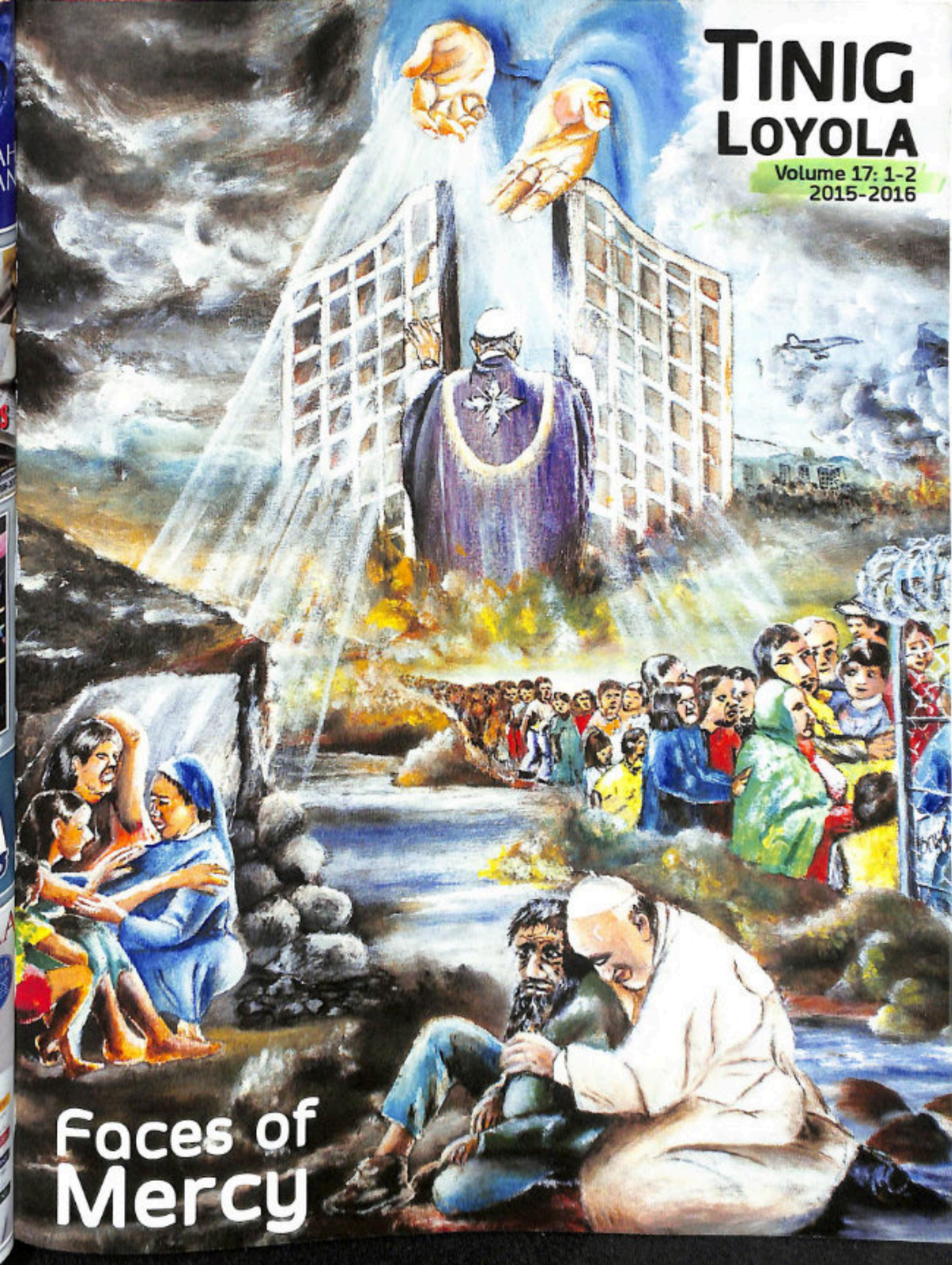

TINIG
LOYOLA
Volume 17: 1-2
2015-2016
Faces of
Mercy

TINIG LOYOLA

contents

EDITORIAL — 4
Earl A. P. Valdez

6
APOSTOLIC FRIENDSHIP
Mark Yoniz
C. Beley, OMI

10
CELEBRATING GOD'S BOUNDLESS MERCY
James H. Kroeger, MM

14
FACES OF MERCY AND THE PEOPLE OF NAVOTAS
Edrylle Cruz Dayrit

16
A PRIEST AMONG THE POOR
April Jhon Magarzo, SCJ

18
POVERTY ON THE FACES OF THE RICH AND POWERFUL
Bernadine Lanot

20
LST: A SCHOOL OF SAINT IGNATIUS
Maria E. G. Banawis, RVM

24
THREE MOMENTS OF THEOLOGIZING
Pablo "Ambo" David, DD

26
HOMILY AT LST CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION
Fernando P. Guillen, SchP

28
CARING FOR OUR COMMON HOME
Earl A. P. Valdez

32
LST@50: THEN ... NOW

38
AUTHENTIC THEOLOGY LEADS AND SERVES
Earl A. P. Valdez

41
COURAGE, THE HEART OF THEOLOGY
Luis Carmelo M. Julian

44
THE ROAD TO THE "COMPRE" AND BACK
Marida Paez

46
PCP-II: SILVER ANNIVERSARY RECOLLECTIONS
James H. Kroeger, MM

48
IEC: PANORAMIC OVERVIEW
Sherwin Santos, SJ; Firmo Bargayo, Jr., SJ; Catalino Arévalo, SJ; Edgar Joseph Miranda; Roberto Oliveros, Jr.; Regin L. Tenorio; Eric Legada

62
LST NEWS BITS
Joseph V. Borres

1965

Loyola School of Theology was inaugurated in 1965 to provide theological formation for the scholastics of the Society of Jesus, the seminarians of San Jose Seminary, and the scholastics of a number of other religious orders. LST is the result of a fusion, first proposed by the Jesuit Provincial, Father Francis X. Clark, of the faculties of Berchmans College (the former Jesuit Scholasticate) and San Jose Seminary. First classes at the new site were held on September 18, 1965.

January 16, 1968

The Jesuit Provincial constituted the School of Theology and Ecclesiastical Studies (STES) as an institute separate and independent in administration and finances from the Jesuit Community of Loyola House of Studies, under its own President, responsible directly to the Provincial.

March 28, 1972

The present name, Loyola School of Theology, was adopted.

March 19, 1989

The Congregation for Seminaries and Institutions of Higher Learning granted LST authority to "confer the academic degrees of BACCALAUREATE and LICENTIATE" through the Faculty of Sacred Theology based in the Catholic University of Fu-Jen, Taipei.
A letter was sent on that day to all the Philippine bishops to inform them of this new milestone in Philippine Church history. Undisputedly, the grant was indeed a "sign of confidence of the soundness of the doctrine being taught at the school."

August 13, 1999

The Congregation for Catholic Education approved LST as an Ecclesiastical Faculty of Theology and was authorized to grant in its own right the ecclesiastical degrees of Baccalaureate in Sacred Theology, Licentiate in Sacred Theology and Doctorate in Sacred Theology.

TINIG LOYOLA STAFF: 2015-2016 **EDITOR:** Earl A. P. Valdez
LAY-OUT EDITORS: Anthony Capirayan, SSP; Michael A Dacalos, MSC; Giovann Tabone, MSSP
MODERATOR: James H. Kroeger, MM

TINIG LOYOLA
Student Publication of
LOYOLA SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
Volume 17: 1-2 School Year: 2015-2016

editorial

If there is one thing that could be considered as the legacy of Pope Francis, not just in the Catholic Church, but also in the world, I would say, unhesitatingly, it is his charm. This is not of the superficial kind that would have one's face appear on the cover of *Time* or *People*; nor is it something that leaves people in mere astonishment. This charm is more profound and fundamental, a sort of an attractive force that leads one to a different way of living, striking at the core of one's being.

It is the charm that Augustine sought and continued to seek all throughout his life, the "ever ancient and ever new" that led him to understand his own identity and purpose. It is the charm that Anselm and Aquinas took efforts to articulate within the capabilities of reason. It is the charm that led Ignatius of Loyola and Mother Teresa to go out of their comfort zones and encounter the least, the lost, and the last of their respective societies. It is the charm of the Christian faith, the reality of which is rooted in, dependent on, and leading to the Love of God in Jesus Christ.

This leads one to another thing that Pope Francis brings: the charm he radiates through his words and deeds reminds all of the mercy of God, which is His very name and His fundamental reality. Pope Francis himself writes, "We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it. Mercy: the word reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life. Mercy: the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness" (*Misericordiae Vultus* 2).

This issue of *Tinig Loyola* seeks to lead to a contemplation of the possibilities that God's Mercy opens up.

Drawing from Christian experience, Pope Francis highlights that which forms, sustains, saves, and fulfils every human person; it is nothing other than the Mercy of God, the Mercy that is God. This leads one to think that, in a quite profound and absolute manner, Mercy stands at the bottom of everything and permeates it. Everything is, because God is Merciful.

This issue of *Tinig Loyola* seeks to lead to a contemplation of the possibilities that God's Mercy opens up. The theme, *Faces of Mercy*, enables one to look at different persons who have experienced the Mercy of God and how they are moved to live a merciful life. In addition, this issue explores events and experiences that are only made possible in and through God's Mercy—"of whose fullness we have all received" (Jn 1:16).

Numerous things have been made possible by God's Mercy: the fifty-first International Eucharistic Congress held in Cebu, the LST International Theological Symposium, and the Golden Anniversary of Loyola School of Theology. Like the episodes in Jesus' life and parables that show God's mercy, these are instances in which one experiences how God's mercy moves and leads people toward genuine reflection and hope; they lead one to be grateful in unique and astounding ways.

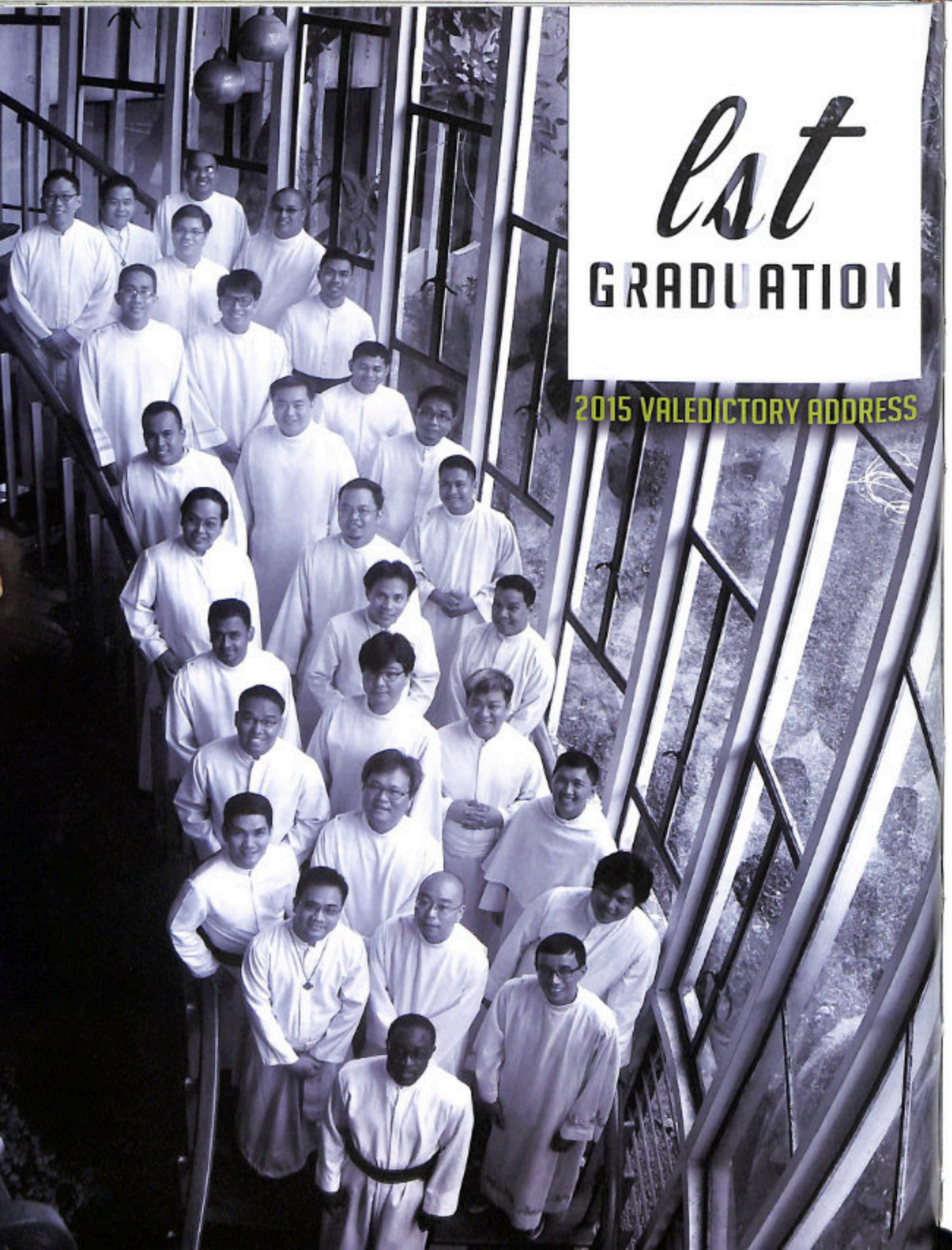
God's Mercy is at work in persons and communities who, in their own unique way, radiate the Mercy of God in their works of mercy. Several narratives of mercy-filled Christians and Christian communities are included here; they show how God's Mercy moves individuals to go beyond themselves in the way that Christ does.

Finally, it is certain that God's mercy enters and is present in various things in life that may seem to be worldly and ordinary; yet, they are reminders of the beauty of life and existence that has the Creator as its Source and End. Reflection on works of art and even life's mundane activities manifest the greatness God's Mercy, providing glimpses of who He is and what He wants for us and our world.

May this issue of *Tinig Loyola* serve as a guide toward *discipleship*, to living Christ's mercy in unique and particular ways, to being beacons that lead others to gratefulness and concrete action. May readers be inspired to adopt a way of seeing, acting, and feeling that reflects how Christ sees, acts, and feels toward everyone.

Earl A. P. Valdez





lst GRADUATION

2015 VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

Apostolic Friendship

MARK YONIZ C. BELEY, OMI

Dear Friends,

A parish priest was given feedback by a lay leader that the people were commenting that he was not engaging the people like a friend. In his dismay, he replied: "I was ordained to be your parish priest, not to be your friend!"

This simple anecdote reminds me of something that Father James Kroeger told us in our Christology class: if we wish to sum up the ministry of Jesus Christ, it could be that of a ministry of friendship, friendship on many levels. It is in that understanding that I anchor the synthesis of our journey as the graduating batch of 2015; if I were to sum up our experience in the past four years here at LST, it would be under the theme of *Apostolic Friendship*.

It is indeed a special privilege to be speaking before you today as your class valedictorian during this year when important milestones are celebrated by our ecclesial community: the culmination of the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council, the Apostolic Visit of Pope Francis in January, and the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Loyola School of Theology. But, this honor does not solely belong to me; the honor more rightly belongs to our religious institute, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, which just celebrated the Philippine Province's 75th anniversary last year and is celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Congregation next year. To my Our Lady of the Assumption Scholasticate formators and brothers, allow me to offer this honor as the tribute of our community to the OMI congregation. To the LST Administration, thank you for giving us this honor and privilege (the first in LST and in our Province's history).

Allow me to share with you today my reflections on the theme of "Apostolic Friendship" which is inspired by and is filled with the most significant learnings and memories of our class.

Apostolic Friendship is the character that seals the bond of our relationship as a batch and that marks one of the most essential theological-pastoral learnings we gained at LST. Its wisdom is one of the most important gifts that we will bring with us as we commence our apostolic ministries after graduation amidst all the challenges of the mission of evangelization today.

The words of Father Kroeger, summing up the ministry of Jesus Christ as that of a ministry of friendship, have remained in my heart since our second-year Christology class. I have frequently pondered those words in my heart and have made that understanding a part of my personal and pastoral life. Indeed, Jesus Christ's primary mode of interaction in his ministry was that of friendship. Friendship is a characteristic theme of Jesus, because to be a friend to someone is a form of love, of which he is personally the embodiment. Jesus' friendship with his disciples and with those he chose to relate with (the marginalized, the outcasts, the sick, children and women) reveals to us his person and mission—that he is sent by his Father so that they, we also, may no longer be called slaves, but friends of God.

