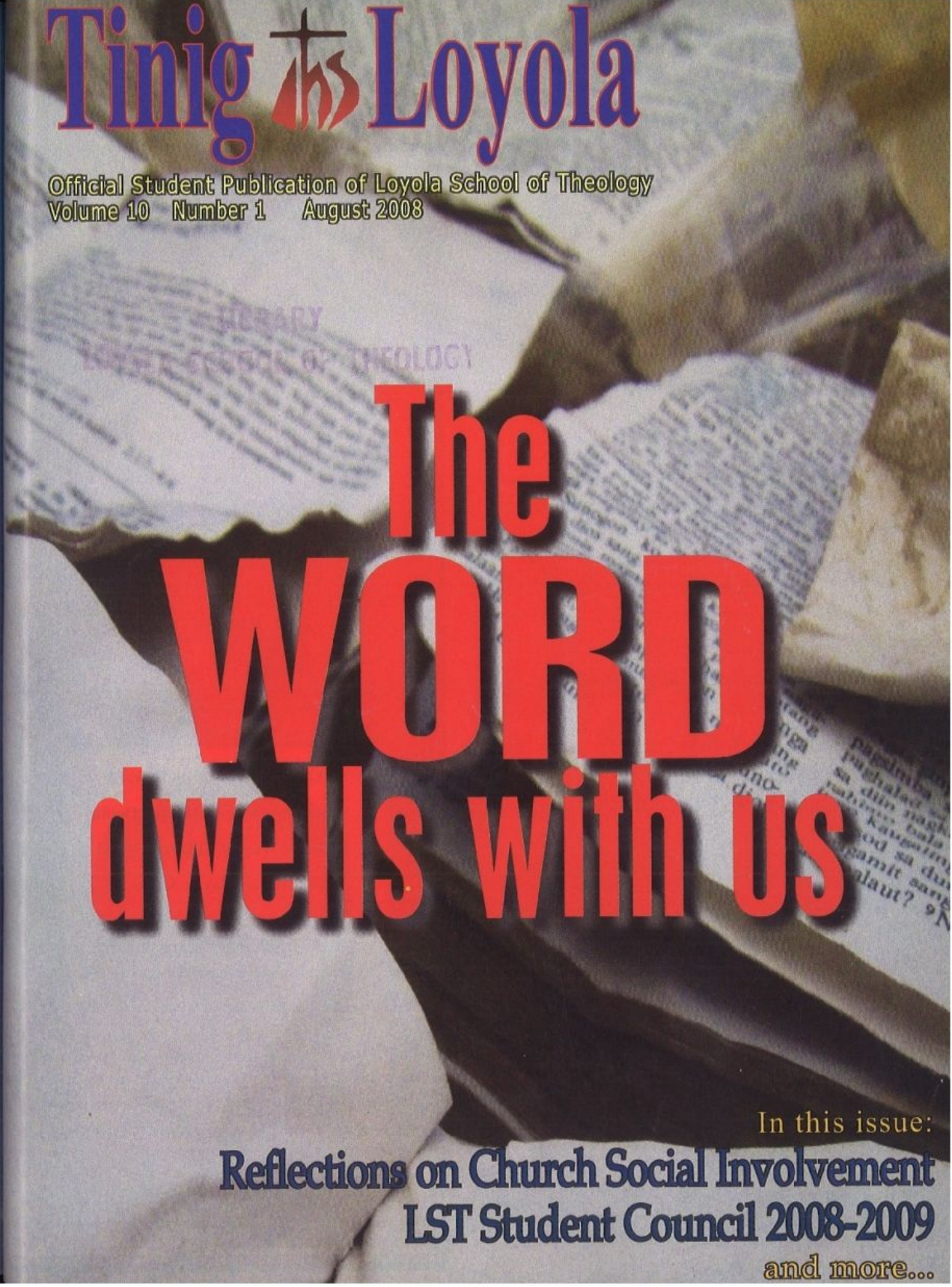
Tinig Loyola

Official Student Publication of Loyola School of Theology
Volume 10 Number 1 August 2008



The WORD dwells with us

In this issue:

Reflections on Church Social Involvement
LST Student Council 2008-2009
and more...

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