Jesus brought us into an intimate relationship with God as his friends; it is that same friendship to which Jesus commissioned his disciples (to whom we are successors) to bring to all peoples. We are perpetuating that friendship of Christ, of God, through our mission as a Church, a mission that is characteristic of the ideal of Apostolic Friendship.

In our journey together here at the Loyola School of Theology, our academic learning and relationship with one another taught me what Apostolic Friendship means with its integral elements, which I would like to express in four words that begin with "G": Giftedness, Gratefulness, Generosity, and Godliness.

Firstly, Apostolic Friendship consists in real friends who recognize and rejoice over the **giftedness** of each other. In Apostolic Friendship, none of the friends is better nor is there anyone lesser. All of us are gifted, endowed with unique gifts proper to

each for the building up of Christ's Body as willed by God. I am fortunate to belong to a class, such as ours, who knows how to appreciate and affirm the gifts of one another. No one possesses all gifts, and it is for that reason that we have learned and lived out the value of interdependence, overcoming envy, jealousy, and competition, in our pilgrimage together.

Truly, we have been graced with diverse gifts that are intended by God for the building up of his Kingdom. But of the many gifts, it is the gift of our very person that is most important, because embedded in each of us is the friendship of God. It is the gift of our personhood, the locus of Christ's friendship, which marks the heart of Apostolic Friendship.

Our recognition of our giftedness essentially leads us to the second element of Apostolic Friendship: **gratefulness**. True friendship is grateful; thankfulness is always requisite in Apostolic Friendship. Our recognition and celebration of our gifts go beyond what is received; truly, gratefulness is a solemn recognition and celebration of the Giver of the gifts.

Apostolic Friendship, first of all, honors God who gives us the singular grace (*charis*), that is, Jesus Christ who brought us into friendship with God, and the manifold graces (*charismata*) with which we are endowed, making us capable of relating in friendship with God and with one another.

Furthermore, Apostolic Friendship honors those people with whom our gifts are shared, developed, appreciated, and realized. God sends us people as his instruments in expressing, nourishing, enjoying, and actualizing our gifts; to those people, we express our heartfelt and sincerest gratitude.

Our gratitude for our giftedness, however, ought not to be mere thankfulness expressed in words of recognition and praise; the true expression of gratitude, and this is the third element of Apostolic Friendship, is **generosity**. The recognition of our giftedness in the altitude of the *head* moves us to gratefulness in the level of the *heart*, which brings us further to actualization in *hands* extended in generous action.

God is totally generous! God, even in his bestowal of gifts on us, wills to make us likewise generous. We are blessed with gifts so that we may also have gifts to share, allowing us to live out our lives as images of a generous God. It is upon that grace of divine generosity that our Apostolic Friendship is founded....

The giftedness, gratefulness, and generosity characteristic of Apostolic Friendship equip us go out of ourselves and indeed to be in deep friendship with God—that friendship with God from and for which we are called and sent so as to bring it to all peoples. Personal relationship with God, that is **Godliness**, is the fourth element of Apostolic Friendship.

Our personal friendship with Christ is the source, core, and summit of Apostolic Friendship; it is the friendship of Christ that brought us together as his disciples; it is the friendship of Christ that we shared with one another as apostolic friends; it is the friendship of Christ that we proclaim in our evangelization; and, it is to that friendship of Christ that we desire to bring all peoples through our Apostolic Friendship with them. Our personal friendship with Jesus Christ ought to be the heart of our apostolic life. It is our friendship with him that will animate all our missionary impulses and endeavors.

IN OUR JOURNEY TOGETHER HERE AT THE LST, OUR ACADEMIC LEARNING AND RELATIONSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER TAUGHT ME WHAT APOSTOLIC FRIENDSHIP MEANS WITH ITS INTEGRAL ELEMENTS.

To conclude, I wish to finally honor our four Filipino OMI Martyrs: Bishop Ben de Jesus and Fathers Nelson Javellana, Benjie Innocencio, and Rey Rhoda. Imbued with the spirit of Vatican II, all four of them (three were graduates of Loyola School of Theology) were exemplars of Apostolic Friendship as they shared "the joys and hopes, the griefs and anguishes, ... especially of the poor and afflicted" (GS 1) people of Mindanao and Jolo-Sulu. Their martyrdom witnesses to the perfect character of Apostolic Friendship, which is to fully love all with whom Jesus Christ wills to share his friendship, even to the point of death. Indeed, the willingness to sacrifice one's life for a friend is constitutive of Apostolic Friendship; as Jesus says in John's Gospel: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15:13). Inspiringly, our four Oblate martyrs embodied the friendship of Christ without cultural and religious boundaries as they dedicated their lives in friendship with our Muslim and *lumad* brethren. To our Muslim and *lumad* brothers and sisters they gratefully shared their gift of Christ's friendship and generously offered their lives so that they, too, may experience the friendship of God.

Friends, we may not be called to martyrdom by blood as did our four Oblate martyrs; but we are called to the ordinary and daily martyrdom of going out of ourselves. Thus, it is the very friendship of God, of Jesus Christ, that penetrates our very persons, that animates our lives, and that constitutes our service to the Church, especially to the poorest and those most abandoned, including peoples of other faiths, cultures, and traditions....

Permit me a personal word to my Dad: "You are right when you told me seven years ago that to live my life in service of the people of Cotabato, Maguindanao, and Jolo-Sulu, as a religious missionary priest, is the noblest act that I will ever do in my life." To my biological Mother who is now in heaven: "Thank you for entrusting me, through our Immaculate Mother Mary's care in heaven, as our family's oblation to God who called me to share the gift of Apostolic Friendship with the Church and the world."

Indeed, to live out a life of Apostolic Friendship (wherever we may go after our graduation today) is the noblest thing that we can ever do in our lifetime. It is the friendship of Jesus Christ that we are called to witness to, so that the joy of the Gospel may shine forth in the world. As Pope Francis puts it: "If something should rightly disturb us it is the fact that many of our brothers and sisters are living without the friendship of Jesus Christ" (EG 49).

We here are very blessed because we have all been consciously experiencing the friendship of Jesus Christ through one another. It is now time to go forth and share with the world the joy of the Gospel—the joy of Christ's friendship—in the fullness of our giftedness, gratefulness, generosity, and Godliness in the spirit of Apostolic Friendship.

Sincere thanks to everyone for sharing this happy occasion with our graduating class of 2015. Praised be Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate!









Celebrating God's Boundless Mercy

JAMES H. KROEGER, MM

The Name of God is Mercy, released on January 12, 2016 in 86 countries and in about 20 languages, is the first book of Pope Francis since his election to the papacy on March 13, 2013. Other books that are compilations of a wide variety of Francis' "mercy quotes" drawn from his speeches and homilies were published earlier: e.g. *The Church of Mercy* (April 25, 2014) and *A Year of Mercy with Pope Francis: Daily Reflections* (November 11, 2014).

This new publication contains an extensive "book-length" conversation between the Vatican journalist Andrea Torniella and Pope Francis conducted in July 2015. One may assert that this book comes from the very heart of Francis. Here one finds Francis' own explanation of his vision behind his declaration of the extraordinary jubilee of the Holy Year of Mercy (2015-2016). The following short citations reveal some of the riches found in this latest book.

Pope Francis continually insists that mercy is the very essence of God; he expresses it this way: "Jesus said that he came not for those who were good, but for the sinners. He did not come for the healthy, who do not need the doctor, but for the sick. For this reason, we can say that ***mercy is God's identity card***, God of Mercy, merciful God. For me, this really is the Lord's identity."

In the book, Francis narrates the details about a Capuchin priest who came to him in Buenos Aires and said that he was worried that he might be overly merciful when hearing confessions. The priest admitted that he had prayed about the matter; then he told Francis: "I go to our chapel and stand in front of the tabernacle and say to Jesus: 'Lord, forgive me if I have forgiven too much. But, you're the one who gave me the bad example'." Francis noted: "I will never forget that. When a priest experiences giving mercy to himself like that, he can give it to others." Later, Francis asserted: "I feel compelled to say to confessors: talk, listen with patience, and above all, tell all people that God loves them."

The Philippine Experience. Undoubtedly, Pope Francis is the "pope of mercy"—and Filipinos experienced this directly and personally during his January 2015 visit to the country that centered on the theme: *mercy and compassion.* As noted by the Philippine bishops in their pastoral letter: "The Holy Father has clearly laid out his wish that the main objective of his visit is to bring Christ's compassion for our suffering people, still struggling to rise from the devastation wrought by the earthquake and typhoon." Archbishop Villegas, CBCP President, observed: "Our compassionate shepherd comes to show his deep concern for our people who have gone through devastating calamities, especially in the Visayas. He comes to confirm us in our faith as we face the challenges of witnessing the Joy of the Gospel in the midst of our trials. This is an eloquent way of showing mercy and compassion."

Although a vast amount of "mercy material" from Pope Francis is available, probably the best source (readily found on the internet) is Francis' document, *Misericordiae Vultus* (*The Face of Mercy*) [April 11, 2015], wherein he proclaims an entire *year of mercy*, extending from December 8, 2015 [50th anniversary of the close of Vatican II] to November 20, 2016 [Feast of Christ the King]. Francis recalls how Saint John XXIII in his opening speech to Vatican II asserted that the Church wishes to use "the medicine of mercy" in proclaiming the Gospel today; she wishes to "show herself a loving mother to all: patient, kind, moved by compassion and goodness." Francis says: "We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace.... Mercy [is] the bridge that connects God and man" (MV 2). Some brief, thematic reflections on mercy from *Misericordiae Vultus* now follow.

Pope Francis continually insists that mercy is the very essence of God.

God, Father of Mercy. Scripture clearly affirms that God is "the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation" (2 Cor 1:3). Our God is "rich in mercy" (Eph 2:4), *Dives in Misericordia*. The psalms speak of a merciful God. "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy, blot out my offenses" (Ps 51:1). "Do not, O Lord, withhold your mercy from me" (Ps 40:11). "Let your tender mercy come to me, that I may live" (Ps 119:77). "Let your compassion/mercy speedily come" (Ps 79:8). God reveals his very identity to Moses as "a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Ex 34:6).

One of Jesus' best known parables is that of the "merciful father" (though often known as the parable of the prodigal son): Lk 15:11-32. The magnanimous

father shows his overflowing love, mercy and compassion to *both* of his sons. There is great rejoicing because the younger brother, presumably dead, has returned alive. A close reading of this narrative reveals the overflowing mercy and tenderness of the compassionate father.

Jesus, the Face of the Father's Mercy. In Jesus of Nazareth, mercy has become living and visible. In God's marvelous plan, in the "fullness of time" (Gal 4:4), he sent his only son into the world, born of the Virgin Mary, to reveal his love for us in a definitive way. Indeed, whoever sees Jesus sees the Father (cf. Jn 14:9).

Jesus' entire life and "his person is nothing but love, a love given gratuitously.... The signs he works, especially in the face of sinners, the poor, the marginalized, the sick, and the suffering, are all meant to teach mercy. Everything in him speaks of mercy. Nothing in him is devoid of compassion" (MV 8). Jesus "felt deep compassion" for the crowds (Mt 9:36). He satisfied the crowds with just a few loaves and fish (Mt 15:37). He is moved with mercy/pity/compassion when he sees people in need (widow of Naim – Lk 7:11-17; the Gerasene demoniac – Mk 5:1-20). His mercy overflows when he invites Matthew the tax collector to follow him; he looked at Matthew with merciful love and chose him: *miserando atque eligendo* [Francis' episcopal motto] (Mt 9:9). Jesus spoke many parables devoted to mercy: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the father with two sons (Lk 15:4-7, 8-10, 11-32).

Church, Community of Mercy. "Mercy is the very foundation of the Church's life. All of her pastoral activity should be caught up in the tenderness she makes present to believers; nothing in her preaching and in her witness to the world can be lacking in mercy. The Church's very credibility is seen in how she shows

The Church lives an authentic life when she professes and proclaims mercy.

merciful and compassionate love.... Sad to say, we must admit that the practice of mercy is waning in the wider culture.... It is time to return to the basics and to bear the weaknesses and struggles of our brothers and sisters" (MV 10).... In the situation of the Church and the world today, many individuals and groups guided by a lively sense of faith are turning, I would say almost spontaneously, to the mercy of God" (MV 11).

"The Church lives an authentic life when she professes and proclaims mercy ... and when she brings people close to the sources of the savior's mercy, of which she is the trustee and dispenser" (MV 11). "The Church is commissioned to announce the mercy of God, the beating heart of the Gospel, which in its own way must penetrate the heart and mind of every person.... As the Church is charged with the task of the new evangelization, the theme of mercy needs to be proposed again and again with new enthusiasm and renewed pastoral action.... In our parishes, communities, associations and movements, in a word, wherever there are Christians, everyone should find an oasis of mercy" (MV 12).

Priest, Minister of God's Mercy. Pope Francis has frequently returned to the theme of mercy—and the duty of priests to be instruments of God's mercy. On the World Day of Prayer for Vocations in 2014, as he ordained thirteen new priests he told them: "For the love of Jesus Christ, *never tire of being merciful*! Please! Have that capacity for forgiveness that the Lord had, He who came not to condemn but to forgive! Have mercy, great mercy"! Pope Francis asked the priests to never close the doors of mercy in people's faces. "Please, do not do this: mercy, mercy! The good shepherd enters by the door, and the wounds of the Lord are the door of mercy."

Again, on the World Day of Prayer for Vocations in 2015, Pope Francis emphasized the theme of mercy as he ordained nineteen priests. In part, he said: "Through Baptism you gather new faithful into the People of God. Baptism should never be refused to a person who asks for it! Through the Sacrament of Penance you forgive sins in the name of Christ and the Church. And I, in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord and of his spouse, the Holy Church, ask you all to *never tire of being merciful*. You are in the confessional to forgive, not to condemn! Imitate the Father who never tires of forgiving."

Mary, Mother of Mercy. "My thoughts now turn to the Mother of Mercy.... No one has penetrated the profound mystery of the incarnation like Mary. Her entire life was patterned after the presence of mercy made flesh.... She treasured divine mercy in her heart.... Her hymn of praise [Lk 1:46-55] was dedicated to the mercy of God.... At the foot of the cross, Mary, together with John, the disciple of love, witnessed the words of forgiveness spoken by Jesus. This supreme expression of mercy towards those who crucified him shows us the point to which the mercy of God can reach" (MV 24).

Christians and the Practice of Mercy. Some guidelines may help our daily "living-in-mercy": (1) Manifesting God's mercy is a duty for every Christian; it is not optional. The call of Vatican II to deep holiness (LG 39-42) demands practicing love and mercy; (2) Mercy addresses suffering / "poverty" of various types in the world: physical, spiritual, personal, structural, psychological, etc. Thus, Pope Francis calls Christians to a renewed practice of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy (cf. MV 15). "Let us enter more deeply into the heart of the Gospel where the poor have a special experience of God's mercy" (MV 15).

(3) We need to practice mercy both *ad intra* and *ad extra* [both in and beyond our homes and communities]. Like the good Samaritan, we often need to reach out to the stranger or foreigner and show mercy (Lk 10:29-37). (4) Mercy is demanding; it is not easy; yes, its demands are often inconvenient and unpredictable; it impinges on our personal plans and schedules. We cannot calculate when mercy will be demanded of us. (5) Practicing mercy is not the same as social work; it must spring from God's love in our hearts (Rm 5:5); it is not only giving things, but giving ourselves. (6) We strive to practice mercy in a manner that respects and restores the dignity of the recipient of our kindness.

Pope Francis' Prayer. "Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father.... You are the face of the invisible Father, the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy. Let your Church be your visible face in the world.... Send your Spirit, so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor."

James H. Kroeger, MM *is professor of systematic and mission theology at Loyola School of Theology, East Asian Pastoral Institute, and Mother of Life Catechetical Center in Manila.*

FACES OF MERCY AND THE PEOPLE OF NAVOTAS

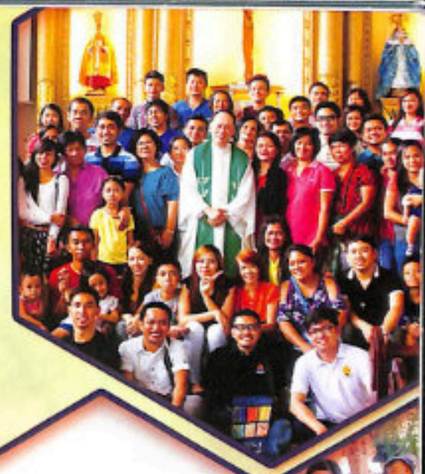
BY EDRYLLE C. DAYRIT

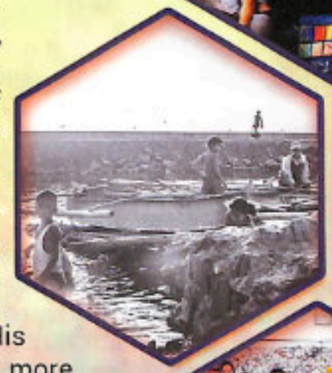
As Pope Francis opened the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, the words quoted above at the right swiftly confronted our naked dispositions. Now is the time to bask in the deeper reality that haunts us, not in abstract concepts that serve as mere playgrounds for our wondering minds. Today, not tomorrow, shall be the start of something new—that of immersing in the peripheries and encountering people face to face in order to see concretely the *Faces of Mercy*.

Apostolate of Presence. As members of BEC *Sangpusod* of San José Seminary, our weekend apostolate is to be with the people of Davila Street, West Side, Navotas City. *More than just being with them physically, it is being with them personally.* I mean, to be present in each moment with them and to see by having the very face of reality and then bring it to prayer. For them, a seminarian's visit and presence is a gift. It is something they treasure and cherish. It is a thing that forever remains in their hearts. I was really surprised when they tell stories about seminarians from the past, some around ten years ago who used to stay and sleep in their houses; they can still remember it vividly! Indeed, it only shows that a seminarian's presence there has a very big impact on their lives. In this whole panoramic scheme of things, the *Josefino* spirit is being kept alive by the qualities of service, virtue, and presence.

Apostolate of Mercy. This year, all of us are being called to be missionaries of mercy to everyone. It is to walk with them, with the very same slippers they have, to see with them by the very same lenses they hold, and to suffer with them by identifying ourselves with the difficult situations in their lives. Mercy is not an abstract word but a face to recognize, contemplate and serve. On many occasions, I can really see God's mercy at work whenever I am with these people of Navotas. Many would say, *"kahit mahirap po kami, brother,* at least

“ THIS IS THE TIME TO ALLOW OUR HEARTS TO BE TOUCHED. ”
-POPE FRANCIS











we can eat decently in a day and our family is complete." Or, some would say, *"marami kaming problema, bro, yung financial, isa lang yan. Maraming beses, pinagpapasa-Diyos na lang namin at yun na nga, ni minsan hindi Niya kami pinabayaan."* [We have many problems, bro, the financial problem is just one of them. Many times, we just let God handle all these things, because we don't know any more what to do; and that's it, He has never abandoned us]. Indeed, I can say that all these things are but glimpses of God's Divine Mercy. On account of everything that is happening in our lives, His mercy is always at work; the more we are in need, the more mercy suffices.

Faces of Mercy and the People of Navotas. All of these things lead me to my last point: the people of Navotas are but vessels of the many faces of God's Mercy. Pope Francis said that to encounter God's mercy is to see the face of Jesus. In this case, to be with the people in our apostolate area is to see the face of Christ in a multi-faceted way. It is mercy, an openness to an embracing love, no matter what the consequences are, no matter even if it leads you to absurdity; you don't even know where it's going to lead you. *Not pity, but mercy.* To have pity on people gives us a lot of securities, but Mercy is insecurity. We simply don't know. We are just willing to manifest mercy and we are open. We are open to possibilities. Finally, in seeing the faces of Mercy, we are disturbed.

And so, this is what I want to share with you—that we don't dismiss the things that disturb us, particularly when we are at the brink of turning our backs on those in need. Only in being open to insecurities and allowing our hearts to be touched by the consciousness of this complex reality can we come to the affirmation of God's many faces of Mercy.

Apostolate work in Navotas is but a reflection of God's mercy—an explicit manifestation of His face.

Edrylle Cruz Dayrit is a first year theology student of LST from San José Seminary, studying for the Diocese of Cubao.

A PRIEST AMONG THE POOR



by
APRIL JHON
MAGARZO, SCJ



I might be mistaken but when I first heard that one of the themes for the next issue of *Tinig Loyola* is "Faces of Mercy," the first thought I had is the *poor*. Yes, mercy is rich in meaning, but personally I can see mercy on their faces. Moreover, as I thought of the poor, the first image I recalled was Payatas, since I have my pastoral exposure there. Without any second thought I also remembered Father Luciano Felloni, the Parish Priest of Lourdes Parish in the Diocese of Novaliches. I do not know the priest personally, but all these years in my pastoral work in Payatas people talk of their good memories with him. So, I believe this priest is very special to them, because he made them feel special. Therefore, I decided to have an interview with him, hoping that many will be inspired by his mission, specifically in LST. By his example we might be fueled and be taught how to live and show the mercy of God to the people who need it most. The interview follows.

Do you live poor among the poor? *No, I do not live like they do. I do not build my house beside the canal. I am not a poor man among the poor. That is the truth. Nevertheless, I try to live a simple life, in solidarity with the people. I try to raise them from poverty and always assure them that I will always be with them in good and bad times. When I was giving a retreat to a group of priests I once asked them: "How many of you have many contacts with poor people in your phone?" They were silent, because sometimes we give more attention to those* people who are rich or popular; but, for those who are poor, sometimes the relationship is merely a sacramental relationship.

And sometimes worse: no money, no sacrament. They are the Church. The Church belongs to them. We priests must serve the people; we are not businessmen. I do not get any profit from the people I serve. That's why I always agree with what Bishop [Antonio] Tobias used to say: "Ang Simbahang walang serbisyo ay negosyo" *[A Church that does no service is a business].*

How do you show your love to the poor? *I show them my love by showing them my constant presence with them. Each priest may be good in a different area (homilies, advice, formation, etc.). Eventually what people need is the presence and the deep affection of the priest in every situation. We need to listen to the people—without tiredness. Their life is concrete, not written in a book. The poor are the periphery, they do not have the "word" in the Church; I try to be the word of the poor. One of my parishioners in Payatas said: "Father, dati mahirap lang kami; ngayon simbahan na kami [Before, we were poor; now we are the Church].*

> **"In our pastoral work we must listen first to the people; we need to listen to their pain and bring that to our theology classes; I think that's the best theologizing."**
>
> Father Luciano Felloni

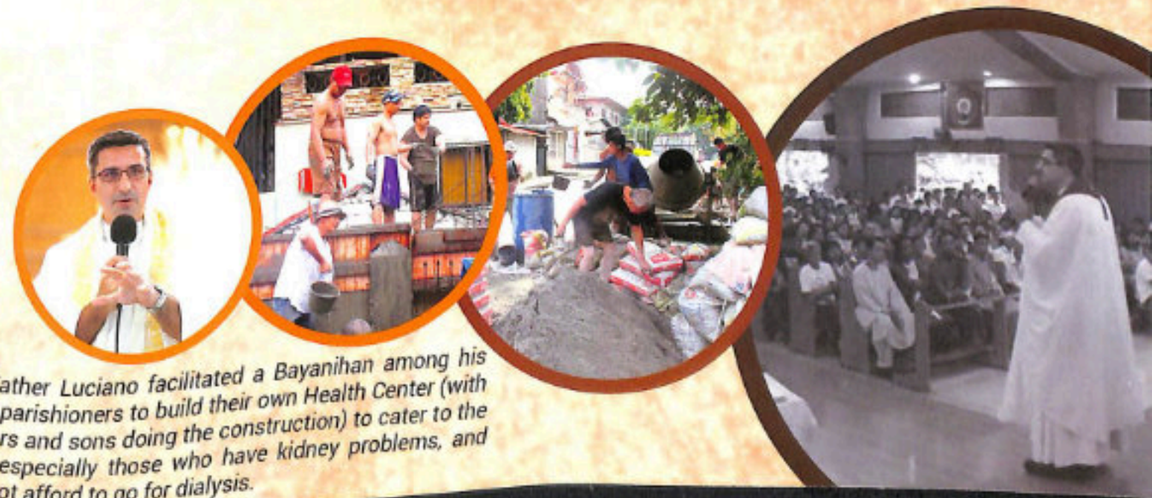
Father Luciano is very correct when he said that each priest might be very good in some areas, but the most important thing that each priest should have is deep affection and then spare even a little time to talk with these people, not spending more time in the convent facing the laptop and phone. I think that the good shepherd should have affection toward all the sheep.

How do you sacrifice yourself for the poor? *I don't consider what I am doing to be a sacrifice. I don't complain about anything. I give a lot of love because I want to love. I accept the environment and lifestyle of the ordinary people. Through the pain, physical or emotional, that I endure, I transform not only the people but also myself. Between us, I need every day to change my mind. Without conversion there is no possibility to announce the Gospel. I do not want to be famous, because that is the strategy of the devil. I am a person who tries to give his life for the sake of others.*

Father Luciano told me that "Mercy is the best attribute of God" and I think it should be also the best attribute of the Church and the best attribute of God's shepherds. But the question is: how do we make them, especially the poor, feel the mercy of the Church? Or, how do we make them feel they are in the "Church" and we are all brothers and sisters? How do we show them that we are not only a "sacramental" Church, but the Church that loves, manifesting the mercy of God? I am also convinced that we students have a very important role in actualizing this work of mercy.

Towards the end of our talk Father Luciano told me something; he said: "In our pastoral work we must listen first to the people; we need to listen to their pain and bring that to our theology classes; I think that's the best theologizing."

April Jhon Magarzo, SCJ, is a second year theology student of LST.



Father Luciano facilitated a Bayanihan among his poor parishioners to build their own Health Center (with fathers and sons doing the construction) to cater to the sick especially those who have kidney problems, and cannot afford to go for dialysis.



POVERTY in the faces of the RICH and POWERFUL

Bernardine Lanot

In his message for Lent 2016, Pope Francis wrote: "The real poor are revealed as those who refuse to see themselves as such. They consider themselves rich, but they are actually the poorest of the poor. This is because they are slaves to sin, which leads them to use wealth and power not for the service of God and others, but to stifle within their hearts the profound sense that they too are only poor beggars. The greater their power and wealth, the more this blindness and deception can grow. It can even reach the point of being blind to Lazarus begging at their doorstep."

The problem is that many people in our world today are trapped in attachments to surrogate loves that promise joy, but bring none. We have created a society where the supposedly desirable and laudable "good" eventually leads to death and deterioration. This is a world where "excellence" is pursued at the cost of people becoming objects, where the rich and the powerful stay close to the center, far, not only from the margins, but also from the very things that can make them human. But, slavery grips not only those who are at the margins but also those who are at the center. With what Pope Francis calls the "globalization of indifference," one may wonder about the dehumanization that touches people on all the levels of the social hierarchy. The poorest of the economically, politically, and socially poor are hardly treated humanely; yet, even the rich and the powerful are also dehumanized by what society does to them and what they subject themselves to, whether knowingly or not.

We regard the abuse of power with disgust, but those whom we call oppressors are themselves oppressed in more ways than can be easily recognized. We say that the poor are suffering from poverty on economic, political, social, and psychological levels; but, if society and its dominant values tell the poor, "You are of no worth," then they also tell the non-poor, "You are of no worth if you do not measure up to society's expectations." They then engage in the game of society which gives them the illusion of winning over the rest. But in truth, it's a game that leaves no winners.

How do we get the rich and the non-poor to respond to Lazarus begging at their doorstep? I do not think that we should start by pointing out to them the wealth, power, and prestige that they already have are things that they need to give up in order to be free for others.



> **"Aside from an unjust world where children go hungry and entire peoples are pushed to the margins, the rich and the powerful may also be vulnerable in ways that are not immediately discernible."**

Rather, I think that we should start by helping them realize that they too are poor. After all, it is only by embracing our own poverty that we become more human, more open to communion with others, and more at peace with ourselves.

My reflection leads me to a host of other complex questions. How do we speak meaningfully of a "preferential option for the poor" when our human experience tells us that slavery and oppression are taking new, unprecedented forms?

How can we expand the scope of our definition of poverty and develop a language and vocabulary about the different kinds of destitution? How do we promote the awareness of these complexities in the Church?

This is not a call to turn our eyes from the poor and turn them instead towards the rich and the powerful. Neither is this an attempt to trivialize the suffering of the marginalized and the disadvantaged. If we have two people who are both psychologically and spiritually poor, but different in terms of socioeconomic status and wealth, we can reasonably say that the less privileged between them is the one who needs the Church more, simply because the other one has more access to help, given his privileged position. However, we cannot enclose ourselves within the presumption that the rich and the powerful do not need help and that their problems simply require a quick hug or a pat on the back. And, this is an invitation to scrutinize the presuppositions we have made about the rich and the powerful and to enlarge our hearts to include those whom we think do not need mercy.

All this is done in imitation of the Father who waits patiently for the son who squandered his wealth on things that will never satisfy. This is the Father who is also made restless by the son who sulks outside and resents his brother. This is the Father who does not rest until all His children are truly, finally home and gathered at one table.

Bernardine Lanot, who is pursuing her MA in Theological Studies at LST, teaches college theology at the Ateneo de Manila University Loyola Schools.



lst

A SCHOOL OF SAINT IGNATIUS
ALUMNI HOMECOMING PERSONAL SHARING

SISTER MARIA EULALIA G. BANAWIS, RVM





Reverend Fathers and Sisters, Alumnae and Alumni, and Guests,

It's unlike me to say "yes" to invitations for messages whether written or oral. It took me time to say "yes" to the invitation to deliver a message on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of LST. I am standing before you here in fear and trembling. But my gratitude for my LST experience is greater than my fear.



In 1969, my Superiors asked me to go to Rome for studies a year after my Perpetual Vows. I declined. I felt I was too young to be uprooted from my religious community. I told my Kuya Willie (Brother William Yam, SJ) that I was being sent for studies in Rome. He suggested that I try to enroll at LST, because he heard that they are accepting women religious. That's how I came here. Thanks to my Kuya Willie.

My unending thanks to Father Catalino Arévalo, SJ for accepting me to LST in 1970. At that time I really did not know what I was in for. All I knew was that I needed very badly to study because of my assignment as a Directress of Postulants.

The first day of class I was subjected to a test of which I was so unaware. It was almost time for classes but I found our classroom empty. I was wondering if I was lost. But I was so sure it was the classroom pointed out to me on the day I enrolled. Finding it empty, I took my seat, faced the blackboard and just waited. Then I heard my name called "Esmeralda" by a chorus of male voices. I turned and saw them lined up at the back of the room. Spontaneously, I responded: "*Bakit nyo alam?*" And laughter followed. [Esmeralda is my baptismal name and Eulalia is my religious name.] They told me they knew a lot about me and that they had a good "source" of information. Immediately, I knew I was at their mercy. That was the beginning of my feeling at home with all the men around me. I knew that I passed the test, that I could be game.

From my perspective, it helped me a lot that my classmates and I engaged ourselves in play, in games. Theology was hard enough and it was made lighter by our "playfulness." I will give some examples. On the feast of Saint Stanislaus Kostka, the men wore their *sotanas* and I wore my floor-length habit. When it was Pilipino week, the men had their *barong* and I had my *alampay* and *saya* over my habit. Days before Christmas I gave them toy guns which created lots of noise in the corridor. The Jesuits did not run out of ideas to make our days enjoyable. I felt that our classroom was always bright and sunny. Most days, we had fun.

Above all, they made fun of me, making me their muse because there was nobody else. Of course, I enjoyed it. My only chance, that's why. I was the only woman in the class then. They "made" me a lady and I "made" them gentlemen, especially when they would offer me a cup of coffee and some eats and offer some other helps.



Some of them used me for their own ends. I remember two of my classmates volunteered to give my reflection paper to Father Schumacher on the last day of submission. I gave it to them early in the afternoon on that day. The following morning Father Schumacher called me and told me that I should not have gone to submit my paper at midnight; I should have waited for the morning. I was wondering why Father Schumacher was talking to me with an apologetic tone. Then I caught sight of my two classmates making signs to me to keep silent. They submitted their papers at midnight with mine.

I really enjoyed the company of my Jesuit classmates Bishop Tony Ledesma, Fathers Ben Nebres, Ting Samson, Lito Mangulabnan, Art Ferrer, Romy Serrato, Romy Tiongco and the late Bobi Nery. We had a Passionist and an Oblate with us, whose names escape my memory. We also had a lay man as our classmate, Jose Bulao. Father Jess Dumawal, MSC is here present. I forgot him. The Jesuits referred to our class as the "First Year Block."

I took my studies seriously though. I valued so much my study of theology. I was afforded the time to read, reflect and pray over what I was reading. From childhood, I loved reading. The LST library was a sacred place for me. Through the thoughtfulness and kindness of Father Ralph Ghering and Miss Rosales, I was given a cubicle for my use. That was my sanctuary. It was there that I encountered the hearts and minds of theologians through their writings. Often, I found myself gazing into space and allowing the beauty and profundity of what I read to simply seep into me.

I was a working student at that time, because when I went home to the Novitiate I had to do my share of teaching the novices and postulants. I had to do all my readings and studies while I was here at LST. I am very grateful to Father Miguel Casals for making me a noon boarder, eating hot meals instead of a cold *baon*.

I can say that I have had the taste of the *Ratio Studiorum*, because I took all the subjects offered to my seminarian classmates, except for the class on hearing confessions, the name of which, *Ad Auds*, until now, I could hardly pronounce. I am so proud of having been taught by the great men of LST: Fathers Joseph Murphy, Philip Calderon, Carlos Abesamis, John Schumacher, Joseph Smith, Joseph Roche, Catalino Arévalo, Eduardo Hontiveros, Gerald Healy, Calvin Poulin, Thomas Green, Pedro Achutegui, James Meehan, and, of course Father William Malley who was my thesis mentor. Their great minds and tender hearts are etched in my heart and memory.

As a child, my ambition was to become a priest. Since it was impossible, I thought of being a catechist. My mother was my first catechism teacher and my idol. When I entered religious life, I just knew I would be a catechist. God knew my heart. He brought me close to priesthood—so close … and that was enough for me!

God unfolded to me my life little by little. It was my theological studies that molded me in contemplation and intimacy with God. When I had my midlife crisis and needed help so badly, God brought me to the Institute of Spiritual Leadership, affiliated to Loyola University of



I CAN LOOK BACK TO MY YEARS AT LST WITH MUCH JOY IN MY HEART. I LEARNED THEOLOGY NOT JUST FROM BOOKS, BUT FROM THE WITNESS OF LIFE OF MY PROFESSORS AND CLASSMATES. IN MY THEOLOGICAL STUDIES, I ENCOUNTERED GOD IN BOOKS, IN MY RELATIONSHIPS WITH PERSONS, IN EVENTS, AND IN PLAY.

Chicago. It was midway through the program that I realized I entered into a Program for Spiritual Direction. All I wanted was to understand myself at that time.

In my ministry of Retreat and Spiritual Direction for the past 28 years, and in my teaching and formation ministry, what gave me much confidence and security was my LST studies and experience. I had the assurance that my faith life was on solid ground. I value and treasure most of all my four years here. It was so wonderful to study, not for grades but for the sheer enjoyment of studying.

The study of Theology and play were intertwined. I did not smell any competition from among my classmates. We did not mind our grades. But, we had time to study as a group, especially before and during our oral comprehensive exams. When one comes out from the examination room, he goes back to the group to share the questions he was asked and then we all had a good laugh over our wrong answers. Always, after comprehensive exams, we would go out to watch a movie, or eat out, or just be together, either in the home of Tony Ledesma or in my community, Saint Mary's Novitiate in Quezon City.

I experienced community in the grounds and corridors of LST. Exchanging smiles, nods and greetings with the San Jose seminarians going for their Philosophy classes is paying off now. At least I can say that I have experienced being smiled at by Cardinal Chito Tagle as a young man, as well as the other young men who are now bishops. Small talk with and getting to know seminarians from the different male congregations like the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI), the Benedictines (OSB), the Passionists (CP), and others widened my circle of friends. I felt the welcoming presence of the Jesuit Academic and Religious community when I met them in the chapel, dining room, and corridors. And yes, I am also grateful for the company and friendship of the service personnel in the different offices of LST. I am most grateful to Ms. Connie Aliwalas and Ms. Pina Adriatico.

I can look back to my years at LST with much joy in my heart. I learned Theology not just from books, but from the witness of life of my professors and classmates. In my theological studies, I encountered God in books, in my relationships with persons, in events, and in play.

All I wish for the present and future of LST is that it will always be a school of Saint Ignatius—very human and very God-like. Thank you very much!

Sister Maria Eulalia G. Banawis, RVM graduated in 1974; she shared these reflections during the Alumni Homecoming on November 18, 2015.

3 MOMENTS OF THEOLOGIZING

JUBILEE MESSAGE AT ALUMNI HOMECOMING

BISHOP PABLO "AMBO" DAVID, DD





You know I was really very surprised when we began by playing the National Anthem. Then the Philippine National Anthem was immediately followed by the Anthem of the Holy See. That is the first time I ever heard it being played at Loyola School of Theology. I never heard it played during the time when the Pope was not a Jesuit! *Joke lang*, Father Provincial!

Dear Faculty Members, Studentry of Loyola School of Theology,

What did Loyola School of Theology teach me? With apologies to that song, the Broadway musical *Day by Day*, I'd say Loyola taught me how to see the Lord, to love the Lord and to follow the Lord; to see the Lord clearly, to love the Lord dearly, and to follow the Lord nearly.

We begin with seeing. I was made to believe that theologizing is about seeing, looking at Jesus and seeing Christ, the Son of God, the Lord. It's not true that God is invisible. Loyola School of Theology has made God very visible to me. Loyola School of Theology made me very sensitive to God at work in our lives, societies, in our communities. I remember very distinctly the *Loyola Papers* that Father Tony and I were talking about.

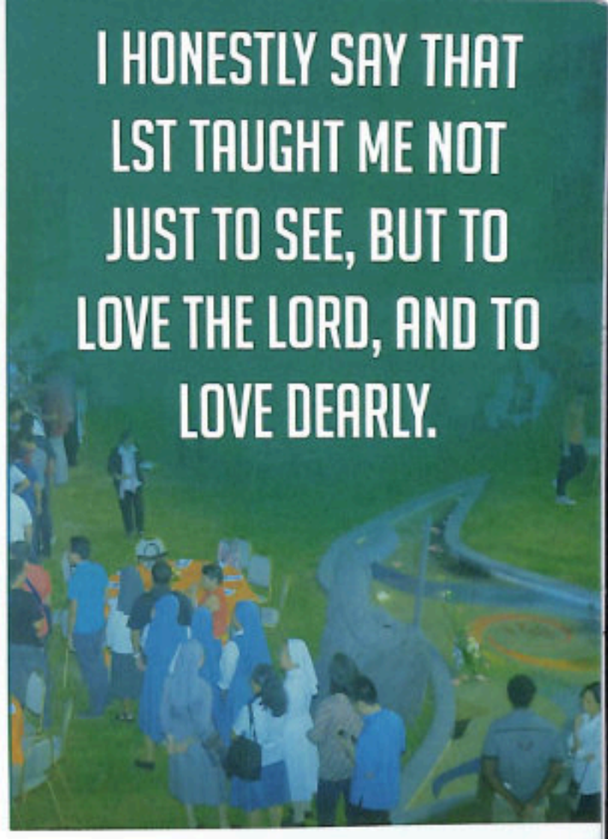
I devoured the *Loyola Papers*. One of those papers that I remember very distinctly is Tony Lambino's "Three Moments of Theologizing." *Kailangan daw maglakad, umupo at lumuhod; tatlong yugto ng pagteteyolohiya*. To do theology is to walk, to sit and to kneel. I think those three moments at Loyola opened my eyes and made me see the Lord. Thanks to the brilliant teachers that I had here; you know, they all influenced us in the same way and at the same level.

I honestly say that LST taught me not just to see, but to love the Lord, and to love dearly. I always saw passion in Father Arévalo; whenever he taught, his heart was burning. I saw lovers in all my professors: people deeply in love with God. I remember with fondness Father Tom Green who taught me not just theology and philosophy but spirituality as well. I can cite many others, but I believe that the loving that I learned at Loyola School of Theology was really in response to the God who loves us. That is what faith is about after all. Faith is a human response of love to the God who loved us first.

We cannot even imagine ourselves responding if we have not first of all experienced and encountered the God who loves us unconditionally. Loyola taught me to love wholeheartedly. That is one thing I learned here, to never be half-hearted in what we do, the *magis*, to love wholeheartedly and passionately. *Kung gagawin mo rin lang ang isang bagay, ibigay mo na lahat, huwag yung kalahating puso*, wholeheartedly. Love the Lord with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.

The best expression of that love is compassion. Loyola also opened my eyes to the poor, because Theology at Loyola was never just academic. Was it perhaps because we lived during those times when we were very suspicious of

I HONESTLY SAY THAT LST TAUGHT ME NOT JUST TO SEE, BUT TO LOVE THE LORD, AND TO LOVE DEARLY.



academic theology? Even if we were forced to do theology very seriously in an academic way, we were taught to walk with people; so our immersion, our exposure, our apostolate meant a good deal to us. You would not see us at Loyola during weekends. You would see us at *Bagong Barrio, Bagong Bayan, Payatas,* wherever.

Finally, Loyola taught me to follow the Lord who is near because I saw serious disciples here, followers, people who follow, not ideas, not ideals. but the Person of the Lord. I think the Lord became a concrete person to me at Loyola School of Theology. I thank Loyola for these three things. I think Loyola has taught me to see more clearly, to love more dearly and to follow more nearly. Thank you!

Bishop Pablo Virgilio "Ambo" Siongco David is the Bishop of the Diocese of Kalookan, where he was installed on January 2, 2016.



HOMILY AT LST CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

FERNANDO PRECKLER GUILLEN, SCH.P

Dear Professors,
Students, Employees,
Dear Friends in the Lord,

You probably know that one of my customs is to finish the opening prayer before class with a song. And you know also that this year I am teaching French because of my experience in French-speaking countries of Africa.

So, when I saw the Gospel of today, one melody came to mind. During my period of studies in sixties, there was a famous French Jesuit called Aimé Duval. He used to sing, playing his guitar, some very nice and striking lyrics. One of his songs was the very Gospel of today:

"J'ai joué de la flutte sur la place du marché,
Et personne avec moi n'a voulu dancer;
J'ai joué de la flutte sur la place du marché,
Toi qui m'as entendu viendras-tu dancer?"

The English translation is: "I played the flute in the marketplace and nobody wanted to dance with me; I played the flute in the marketplace, you who have heard me, will you come to dance?"

Jesus applied the image to the John's preaching, a kind of lamentation, and to his own teaching, a song of joy. The people, the Jewish hearers, never joined the dance. So, I thought: "Revelation is like music, melodies are different, and we are invited to sing and dance."







Doing a short glance at the immense repertoire of liturgical songs, I quickly verified the differences between Lenten songs, Easter songs, and Advent songs. "*Rorate coeli desuper et nubes pluant justum*" (Advent) and "*Puer natus in Bethlehem, alleluia; unde gaudet Jerusalem, alleluia, alleluia; in cordis iubilo, Christum natum adoremus, cum novo cantico*" (Christmas). What a living lesson in lyrics and in melodies of the liturgy! Let us spread in our assemblies a liturgical spirituality.

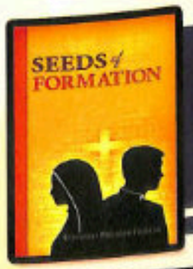
Did you observe that my two samples were in Latin and in Gregorian chant? Why? Fifty years ago (1965) at the beginning of LST and also during my priestly ordination, the language was Latin and the melodies were in Gregorian chant. And, we commemorate today these two fiftieth anniversaries.

Let us give thanks to the Lord and to the courageous Jesuit Fathers who worked and accomplished the foundation of LST. We are also grateful to the subsequent generations that were able to maintain the "sacred fire." LST has already fifty years, is alive, is fruitful, and is increasing and promising for the "new evangelization" of Asia through deep theological studies. The Father of this "beginning moment" is still with us, and in him, Father Catalino G. Arévalo, we thank all LST promotors, collaborators and students.

My fifty years of priesthood may pass hidden in the constant and monotonous task of teaching as a good Piarist (*Ordo Scholarum Piarum = Order of the Pious Schools*) in Spain, Mexico, Senegal, Cameroon and the Philippines. I am grateful to the excellent professors I had at the Gregorian University in Rome during the Second Vatican Council.

Dear Friends, that is all. Let us now enter silently and deeply into the spirit of Advent, to be able to truly rejoice in this unique Christmas 2015 in our own personal history and in the history of the Church and the World. We sing: *Joy to the World!*

NOTE: *This homily was delivered on December 11, 2015 in the Oratory of Saint Ignatius during the LST Christmas celebration.*



Fernando Preckler Guillen, Sch.P. *born in Spain, is a member of the Order of Pious Schools founded by Saint Joseph Calasanz. He is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and Church History at LST. His most recent book is* Seeds of Formation, *published by Claretian Publications in 2014.*

CARING for our COMMON HOME

Earl A. P. Valdez

insights from The Little Prince

The Church took a gigantic leap forward in 2015 in interpreting the "signs of the times." In May of that year, Pope Francis published his second encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, which is a call for citizens of this world to take care of our planet. The pope adopts what he calls an "integral ecology" which covers various aspects of human living in relation to the environment. What makes this encyclical ground-breaking is that not only is it addressed to peoples of all cultures and religions, but that it also discusses the reality of the earth from the lens of Christian faith. This approach enables the Church to practice a holistic approach to mission, caring for the earth as part of her responsibility to humanity.

Coincidentally, the world of literature also remembers an influential novel during that year, since in 2015 a film was made of *Le Petit Prince (The Little Prince)*. Authored by the French pilot, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, this novella tells the story of a young prince living on one planet; from there he travels to different planets, encountering different kinds of people. Eventually he lands on earth and meets a fox, a snake, and an aviator pilot. The book became a best-seller, translated in more than 250 languages; it became part of required literary works in schools around the world, the Philippines included.

Recalling the 115th birth anniversary of Saint-Exupéry (1900-1944), a stop-motion, animated film was released in 2015; it became significant for fans of the book around the world. It not only retold the story, but also extended it—all seen and experienced by a young girl who heard the story of the pilot who encountered the prince. As expected, the film gained positive reviews; it was even an official selection for the 2015 Cannes Film Festival for Best Animated Film.

While these two events [Pope Francis' encyclical and *The Little Prince* film] may seem to be distinct and separate events, one can draw connections between these two works, especially regarding the message of the encyclical and the film. Thus, I hope to draw some connections, showing that *The Little Prince*, both the novella and the movie adaptation, has something to say about who we are and what we can do. These matters resonate with the Pope's words of wisdom in his new encyclical.

***The Little Prince*: A Story of Wonder.** "Once when I was six years old I saw a magnificent picture in a book, called *True Stories from Nature*, about the primeval forest. It was a picture of a boa constrictor in the act of swallowing an animal." These first lines from *The Little Prince* introduce the reader to what Saint-Exupéry asserts throughout the novel: the importance of knowing how to imagine and think otherwise.

Living in exile in the United States before re-joining the war as a French reconnaissance pilot, Saint-Exupéry had an opportunity to write essays and reflections; he asks profound questions of life from the point-of-view of someone who has been up in the sky for lengthy periods of time. The Little Prince was a product of that time in his life; in fact, it was inspired by his own experience of crashing in the Sahara five years before the onset of World War II. He then used this setting as the eventful encounter between the narrator and a Little Prince living on a planet with nothing except a rose encased in glass.

From this perspective readers are led to a narrative that would bring a huge wave of emotions and wonderful insights about life. The Prince would meet various figures in the different planets where he had gone before coming to Earth, figures that represent ways of living and being.



The most important encounter, however, is one with the fox on earth, who tells the Prince—and the readers—the most memorable secret of them all: *What is essential is invisible to the eye (L'essentiel est invisible pour les yeux).* With these words, the Little Prince was able to figure out the meaning of life, within an understanding brought by love and friendship.

In celebrating the significance of *The Little Prince*, director and filmmaker Mark Osborne took the classic a step further with his own film adaptation. Not only did he retell the story, but he also extended it in an interesting manner. Osborne's movie is centered, neither on the Little Prince nor on the narrator of the story; instead, it focuses on a little girl who is set to study in a prestigious academy.

Having just moved into a new neighborhood with her mother, she was forced to follow a rigid summer schedule in preparation for studying at Werth Academy. However, an encounter with their neighbor, an old aviator, led her to things that are beyond what her studies could achieve, things that only wonder and imagination can reach and make real for her.

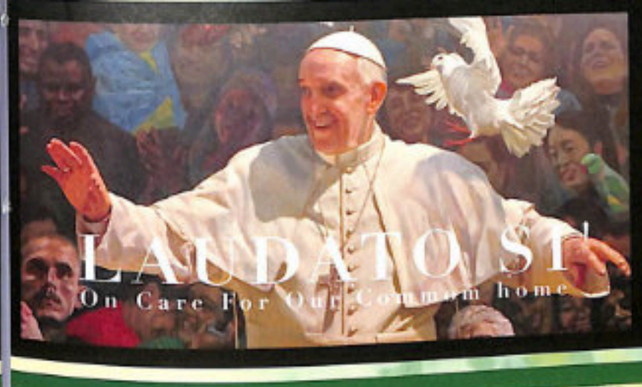


Through the old man, she was able to know the story of the Little Prince. But more than that, she was able to meet an older version of the Little Prince, now working for *The Businessman* who collects and stores the stars of the universe. He had grown up to be a quite submissive and workaholic young man. Through the little girl who helps the Prince escape and, with his help, frees all the stars, the man was able to get back his sense of wonder.

This extended version of *The Little Prince* is more than just an engaging sequel that takes Saint-Exupéry's readers back to the details that make up the story; it awakens the call to recover our sense of wonder and imagination. Unsurprisingly, one can also find these same themes in Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'*.

***Laudato Si'*—A Poignant Reminder.** One cannot miss the obvious in *Laudato Si'*; it speaks about the material dimensions of our existence. However, one can see that for Pope Francis, what is most important is the intellectual and spiritual disposition that one possesses as a citizen of the earth. As Francis points out, on the one hand, Christianity is not about spiritualizing and rejecting material existence, but, on the other hand, it recognizes that the material world is a means through which we reach our spiritual end, with the help of grace. The Pope names it: *integral ecology*, one which considers the integrity of the environment as well as economic and social development (LS 137-146); he also examines the "ecology of daily life" (147) and considers the various aspects of the human person as having inherent value and dignity, thus deserving of a humane way of living and realizing his or her meaning and purpose (LS 147-155). Put simply, *Laudato Si'* encourages us to a way of life that befits us as living within a larger whole; we need to think of the serious consequences of our actions, not just for ourselves but also for other people and mother nature.

Reflecting the Franciscan way of doing things, the Pope calls us to an "ecological conversion" (LS 217), not so much as a definite action plan but as a spirituality through which we live "our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork," which cannot be separated from our lives as Christians (LS 217). It is only through this perspective and way of being that one can live in communion with the Trinitarian God and with creation as a whole.



> "*The Little Prince* and *Laudato Si'* point out a way of life that is open to the mystery of others leading us to seeing who and what they really are, realities that cannot be captured by a short-sighted view of our world."

In the end, our response to take care of our common home is nothing more than a part of our response to the vocation to love, through which we are able to see and value things more than how our naked senses see them.

Is not this what Saint-Exupéry and, through adaptation, Osborne remind us of in the *The Little Prince?* It is noticeable that, within the interesting characters and insights provided us by this classic, what is really demanded from readers or movie-goers is to be able to see the essentials, in contrast to being too short-sighted, thus missing the most important things in life. It is quite significant that Osborne's adaptation singles out the Businessman as a kind of antagonist during the Prince's later life; he represents a mind-set that reduces the value of human beings to the work that they do and to the elements of nature (symbolized by the stars) considered to be valuable possessions. One could extend this concept to the King, the Tippler, the Conceited Man, and the Lamplighter, all who reduce their realities in one way or another. In other words, the way of "grown-ups" is nothing but a reduction of everything to something measurable, calculable, and profitable, typical of a scientific and materialistic mind-set that we should hope to avoid in our age.

Against this "adult" way of living, there is a child-like way; it is characterized not just with wonder, innocence, and amazement over the things that we sense and experience, but also with the capacity to imagine beyond what we have and see now. What *The Little Prince* and *Laudato Si'* point out is that a way of life which is open to the mystery of others can lead us to seeing who and what they really are, realities that cannot be captured by a short-sighted view of our world.

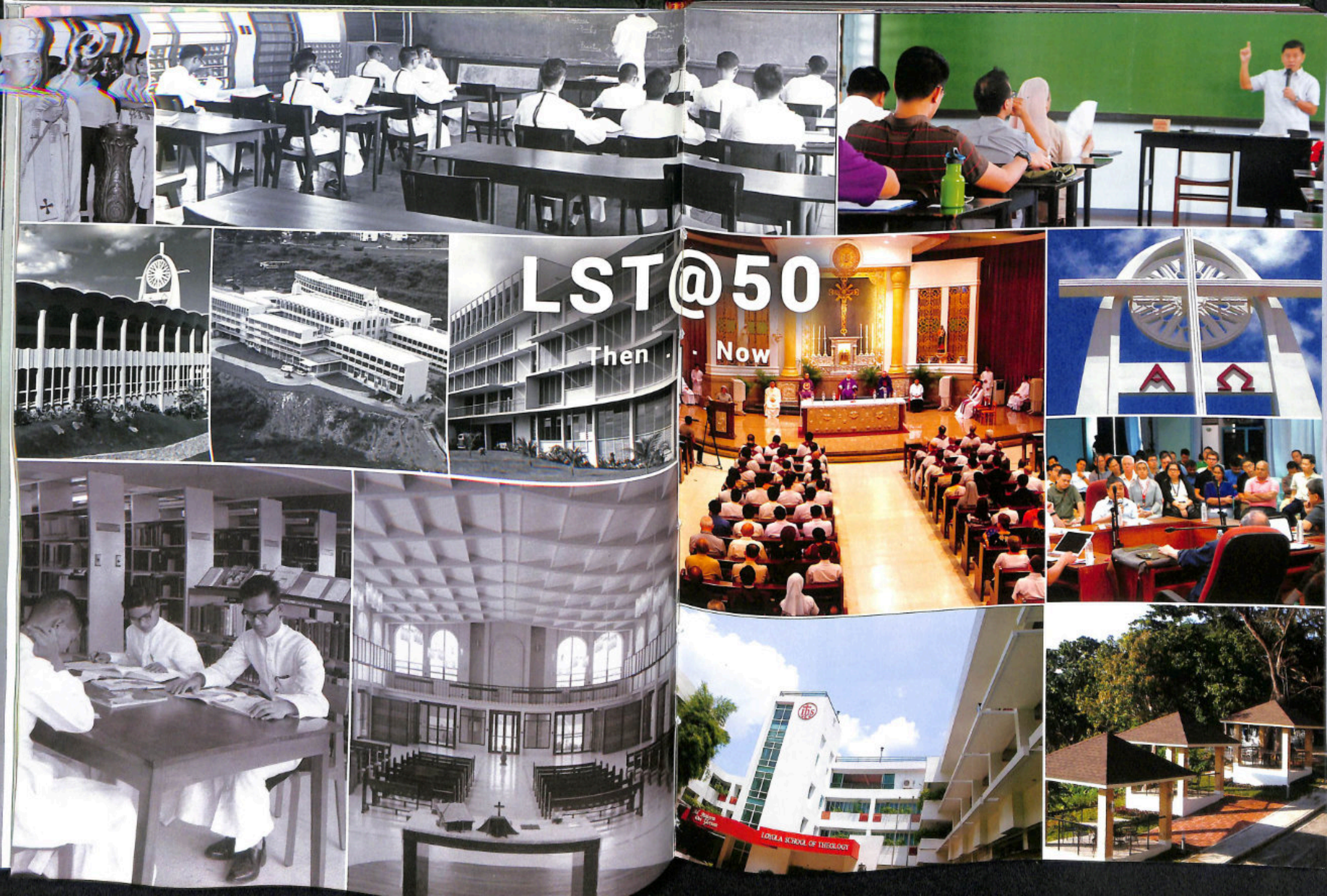
Put briefly and in Christian terms, wonder and innocence lead us toward love, through which one sees the essential that is invisible to the eye; this is, in fact, part of the Infinitely Essential God in which we and all others in our common home abide.

A Matter of Choice. It appears, therefore, that the wonderful insights brought us by a 20th century aviator and a 21st century pope—the former through a touching story while the latter through a call to action—bring us back to what was lost in the age of technology and what we need to recover: a sense of wonder and innocence toward our common home and whatever we encounter in our human lives. Both persons contrast two distinct and separate viewpoints; they show that one worldview that reduces reality leads to a rejection of life, while the other shows the way toward what is essential and is therefore life-affirming.

Ultimately, both of these great figures leave us "hanging"—but in a good way; they force us to choose for ourselves what kind of world we desire to have. At the end of *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis calls us "to come together to take charge of this home that has been entrusted to us," "to sing as we go" in praise of God (LS 244); this is achieved in and through our care for our common home; thus, we show our love for Him and the world He created. For Saint-Exupéry, one cannot forget the Flower that grew in the Little Prince's world, one which he wished he knew how to love in his younger years and hopes to see and be one with again. And, in the film, after having regained this sense of wonder and innocence, he comes back to his own planet and to his beloved flower, not coerced by outside forces, but by his own choice.

In the end, to be innocent and filled with wonder is a matter of our own choosing.

Earl A. P. Valdez is a second year theology student from the Archdiocese of Manila; he resides at San José Seminary.


LST@50
Then
Now
LOYOLA SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

LST PRESIDENTS THROUGH THE YEARS



FR. CATALINO
G. ARÉVALO, SJ
1965-1966



FR. JOHN
N. SCHUMACHER, SJ
1966-1967



FR. JOSEPH
A. GALDON, SJ
1967-1968



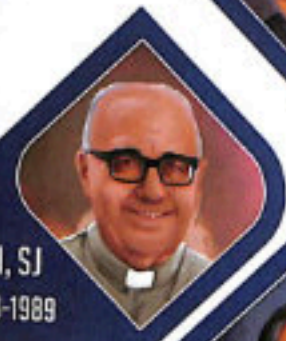
FR. CATALINO
G. ARÉVALO, SJ
1968-1971



FR. PEDRO
C. SEVILLA, SJ
1971-1977



FR. ANTONIO
B. LAMBINO, SJ
1977-1983



FR. PEDRO
S. DE ACHÚTEGUI, SJ
1983-1989



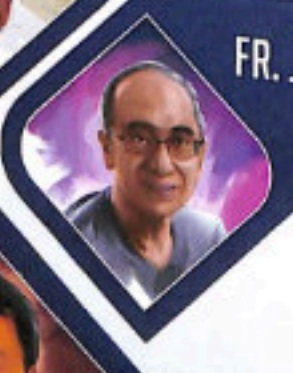
FR. PEDRO
C. SEVILLA, SJ
1989-1995



FR. JOEL
E. TABORA, SJ
1995-1999



FR. VICTOR
R. SALANGA, SJ
1999-2005



FR. JOSE MARIO
C. FRANCISCO, SJ
2005-2013



FR. JOSE
VC. QUILONGQUILONG, SJ
2013-PRESENT

SENTIRE CUM ECCLESIA
LST ALUMNI-BISHOPS



MOST REV. TEODORO BACANI, DD
BISHOP EMERITUS OF NOVALICHES



MOST REV. BENJAMIN DE JESUS, OMI, DD
VICAR APOSTOLIC OF JOLO



MOST REV. ANTONIO LEDESMA, SJ, DD
ARCHBISHOP OF CAGAYAN DE ORO



MOST REV. JESSE MERCADO, DD
BISHOP OF PARAÑAQUE



MOST REV. ANGELITO LAMPON, OMI, DD
VICAR APOSTOLIC OF JOLO



MOST REV. HONESTO ONGTIOCO, DD
BISHOP OF CUBAO



H.E. LUIS ANTONIO CARDINAL TAGLE, DD
ARCHBISHOP OF MANILA



MOST REV. PAUL TAN CHEE ING, SJ, DD
BISHOP OF MELAKA-JOHOR



MOST REV. MYLO HUBERT VERGARA, DD
BISHOP OF PASIG



MOST REV. GEORGE RIMANDO, DD
AUXILIARY BISHOP OF DAVAO



MOST REV. PABLO VIRGILIO DAVID, DD
BISHOP OF KALOOKAN



MOST REV. JOSE CABANTAN, DD
BISHOP OF MALAYBALAY



MOST REV. JOSE BANTOLO, DD
BISHOP OF MASBATE



MOST REV. NARCISO ABELLANA, MSC, DD
BISHOP OF ROMBLON



MOST REV. VICTOR OCAMPO, DD
BISHOP OF GUMACA

DAYS OF THE GIANTS

SOME LST FOUNDING FATHERS

FR. PEDRO S. DE ACHÚTEGUI, SJ
SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY

FR. CATALINO ARÉVALO, SJ
DEAN, FUNDAMENTAL AND DOGMATIC THEOLOGY

FR. PHILIP CALDERONE, SJ
HEBREW, INTRODUCTION IN SACRED SCRIPTURE

FR. ROQUE FERRIOLS, SJ
HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY

FR. RALPH GEHRING, SJ
LIBRARIAN

FR. THOMAS GREEN, SJ
COSMOLOGY

FR. GERALD HEALY, SJ
MORAL THEOLOGY

FR. EDUARDO HONTIVEROS, SJ
FUNDAMENTAL AND DOGMATIC THEOLOGY

FR. JOSEPH ROCHE, SJ
NATURAL THEOLOGY, HISTORY OF ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPY

FR. JOHN SCHUMACHER, SJ
CHURCH HISTORY, CHRISTIAN ARCHAEOLOGY

FR. JOSEPH SMITH, SJ
FUNDAMENTAL THEOLOGY

FR. SAMUEL WILEY, SJ
CANON LAW, MORAL THEOLOGY

LST ALUMNI-MARTYRS

IN A SPECIAL WAY, WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO HONOR SOME OF OUR "MARTYRED" BROTHERS, GRADUATES OF LST, WHO HAVE FALLEN "IN THE LINE OF DUTY."



FATHER NELSON JAVELLANA, OMI
WAS AMONG THE TWELVE PERSONS AMBUSHED BY UNIDENTIFIED MEN AT TAMBUNAN, DATU PIANG AT 6:30 P.M. ON NOVEMBER 3, 1971. THEY WERE RETURNING TO ESPERANZA FROM COTABATO CITY. THOSE WHO DID NOT DIE FROM BULLETS WERE HACKED TO DEATH.



AFTER DISEMBARKING FROM A TRI-SIKAD, COMING FROM A MEETING ON PEACE INITIATIVES, **BISHOP BENJAMIN DE JESUS, OMI** RECEIVED TEN BULLET WOUNDS AFTER HE WAS SHOT AT CLOSE RANGE WITH .45 CALIBRE PISTOLS IN FRONT OF JOLO CATHEDRAL AT ABOUT 9:30 A.M. ON FEBRUARY 4, 1997.



ON JANUARY 15, 2008, **FATHER JESUS REYNALDO RODA, OMI,** WAS PRAYING IN NOTRE DAME OF TABAWAN CHAPEL, WHEN AROUND TEN MEMBERS OF ABU SAYYAF GROUP BARGED IN AND TRIED TO KIDNAP HIM. LATER, FATHER RODA WAS SHOT DEAD AS THE GUNMEN EXCHANGED FIRE WITH POLICE WHO TRIED TO RESCUE HIM.

PIONEERS AMONG LST ALUMNAE

SR. MA. VICTORINA PALANCA, ICM
FIRST FILIPINA STUDENT OF LST (1969)

DR. MA. CHRISTINA ASTORGA
FIRST LAY FEMALE PHD GRADUATE OF LST (1992)

SR. MA. EDITHA LINTERNA, FI
FIRST FEMALE PHD GRADUATE OF LST (1979)

ANGELITA MAKALINAO
OLDEST TO GRADUATE FROM LST AT 75 (MA, 2006)

THE DATA ON LST FOUND IN THESE PAGES WAS SUPPLIED BY JESUIT SCHOLASTICS AMADO T. TUMBALI, JR. AND MARTIN A LICUP.



Authentic Theology Leads and Serves

The LST International Theological Symposium

Earl A. P. Valdez

The celebration of the Golden Anniversary of Loyola School of Theology is not just a time for remembering the meaningful past of the institution; it also provides a renewed perspective for the Church and Catholic theology in the Philippine context. As a way of steering the institution toward unexplored horizons and a fulfilment of its mission, an International Theological Symposium was held on March 9-10, 2016. This brief overview of the symposium covers the essentials of the two-day event; it provides a synthetic view of what transpired in those meaningful days.







Theology: A Guiding Light and Way of Life. Recognizing the efforts of LST in the past fifty years, *Giuseppe Cardinal Versaldi,* Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education, articulated the significance and meaning of Catholic theology as a way of leading and serving in the Church. For him, the task of Catholic theology, as the light of the world, is to primarily communicate Christ in societies and cultures of the modern world. He discussed this insight in the context of the search for truth in the West. He called on theologians in Asia to bear witness and proclaim the Gospel through various methods that suit Asian concerns and contexts.

The "leadership" role of theology cannot be separated from its faithfulness to the Magisterium. In fact, theology bears the role of interpreting, critiquing, and contextualizing the teachings of the Magisterium. The ultimate goal of this servant role is the full application and realization of these teachings within specific contexts and through distinct ways of living. In this way, theology both leads and serves the Church of Christ.

This contextualization in the Asian context was discussed by *Orlando Cardinal Quevedo, OMI, OD,* Archbishop of Cotabato. Quevedo presented the direction that the Church in Asia has been taking in terms of doing theology, as outlined in the documents of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC). Quevedo highlighted the fact that the Church in Asia sees that dialogue and proclamation go together. More precisely, the proclamation of the Gospel happens in and through dialogue. This dialogue, moreover, must be understood in the sense that Vatican Council II highlights it, namely that believers are in touch with concrete reality in their everyday lives.

What is encountered in the process of dialogue, Quevedo added, is the Asian face of Christ; this encounter transforms one's own way of living and thinking. This face is experienced in three aspects of Asian life, namely the diversity of cultures, the diversity of religions, and the various faces of people, especially the poor and marginalized. From this lively encounter between Christ and the believers experienced in daily life, one receives the Gospel. One then moves to proclaim Christ through words and actions. In reference to theology, one can validly speak of this daily encounter with Christ as the source and foundation of a dynamic exchange: between theological reflection and intercultural and interreligious dialogue as well as with socio-political involvement in particular Asian contexts.





Cardinal Quevedo, in the same line as Cardinal Versaldi, but with a more "Asian touch" concluded that the new evangelization for Asia is founded on a spirituality of communion, the fruit of dialogue. This spirituality is founded on one's unique encounter with Christ and the Asian peoples; every Christian in Asia is to be committed to strengthening this communion both in word and deed.

In summary, Cardinals Versaldi and Quevedo emphased that theology needs to go beyond conventional categories and traditional philosophical underpinnings; it must move into the very intricacies of the daily life of Christian believers and disciples. In this way, theology reaches its supposed goal: the comprehension of the mystery of God at work in the world. Only by moving in this direction, can theology, nourished by a faith that is lived in action as it seeks understanding, truly become light of the world and servant of the Church.

Testimonies of Christian Life. Following the addresses of Cardinals Versaldi and Quevedo, various personal testimonies highlighted how fruitful proclamation and evangelization are manifested in everyday life. Four persons who

represented three ways of living the Christian life, Father Catalino Arévalo, SJ, Sister Judette Gallares, RC, and Nelson and Cory Villafania, spoke of their real experience of dialogue and proclamation in their own contexts.

Father Arévalo spoke of certain figures in the history of LST (especially Bishop Benjamin de Jesus, OMI) who embodied the ideals of doing theology as emphasized by Vatican Council II. These people, for him, serve as icons which show how theological reflection provides a perspective and goal for action, an activity that makes theological reflection more real and transformative. Sister Gallares told the story of a fruitful religious life in her religious order. She said that the training of religious women, in which they are called to engage in critical theological discussion while living a way of life that emphasizes prayer and interiority, enables them to become effective evangelizers. Finally, Mr. and Mrs. Villafania shared how in their household, the Gospel is proclaimed in the encounter between children and parents in affairs both great and small.

Panel Discussions. On the second day of the symposium, two consecutive panel discussions were held. While these were more "academic" and focused on particular concentrations, namely Systematic Theology and Biblical Theology, the insights produced were no less real and engaging as those of the first day.

In the first panel discussion on Systematic Theology, the members reinforced the necessity of engaging in dialogue as an essential part of doing theology. Affirming the words of Cardinals Versaldi and Quevedo, the members of the panel emphasized within their own backgrounds and specialties the need for proclamation through dialogue. They affirmed that, as Anselm asserted, theology is indeed a response to the call to understand *what*, or more importantly, *who* one believes in. Thus, at the heart of this dialogue is a lively testimony of the Good News that is Christ, shown particularly in the way Christians think and act.

In the second panel discussion on Biblical Theology, the members affirmed the call to dialogue, uniquely emphasizing that this mode of proclamation is founded in Sacred Scripture. They also explored how reading and reflecting on Scripture become the first instance of dialogue and reflection, especially in Asian and Filipino contexts.

The discussions that followed the talks were not a mere postscript; they proved to be starting points for doing theology within contexts where dialogue serves as the means through which the Gospel is proclaimed. The challenge therefore is to determine how the Spirit is at work in different contexts and communities in which students of theology live. Inserted into this context one can determine other ways in which to effectively communicate Christ in meaningful ways.

Theology is Open-Ended. After two meaningful days of in-depth reflection, one may ask where this leads students of theology. Theological reflection, as a discipline, does not leave its practitioners "hanging." Its comprehensiveness draws one to something beyond the current state of affairs. Theology always beckons one to go beyond what can be explained, thus, to *do something*. More specifically, it calls all to actively proclaim and make known the identity and mission of Christ within local contexts and settings. Only in doing so, can theology effectively bring forth transformation in communities and societies, drawing all closer to Christ who lies at the heart of Christian theology.

Earl A. P. Valdez *is a second year theology student and a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Manila.*

Courage, the Heart of Theology

Luis Carmelo M. Julian





Living a life for the Gospel of Christ is far from easy. Everyone who commits to do so will inevitably find oneself entrenched in what the famous prayer calls the "valley of tears." What I found in common, however, in the testimonies of Father Arévalo, Sister Gallares, and Mr. and Mrs. Villafania was the *virtue of courage* in the face of this world's pains and challenges. They testified to the joy and worth of their vocation, even when faced with insurmountable odds—the death of a son, the slaying of a good priest-bishop, the struggles of consecrated life.

The testimonies at the LST theological symposium have compelled me to ask two striking questions of myself. First: *what* drives my theologizing? As a theologian at the university surrounded by books and class records, the temptation to be distant and insular from the concerns of real people is particularly strong. Theology, after all, is commonly not deemed to be a "practical science," reserved for priests-to-be and overzealous lay people who have the luxury of time to enter into centuries-old texts to label their philological nuances and what-not. But Vatican II, and more recently Pope Francis, has challenged the Church to go beyond a theology of the university, the monastery, or the convent, moving toward a theology of the marketplace.

What's in a marketplace? Certainly, one does not find the neat and pristine structures of the academic milieu. Instead, one finds the dirt and noise, the grit and toil of the human condition. Yet, we know that this is precisely where the Gospel must go. For me, it means that theologizing needs to be heart-driven rather than head-driven. Yes, being familiar with historical backgrounds and

doctrinal frameworks is useful, but if it is at the expense of the realities on the ground, then what real end does this knowledge of theology serve? More than ever the Church needs theologians with a pastoral heart.

For instance, I have seen in my experience of teaching at the university that I am constantly faced with young people who have become more averse to our Church's long-held traditions and doctrines. They simply dismiss them as archaic and out-of-step with the times. But, who could blame them if their only experience of the Word of God comes from lofty, uninspiring, and sour-faced ministers who simply "expect them to know" their prayers and dogmas? In the face of an increasing apathy towards the Church, perhaps responding apprehensively or violently to our youth's waning enthusiasm will do more harm than good. No one wants anything shoved down their throats. So, as far as preparing for a theology class is concerned, it's no longer just about getting your content right, but also asking how you can teach the Word in an attractive and engaging way. I found that this requires courage because that means *sharing your story*. The Word of God can only be engaging and effective for its listeners if they see that the one proclaiming it truly lives it.

My second question is: *who* drives my theologizing? Another temptation that we theologians are called to overcome is to turn our theologizing into a faceless enterprise. What that means is that we must constantly struggle to avoid limiting our theologizing only for self-oriented reasons like finishing a degree or getting ordained, important as those may be. But what happens after these accomplishments? Are our studies only geared towards our personal aspirations? This leads to a more fundamental question: Is Christ still at the heart of our theologizing? Think of a relationship. We know that in order for any relationship to flourish, there must indeed be a sincere effort to get to know the person we love. But, if we forget the person with whom we share this relationship, then we have preoccupied ourselves with nothing more than meaningless data gathering. In the same way, if we forget that theology is about deepening one's love for Christ, then our theologizing will be nothing more than an empty show. It's precisely the face of Christ that gives all of our studies unity.

Where do I find the face of Christ? I believe that it is first found in our prayer and sacramental life. I believe that a theologian without prayer and the sacraments is malnourished. All the facts and figures may be memorized and processed, but if there's no heart, there's also no depth. Perhaps there is a challenge for us contemporary theologians to imitate the Patristic Fathers who drove no sharp wedge between their theological reflection and their contemplative life. Their theology is deeply rooted in their own prayer. These days, it has become a courageous act to remain still and focused in prayer. This world continues to demand so much from each person that there seems to be no room for silence and contemplation. I would say, then, that being steadfast in prayer serves as a prophetic witness in a fast-paced, demanding world.

But the face of Christ is also found in the least, the last, and the lost. Knowing more about Christ must bring us to deeper *orthopraxis*, not just *orthodoxy*. With *orthopraxis* comes the capacity to empathize with the world. For example, a good grasp of the Gospel—where we find how Christ thinks, feels, and acts—must encourage us to imitate him in our own areas of mission. A disciple of Christ is one who truly feels that same zeal that Christ had for the Kingdom of God. With that in mind, there should be this courage to not just speak out against injustice, but to also act against it. In spite of what might come off as a militaristic clarion call, acting against injustice means something more humble, that is, participating in the missionary activity of the Church without wavering: feed the hungry without fanfare, work towards social reforms that will benefit our farmers and fisher-folk, listen to the stories of those whose voices are often ignored, etc. Our theology must bear fruit in the lives of the poor, the *anawim*—those closest to God's own heart.

In the end, I believe that the greatest need for theologians right now is courage. With the emerging challenges of our times comes the great evil spirit of lukewarmness. Ignatius of Loyola would describe missionary activity like a fire that needs to be spread to all the world (*ite, inflammate omnia*). Fire needs to be kept constantly burning especially in a world that is gradually getting darker. If we theologians keep this fire burning in our hearts, then perhaps like those who shared their testimonies at the theological symposium, we may also be able to live courageously and eventually share our own stories with others.

Luis Carmelo M. Julian *teaches theology at the Ateneo de Manila University and is pursuing his Masters degree at LST.*















THE ROAD TO "COMPRE" AND BACK

Anyone who has taken the comprehensive exams, the "compre," will agree that it's not an easy road to travel. It could get really bumpy, scary and draining. There's no hiding this truth. I remember what a sister told me years ago when we met at the library: "Oh, the compre review, it's so tiresome"! All I could do was to listen and encourage her: "Think of it this way. Look at the entire review as a time to encounter the Lord. Look forward to the encounter." Weeks later, I saw her again. "So how's everything going?" I asked. "It feels different now. Your encouragement really made a difference." Why did I say those words?

Allow me to make a confession. I returned to LST to continue my MA program with much hesitation. I enjoyed all the Spirituality courses I took years earlier, but I resisted just the mere thought of taking the dogmatic courses. When I took Revelation and Faith, I literally begged the Lord to help me, because I felt I was not cut out for dogmatic stuff. I studied really hard to make it. And I did! But more than that, something deeply personal changed my inner landscape. From then on, my prayer changed. I still prayed to pass, but also to encounter the Lord.

That desire, in itself a gift, led to many other graced moments. Given those deeply personal encounters, it seemed that the entire breadth and length of my theological formation was one long retreat. It was a privileged time with the Lord who spoke to my heart and walked with me to gather the fragments of my storied life into one meaningful whole.

This disposition did not take away the blues, though. There were days I couldn't wait until everything was over and done with.



I was exhausted and all I could think of was Christmas and the holidays, rest and fun. Each passing day tested my faith, stretched my patience and challenged my hope. But then I should say, there were days too, when I found myself gripped by a truth so tender, a love so overwhelming that I'd find myself washed over by a deep, abiding peace, by a renewing and refreshing stillness.

As I gazed at the breathtaking panorama of God's progressive self-communication in history, I felt both so small and so precious; so inconsequential, yet infinitely blessed with the gift of God's self. A gift, which it dawned on me, I could choose to accept or not. This thought so hit me that I wrote in my journal: "I tremble, Lord.... I tremble at the thought, even at the thought that it is within my power not to choose to share your dream. What power, what freedom you have given me ... to choose ... to craft my life."

If God's gracious offer of friendship proved to be a tender, heartfelt moment, my reawakening to the gratuitousness of faith was just as moving. Thanks to *CFC* 149 for mediating this humbling grace. Indeed, my faith depends on two things: God's free gift of revealing himself and the interior illumination of the Holy Spirit. What would my life be if God had not made himself known to humanity, to me? What sense could I make of it without the Spirit who keeps moving it forward? All my life, its sense and shape, its purpose and direction, its nourishment and sustenance, hang on that one constant truth: the sheer graciousness of God.

Thanks to the generations that came before me, that long line of people who had fought and stood for the faith, passed it on by their teaching and by their example, by their heroic lives of sacrifice and toil. So much of what I now understand about life, faith and God, I have come to receive through them.

"HOW LONG THE ROAD IS. BUT, FOR ALL THE TIME THE JOURNEY HAS ALREADY TAKEN, HOW YOU HAVE NEEDED EVERY SECOND OF IT IN ORDER TO LEARN WHAT THE ROAD PASSES BY."

DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD, *MARKINGS*

Gratitude welled over me as I studied the thesis statement on Soteriology. I could not help but recall how I gradually made sense of the Paschal Mystery of Christ through my own experience of pain and suffering, healing and restoration. This, I felt was the highest point of my review. Christ's love burst me open, I could not stop crying. Surely, Christ's Paschal Mystery was not just one of those theological truths one needs to study to pass the exam, but the single most important truth that brings meaning and healing to life.

During the oral comprehensives, one of my panelists asked me to explain salvation in ordinary words. I knew right away what to say. But what I didn't know was that I also brought along my tears, which brings me to ask: "Do you leave your heart behind in a dogmatic exam? Do you tell your tears not to show up?" I still think it's best to come as you are, with all of your heart and your entire story because the compre is also about that story.

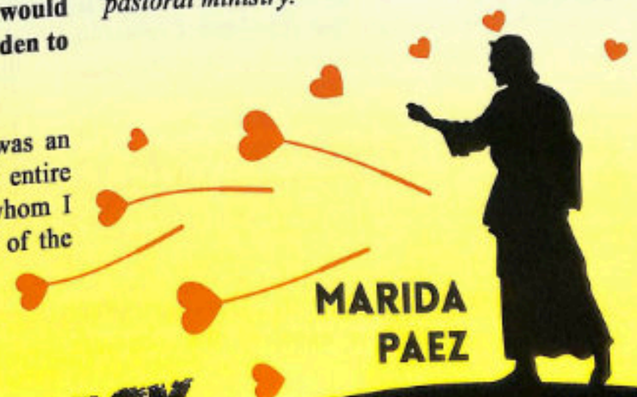
I realized that unless and until the story of Jesus touches on my personal story, the compre would only be that—an academic exercise and a burden to be done away with.

My entire compre journey, it turned out, was an "unwrapping" of that one precious gift of my entire life, the gift of God's self, the Gift before whom I stood in awe and endless gratitude at the end of the road and beyond.

Two of my batch mates shared what the road to the compre was like for them. For Hong Yan Liu, "The compre is a time of grace and gratitude. It is not merely a test, but a theological dialogue." Sister Bing Afable, ACI, speaks of how we take the heart along and how we speak from that deep place of knowing: "I noticed that whatever we say in the oral comps, it seems that it is our synthesis of what just remains in our hearts."

We each have our story of the road. There is really no denying that it could be one difficult road to travel. But there is as well, that constant reassurance that bids you: "Keep going. Do not be afraid. My grace is sufficient for you." How that grace has changed my view of dogmatic theology, of faith, of God and all of life. Indeed, "I needed every second of that long journey to learn what the road passes by."

***Marida Paez**, a Filipina lay woman from Bulacan, hopes to use her studies at LST in pastoral ministry.*



MARIDA PAEZ

SECOND PLENARY COUNCIL OF THE PHILIPPINES

Silver Anniversary Recollections

James H. Kroeger, MM

When Pope Benedict XVI received a group of Philippine bishops for their regular *ad limina* visit on November 29, 2010, the pope drew upon the vision of the "Second Plenary Council of the Philippines" (PCP-II) to encourage the local Church in its mission of evangelization. Indeed, today, twenty-five years after this significant 1991 milestone, PCP-II remains a key anchor for the mission of the local Church; it continues to have significant impact on theology, mission, pastoral practice, and spirituality—all fostering a Spirit-inspired pilgrimage.

Brief Overview of PCP-II. After three years of preparation, PCP-II convened from January 20 until February 17, 1991. Its avowed themes were Church renewal and evangelization. The 489 delegates included: 94 bishops, 225 priests, 12 sisters, 2 brothers, and 156 laity. The primary source for PCP-II documents are the official texts found in *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines.*

The closing message of PCP-II, read at the final Eucharist by Archbishop Leonardo Z. Legaspi, OP, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, reflected on the identity and mission of the local Church. He noted: "As we approach the year 2000, Christ bids this community—ourselves, the laity, religious and clergy of the Catholic Church in the Philippines—to be a Church of the Poor.... The Council's thrust is toward a New Evangelization, based not on human expectations and wisdom, but on the preaching of Christ Crucified to today's Filipinos and Asians."

Methodology of PCP-II. The assembled delegates began by examining the concrete situation attaining in the Philippines. This meant taking the idea of the contextualization of the Gospel very seriously. Thus, the Gospel that the Church seeks to announce will be linked into concrete reality, not just some abstract principles. In this way the Church attempts to be a leaven that transforms the hearts of individuals and communities as well as the concrete historical situation of the Catholic faith and the country.

Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, OMI, carefully delineated the approach employed by PCP-II: "The methodology followed by the Council is called the *Pastoral Spiral* ... [which] begins with a comprehensive, holistic analysis of the situation (including cultural analysis), proceeds with faith-reflection on the situation in the light of the Scriptures and teachings of the Church, and finally goes into decision-making, planning, implementation, and evaluation."

Major Pastoral Challenges. The situational analysis done by PCP-II surfaced four major pastoral challenges. The first challenge focused on the *economic* sphere of life, which includes poverty, under-development, social injustice, and the gap between rich and poor. Secondly, the *political* order reflects the lack of political power among the poor and results in the lack of a truly representative democracy; this reality is a direct challenge to Catholic Christians. In the *cultural* sphere one finds cultural values that are ambivalent, containing positive aspects, but yet often dominated by negative dimensions; these cultural factors often reinforce negative aspects of economic and political life. Fourthly, there are challenges posed by *religious* beliefs and practices; these factors have often resulted in the so-called "split-level Christianity."

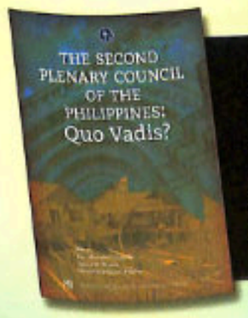
Renewed Vision of Missionary Evangelization. Flowing from these four concrete pastoral challenges, PCP-II sought to enunciate a renewed pastoral-missionary vision for the local Church; communal discernment resulted in the conviction that the Gospel needed to be announced in a new way. The final document treats this new paradigm of *evangelization* in three interrelated sections: (a) "Envisioning a Church Renewed"; (b) "Renewed Integral Evangelization"; and, (c) "The Community of Disciples: Workers of Renewal." The CBCP issued in 1993 a National Pastoral Plan, entitled "In the State of Mission," in order to facilitate the implementation of the PCP-II Acts and Decrees.

Conclusion. Having presented a very succinct panorama of central themes found in the PCP-II materials, one can most validly make this assertion: the Vatican II era has been a rich experience of the continuous outpourings of the Holy Spirit upon the Church and her mission of renewed integral evangelization. For these abundant gifts, the Church in the Philippines is most grateful. This gratitude is best expressed through a renewed fervor and commitment to evangelization. What has been received as a gift is to be given as a gift (cf. Mt 10:8).

It is the firm conviction of this author that the more one explores Vatican II and PCP-II, the more one is convinced of the deep action of the Holy Spirit in and through these events. Blessed Paul VI, reflecting on the Council, once said: "The first need of the Church is to always live Pentecost." Indeed, Saint John XXIII envisioned Vatican II to be a "new Pentecost." Today, in the Philippines, one sees how implementing PCP-II will foster a continuing "Philippine Pentecost." *Veni, Sancte Spiritus.*

James H. Kroeger, MM, *has taught at LST since 1987. His most recent books include: Asia's Dynamic Local Churches: Serving Dialogue and Mission, Becoming Missionary Disciples, Walking in the Light of Faith, Gift of Mission,* and *Exploring the Treasures of Vatican II.*

For these abundant gifts, the Church in the Philippines is most grateful. This gratitude is best expressed through a renewed fervor and commitment to evangelization. What has been received as a gift is to be given as a gift (cf. Mt 10:8).



The recently released book (2015), *The Second Plenary Council of the Philippines: Quo Vadis?*, edited by Eric Genilo, Agnes Brazal, and Daniel Pilario, is an anthology of essays written by bishops and theologians which emerged from a 2011 nationwide conference on PCP-II. Three essays by current LST professors are included: "Parallel Paradigms of Evangelization: FABC and PCP-II" by James H. Kroeger (133-155), "Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP-II): Compendium of Resources" by James H. Kroeger (156-168), and "Epilogue: The Church of PCP-II after the RH Bill Debate" by Eric Marcelo C. Genilo (169-189). The book is published by Ateneo de Manila University Press.

IEC 2016: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Sherwin Santos, SJ



The 51st International Eucharistic Congress (IEC) was held in Cebu City, Philippines on January 24-31, 2016. This was the second time that the Philippines hosted the IEC; the first time was in Manila on February 3-7, 1937.

A pre-congress three-day Theological Symposium was held at the Cebu Doctors University on January 20-22, 2016; it featured celebrated international speakers, who spoke on the Eucharist in relation to various topics. The most anticipated among these was Father Timothy Radcliff, OP, who discussed the *Christian Virtue of Hope*. Other speakers included Father Francis Maloney, SDB (*Eucharist in the Gospel of John*), Father Mark Francis, CSV (*Liturgy and Inculturation*), Bishop Fiero Marini, DD (*A History of the Novus Ordo*), Father Thomas Rosica, CSB (*Evangelizing a Secular World*), and, the only female speaker, Miss Josephina Manabat (*A Catechisis on the Sunday Eucharist*). The morning sessions began with morning prayer and concluded with the celebration of Mass.

In the afternoons of the Theological Symposium, participants chose from seven concurrent workshops with the following topics: Eucharist: Source and Goal of the Church's Mission; Eucharist and Mission in Asia; Eucharist and Dialogue with Cultures; Eucharist and Dialogue with Religions and Religious Traditions; Eucharist and the Poor and Marginalized; Eucharist and the Youth; and, Eucharist and Mary.

The International Eucharistic Congress proper began on January 24 with an opening Mass at Plaza Independencia. The Papal Legate, His Eminence Charles Maung Cardinal Bo of Myanmar, led the celebration. In his homily, he lauded the Filipino's faith, oftentimes shifting to Tagalog and Visayan, which delighted the local participants.

A new pavilion was constructed at the grounds of San Carlos Seminary for the venue of the Congress proper. A strong 15,000 participants from all over the world attended (70 countries were represented). From January 25-30, the morning sessions began with the chanting of morning prayer; various religious orders and congregations led the community singing. Various sessions of catechesis followed.

On the first day, Bishop Miguel Cabrejos Vidarte, OFM expounded on the verse in Colossians 1:27, where the theme for the 51st IEC originated: *Christ in You, our Hope of Glory*. Bishop Robert Barron spoke on the Eucharist as a Celebration of the Paschal Mystery. Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle spoke on the Eucharist and the Dialogue with Cultures. Cardinal Dolan presented the topic of the Eucharist and Mary. Bishop Thomas Menamparampil, SDB and Cardinal John Onaiyekan spoke on Eucharist and Mission, and Eucharist as Dialogue with the Poor and Suffering, respectively.



Testimonies from various speakers followed the catechesis. Cardinal Joseph Zen shared his experience in China. Miss Marianne Servaas spoke of her conversion to the Catholic Church. Paul Ponce and his family, professional jugglers, received a standing ovation after he performed for the audience and related the centrality of the Eucharist in the life of his family. Mr. Kei-ichi Sugawara spoke of the rebuilding of their church and community after the *tsunami* in Japan. Ms. Sarindhom Mativachranon from Thailand shared her experience of drawing consolation from the Eucharist at the time when she was falsely accused.

The morning sessions always closed with the celebration of the Eucharist; Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales was the main celebrant on January 26. The participants would then go for a hurried lunch, since the afternoon sessions were packed with activities. During the second and third day, the participants chose from different topics and resource persons. Some speakers were: Father Timothy Radcliffe, Father Francis Maloney, Miss Josefina Manabat, Father Paul Vu Chi Hy, Ambassador Tamara Grdzeldize, Cardinal Orlando Quevedo, Father Luciano Ariel Felloni, and Monsignor Diego Monroy Ponce.

On the fourth day, the participants signed up for "parish encounters" where they were ferried to different parishes around the city for faith sharing and cultural presentations. A penitential service, led by Archbishop Socrates Villegas, was conducted on the fifth day. It was followed by *Visita Iglesia*; seven churches around the city center participated. Concurrently, teenagers and young professionals attended overnight vigils and activities for the Youth Day, where Bishop Barron and the Ponce family were invited to give their testimonies.

The Holy Eucharist was celebrated at the Capitol Building on the sixth day; a solemn procession followed. More than a million people participated in the two-kilometer-long procession to Plaza Independencia. The following day, Cardinal Ricardo Vidal led the Holy Eucharist with 5,000 children receiving their first communion. Incidentally, Cardinal Vidal was among the children who received their first communion during the 1937 Eucharistic Congress in Manila.

Other activities were offered, including a series of talks focusing on how to evangelize the deaf and mute, visits to museums, watching a musical play, dance performances, concerts and the like.

The closing mass on January 31 was led by Cardinal Bo with more than two million in attendance.

Sherwin Santos, SJ, *from Pampanga is currently in theological studies at Loyola School of Theology.*

Serving in the Spirit of Vatican II

LST AT IEC

Firmo "Jun-Gee" Bargayo, Jr., SJ



The Loyola School of Theology (LST) was founded in the same year (1965) that Vatican II concluded. The said institution seeks to continuously contribute to the building up of the Church, not only in the Philippines, but also in Asia and the world. Some of LST's contributions were seen during the 51st International Eucharistic Congress (IEC) held in January 2016 in Cebu City.

It was a privilege for LST to be of service in preparation for the congress, during the IEC Theological Symposium (January 20-22), and in the IEC proper (January 24-31). Three current LST persons (Fathers Arévalo, Kroeger, and Quilongquilong) served on the Theological Commission that helped draft the "Basic Text"; the primary drafter was Father Catalino Arévalo, SJ, a former president of the school. Father Jose Quilongquilong, SJ, the present LST president, was part of the steering committee of the event; he was also active on the promotion, media and communications team. Father Timoteo Ofrasio, SJ, composed the IEC prayer.

Several "LST persons" played various roles during the IEC Theological Symposium. Father James Kroeger, MM, was a reactor to the talk "Evangelizing a Secular World"; in addition, he facilitated the concurrent session on "The Eucharist in the Church's Dialogue with Religions and Religious Traditions." Sister Maria Anicia Co, RVM, responded to the talk "He loved them to the end (Jn 13:1): Eucharist in the Gospel of John" and facilitated the concurrent session on "Mary and the Eucharist in the Contemporary Mission of the Church." Father Jose Quilongquilong, SJ, was one of the reactors to the talk on "A Catechesis on the Sunday Eucharist"; he also facilitated one of the afternoon concurrent sessions on "The Eucharist and Mission in Asia: Integrating Dialogue and Proclamation."

During the IEC Congress proper, His Eminence Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, DD, a professor and an alumnus, delivered a powerful catechesis on "The Eucharist and the Dialogue with Cultures." The Jesuit scholastics served as the choir for some morning prayers during the congress.

Other professors and alumni/alumnae of the school had various roles in the symposium and congress. Bishop





Paulo Virgilio David, DD, presided at one of the masses. Bishop Angelito Lampon, OMI, DD, was a speaker during the concurrent session on the Eucharist and Interfaith Dialogue. Bishop Antonio Ledesma, SJ, DD, presided at one of the masses and read the catechesis of His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias on "The Eucharist in the Church's Dialogue with Religions." Dr. Josefina Manabat was speaker for "A Catechesis on the Sunday Eucharist" and "The Eucharist: Cup of Sacrifice, Banquet of the Kingdom." Father Luciano Ariel Felloni spoke on "Washing the Feet of the Poor: The Eucharist and the Priesthood."

Those mentioned above were bishops, priests, religious and lay. This shows the impact of LST in the Church today. LST has served the Church by producing leaders who not only do pastoral care in dioceses, communities and schools, but also do theological inquiries that promote dialogue with the other beliefs, the youth and the poor.





One of LST's thrusts is to support the Church wherever and however it can serve. We saw LST's presence not only on the stage but also through the people who were working behind the scenes. There were a large number of LST graduates and students who were part of the logistical team, media and social network communications, etc. Sincere apologies are extended to any LST persons whose names may have inadvertently been overlooked. Finally, many who came as participants were LST graduates and students as well.

Faithful to the spirit of Vatican II, LST has proven during the IEC that it was born out of the desire to be of service to the Church, the people of God.

Firmo N. "Jun-Gee" Bargayo, Jr., SJ, *is a Jesuit scholastic pursuing his theological studies at Loyola School of Theology.*

1937 INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS

Personal Recollections and Reflections

Catalino G. Arévalo, SJ



The thirty-third International Eucharistic Congress was, without doubt, the greatest single event—an international one!—that had ever been held in Manila up to that time, so everyone believed. There had been much excited anticipation. Regional and provincial congresses had been held throughout the country in the preceding months; in addition, preparatory assemblies unfolded in Manila in parishes and schools by diverse Catholic organizations. The 1937 IEC had a six-day schedule: Monday to Sunday. The really major events were held at the Luneta. The numbers of participants were "controlled"; it was estimated (if I remember rightly) that about half a million were at the Luneta celebrations.

Jesuit preachers and other speakers at the Luneta, and in several smaller language-groups, included the then-renowned Londoner Father Cyril C. Martindale SJ; also present were our Ateneo Rector, Father Henry C. Avery, SJ (relative of the later Cardinal Avery Dulles), Father Joseph Mulry, SJ, and Father Isaias Edralin, SJ.

Young people, even as an eleven-year old (as much as we could be "excited in anticipation"), looked forward to the Congress. I was in seventh grade at the Ateneo de Manila Grade School (AGS), Padre Faura. In the preceding months, we were informed and prepped for the Congress. At the Ateneo, Father Joseph Mulry was a member of the "think tank" of the Executive Committee (he made sure "social justice" was touched on in the

> *"The 33rd International Eucharistic Congress was, without doubt, the greatest single event that had ever been held in Manila up to that time, so everyone believed."*



addresses). We learned the Congress hymn in Spanish and sang it countless times. I just recalled (from past news reporting) that the theme of that IEC was (YES!): ***"The Eucharist and the Missions"!***

Incidentally, Jesuit scholastic Fenton Fitzpatrick, whose father was a papal knight, came as part of the "personal entourage" of His Eminence, Denis Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia, Papal Legate. Fenton was made a "monsignor" during time of the Congress and sometimes assisted the Papal Legate. "*Msgr.* Fenton" was garbed in purple robes when he did this. At the *carroza* of the final grand procession (February 7), the float bearing the Eucharist in the "grand monstrance," he was one of those assigned to kneel behind Cardinal Dougherty; the procession (which was held only within the Luneta) took about an hour, from 8:30 p.m. onwards; the organizers wanted to highlight the lights and the candles, especially, "conquering the darkness" of night.

A group of us from the AGS (not all could join; schools were given limited numbers of participants) went together for the 7:30 a.m. *Children's Day* "Low" Mass at the Luneta, "primarily to receive communion." Bishop Silvestre Sancho of Vigan was "the celebrant"; Bishop Francis X. Ford, a Maryknoll Missioner, Vicar Apostolic of Kaying, Kwantung, China, preached the sermon. He earnestly asked the children present to pledge to be "true, valiant soldiers of Christ, ever bravely loyal to Him and His Kingdom; genuinely ready to die in fidelity to Him: Jesus who loved them unto the end."

Bishop Ford pointed to the urgent need of priests for mission, above all: "the Philippines with over 10 million Catholics had less than 8,000 priests. For Asia, for China, first of all, at least 14 thousand priests were urgently needed, even right now!" [I found a brief account of his sermon in the April 1937 issue, *Boletin Eclesiastico de Filipinas*.]

As the Mass was ending, the children and their parents were solemnly consecrated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Yes, I do remember that morning, not very vividly now. But I think we received much grace from the Lord of the Eucharist, and maybe the grace of vocation was granted or confirmed for a good number of us.

I witnessed the early part of the final procession (children were not joined to the Luneta crowd itself that night); we young people mostly went back home even before the procession ended. I know the glorious final events, never before experienced here, "emotionally" and "faith-wise," overwhelmed the people there. What I saw of the *carroza* and the "grand monstrance" was what has lasted in my mind, really, until the present. And, yes, the memorable official hymn of the Congress has remained in my memory all my life long, with its words: "*Pueblo amante de Maria*"— "people who love and cherish Mary, within your hills lie golden treasure, but your truest treasure is the Cross, your Faith!"

Catalino G. Arévalo, SJ, *is Professor Emeritus of the Loyola School of Theology.*

Eucharist: A Special Gift

Edgar Joseph Miranda



The recent International Eucharistic Congress and the opportunity to attend it was truly a graced experience. I was able to take much from it; my faith was refreshed, being surrounded by a large number of Catholic faithful. Perhaps most important, and fittingly so, is my renewed love for the Eucharist. As a seminarian, I have to admit, the Mass being available to me daily has led me, to some extent, to take it for granted. I have become so used to having the Eucharist as part of my life, my daily schedule, that I have been less able to see, feel, and appreciate its true worth. It has become seemingly commonplace; I have failed to notice how I have started to lose reverence and proper awe of it.

Listening to the testimonies of Catholic faithful belonging to different backgrounds, some priests, some religious, and others laity, as they shared their experience of being minorities in their home countries and how upholding and living their faith can be such a great struggle, reminded me to be grateful for my privileged situation. Here, Cardinal Tagle's words on how to counter the "throw-away culture" prevalent in the world with a "culture of gift" became important for me.

In the course of the IEC, I was made to remember how the Eucharist is a gift, a gift wherein we remember and actually receive the best gift we can ever receive, the gift of Jesus: His gift of self, offered for our redemption and salvation. To see the hunger of the faithful who participated in the Holy Eucharist during the IEC, most especially the non-delegates, rekindled in my heart an appreciation of the Eucharist as gift. And to see it as gift, to hold it in my heart for the grace that is, is to no



> *"I am finally able to enter again into the mystery of the Eucharist; I do this with a humble and grateful heart, willing to receive Christ and welcome Him in His rightful place in my life."*

longer relegate it to being merely commonplace, nor easily set aside or thrown away. Realizing that in the Eucharist I receive all that I truly need, God himself, in and through Jesus Christ, without cost and despite my unworthiness, I am finally able to enter again into the mystery of the Eucharist; I do this with a humble and grateful heart, willing to receive Christ and welcome Him in His rightful place in my life.

One reminder that has stayed with me from the IEC is God's preferential love for the poor and how the Eucharist should be more so for the poor. When I speak of the poor, this is not so much the materially poor, but also those who are spiritually poor. As a would-be priest, I realize that special care must be exerted so the poor may be welcomed and included in the Eucharist; this entails addressing concerns which may hinder them from approaching the Holy Mass. Much can be said about this, but even more needs to be done. What I do know though, is that with my renewed love for the Eucharist, I am reminded greatly of God's immense love for us, a love which led Him to send His Son to be with us, to become human, and to offer His life for our sake, to allow us a chance at eternity in His loving embrace. This love is meant to be shared with all, especially with the "least" of our brethren. Sharing and inviting others to the Eucharist, is a good, rather, the best place to start.

Edgar Joseph Miranda *from the Diocese of Parañaque completed his studies at Loyola School of Theology while residing at San José Seminary.*

Hoping in the Desert

Roberto Oliveros Jr.



A year ago, my father passed away from cancer. His death was my own experience of the desert: I felt like I was lost in a barren land, full of uncertainties, pains, struggles, hunger and darkness. The 51st International Eucharistic Congress left a mark of consolation in my heart when I was reminded once again that in our darkest experiences of life, we can learn so much about hope. In my own experience of the desert, there was only one thing that I hoped for: the healing of my father. Of course, I would have wanted him to stay and be present at my ordination. Things will never end that way anymore. I lost him. I lost a dream.

Since then, I have wallowed in pain and frustration, because I thought "hope" meant that everything will be solved, answered, that everything will be fine. I was wrong. Father Timothy Radcliffe's talk taught me a deeper understanding of hope. He said that hope "is the conviction that all things will make sense, regardless of how things turn out." Hope does not mean the absence of pain, darkness or uncertainties in life; rather, it is the strong confidence that everything will find meaning. Hope asks us to remain, to stay and to abide.

Hope also invites us to look at Jesus in the Eucharist. Hope leads us to remember that very moment when Jesus gathered his disciples the night before His crucifixion.



> *"He assures us and gathers us again in his love, telling us "I am here and I will be your hope."*

We remember that it was also a dark night. It was a night of disintegration, a night of betrayal, a night of denial, a night of fear and running away; there seemed to be no hope, but all loneliness, fear, suffering and death.

And yet, in this darkest hour, Jesus performed a great gesture of hope: he remained; he stayed. For sure, his friends might not have been able to understand what was going on around them, but Jesus was there, assuring and comforting them with His presence. Jesus did not only remain but also offered His Body and Blood, telling them: "This is my body, given for you. This is my blood, poured out for you."

Everytime we go to Mass, bringing all our worries, problems, fears and the like, Jesus does the same thing. He assures us and gathers us again in his love, telling us "I am here and I will be your hope."

Now, I still feel that pain of my past, but I am more confident in facing the future. Hope did not bring back my father, but Hope made me realize that when he died, I was never alone. Jesus remained with me in the desert. Hope in the present is to believe in Jesus who makes us confident that everything will make sense in the future.

Roberto Oliveros, Jr., *a fourth year diocesan seminarian living at San José Seminary, is from the Diocese of Bayombong, Nueva Viscaya.*

Sacrament of Love and Life

Regin Lagante Tenorio



Excited and full of hope, we went to the IEC Pavilion for the opening of the congress. While walking, I saw a man beside the street, cooking food for his breakfast. He had difficulty setting up the fire, using pieces of wood he found from the trash nearby. He looked dull; I noticed "hunger" on his face, not only physically, but also having the need to be recognized and given attention, hoping to have some "luck" coming from the many people who were passing him. Unfortunately, I was one of them; the scene was just a few meters away from the "gathering" of delegates who would dialogue, heart-to-heart, about the true meaning of the Eucharist.

Yes, it was an overwhelming experience to encounter different peoples and cultures during the 2016 IEC. It was indeed an encounter of "communion; a convocation" (Tagle). But, the experience also invites and challenges me into mission which requires sacrifice (to suffer with the other, with the beloved); "to bring the Eucharist, as the Sacrament of Love and Life, down to the streets" (Rosales); to meet and encounter Christ who hosts a meal for us (Tagle) with the person of the "surprising other." Only then I will truly understand these "others" if I become sensitive to them and to others in the Lord's banquet. And, only by "fully, actively, and consciously" living this Incarnation of God's love and mercy in my heart will I meet and encounter the "poor" on the streets of life; there I will find the many faces of God manifested.



> *"Now, after the congress "gathering," it is time for me to fully appropriate it by serving people whom I am constantly choosing and giving my life with in service."*

Cardinal Onaiyekan said: "Discrimination is the exact opposite of what communion is all about." His words directly hit and challenged me. The celebration of the Eucharist is a communal gathering of thanksgiving. It is not only a "one hour" event. It is an encounter which invites us to celebrate the "effect" of it for the rest of the hours of the day in mission and service of the Church. The effect of the Eucharist must be loving and living.

Now, after the congress "gathering," it is time for me to fully appropriate it by serving people whom I am constantly choosing and giving my life with in service. As I conclude my seminary formation, I turn back to the Eucharist; it is precious gift to be shared and not to be kept only within the confines of the Church and rectory.

Regin Lagante Tenorio *is a fourth-year seminarian from the Diocese of Balanga; he resides at San José Seminary.*

Eucharist as Convocation

Eric Legada



The Eucharist brings us into deep aspects of our Christian life. It allows us to see the connection between who we are and what we believe. It is not simply an opportunity for renewal, but, at the same time, an important event of coming together. Eucharist is an avenue for a deeper encounter with God, with ourselves and with one another. It gives us an opprotunity for a Christian convocation, of dialoguing with one another, of listening and moving towards a unified humanity. Eucharist is a convocation, a calling together as one family in a meal prepared for us by Jesus, a meal of solidarity, fraternity and unity.

This brings me to point out how the talk of Cardinal Tagle during the IEC on the theme, "The Eucharist and the Dialogue with Cultures," inspired me to look deeply into how the Eucharist touches the deepest core of our Christian life and how it brings us forward towards a meaningful convocation and dialogue. For me, the idea of the Eucharist as a meal is a simple analogy of what it is to be called a family; yet, it introduces me to a greater avenue of coming together.

Coming together in this Eucharistic meal transcends all cultures. With this sharing of the Eucharistic meal, we come together, confess our one faith, and thus, leave behind anything that divides us; we bring to the fore our contrbution toward Christian unity and recognize our oneness as children of God. In this dialogue, we bring with us our natural feelings, our way of

> "Coming together in this Eucharistic meal transcends all cultures."



thinking and acting, not to discriminate, but rather, to contribute to this oneness. This is for me the essence of the convocation brought about by our sharing in this important meal of the Lord, bringing us closer with joy, mercy and compassion towards one another.

Lastly, this idea of convocation allows me to see the importance of the Eucharist in our idea of engaging others and building bridges towards unity. It is an encouragement for me to continue to hope and feel the grace of God that continuously works to bring people together in His embrace. I believe this is the way God shows His mercy and compassion to one and all. As we come together as one family, we recognize each others' uniqueness more than various differences. We transcend and move beyond the idea of inequality, letting go of biases, and enjoying the meal of oneness as a family.

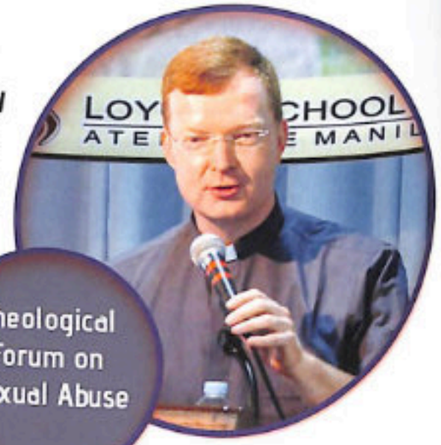
Eric Legada, *from the Diocese of San Jose de Antique, is a fourth year Josefino seminarian.*



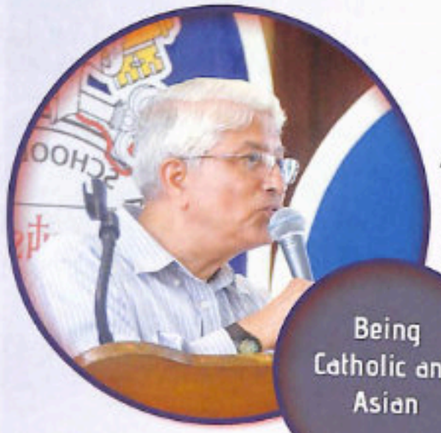
Fourth-year *Josefino* seminarians: Legada, Miranda, Oliveros, and Tenerio

LST Theological Hours

"The Church and the Contemporary Challenge of Sexual Abuse: Analysis and Prospects" was the title of the LST forum held on August 28, 2015. Father Hans Zollner, SJ, was the resource person. He is a member of the Pontifical Commission of the Holy See for the Protection of Minors. He is also the Academic Vice President, Professor, and Chairperson of the Institute of Psychology of the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome and President of the Centre for Child Protection of the same Institute.



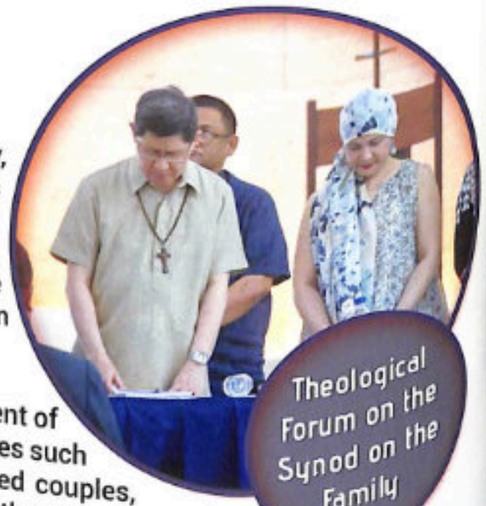
Theological Forum on Sexual Abuse



Being Catholic and Asian

Sponsored by LST, a theological hour entitled ***"Catholic and Asian: Perspectives from India"*** was held at the Oratory of Saint Ignatius of Loyola on October 21, 2015. Father Thomas Kaiprambat Kuriacose, SJ, was the speaker. He is from the Delhi Province of the Society of Jesus and is a Permanent Resident Teaching Staff member in the Faculty of Theology at Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth in Pune, India.

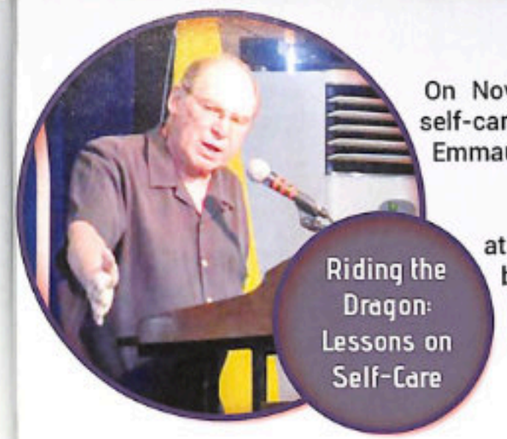
The East Asian Pastoral Institute, Loyola School of Theology, and Theology Department of the Ateneo School of Humanities held a ***"Special Theological Forum on the Synod on the Family"*** with His Eminence Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle, Archbishop of Manila and Delegate President of the Synod on the Family, as the keynote speaker. The November 11, 2015 forum was held at the Church of the Gesú and was open to the public.



Theological Forum on the Synod on the Family

Cardinal Tagle spoke about the key points of the final document of the Synod on the Family. The said Synod touched on varied themes such as migration, poverty, domestic violence, divorced and remarried couples, violence against women and children. The Cardinal noted that the Synod was about the pastoral care of families and presented significant dialogues on the above-mentioned themes.

There followed four responses by persons from several Jesuit departments and institutions. The respondents were: Mariles Borja of the Department of Theology; Jayeel Cornelio of the Development Studies Program; Mary Yunja of the East Asian Pastoral Institute; and, James Gascon, SJ, of Center for Family Ministries.



Riding the Dragon: Lessons on Self-Care

On November 11, 2015 Dr. Robert Wicks shared his thoughts on self-care. The said program was sponsored in partnership with the Emmaus Center of Spirituality.

Dr. Wicks is a Professor in the Pastoral Counseling Department at the Loyola University in Baltimore, Maryland. He has authored a book with the title, *Riding the Dragon: Ten Lessons for Inner Strength in Challenging Times.*



The EDSA Revolution: Thirtieth Anniversary

On March 2, 2016, LST sponsored the presentation: ***"The Faith of the Filipino People and the Peace Revolution: 30 Years after EDSA."*** Archbishop Socrates Villegas, DD, Archbishop of Lingayen-Dagupan was the featured speaker.

"It [EDSA] changed my understanding of humanity," said "Father Soc," as he prefers to be called, a point he made as he started to share his experiences and reflections on the EDSA revolution. He added that the revolution and what preceded it showed him that human beings can be so base, can be so greedy. Yet, the same revolution showed him that human beings can be so compassionate—even with those who have wounded them. "It helped me to understand human sin and human greatness," he emphasized.

In response to a comment raised by a student from LST, Father Soc urged those who were present to write—to put to paper their thoughts on the EDSA revolution. Father Catalino Arévalo, SJ, spoke towards the end of the forum and gave the same challenge to Father Soc, noting that he alone knows so much about what happened, especially because he worked so very closely with Cardinal Sin.



Intercultural Bridges: Participating in Dialogue

On April 13, 2016, General Natalio C. Ecarma III shared his experiences of dialogue with the people he had been able to serve especially in Patikul, Sulu in a forum entitled, ***"Intercultural Bridges: Participating in Dialogue."*** He shared how he integrated the values of the Gospel in his dialogue with other peoples and cultures.

In dialoguing with others he suggested three attitudes that any participant in dialogue should have: *Sincerity, Humility,* and *Empathy.*


ihs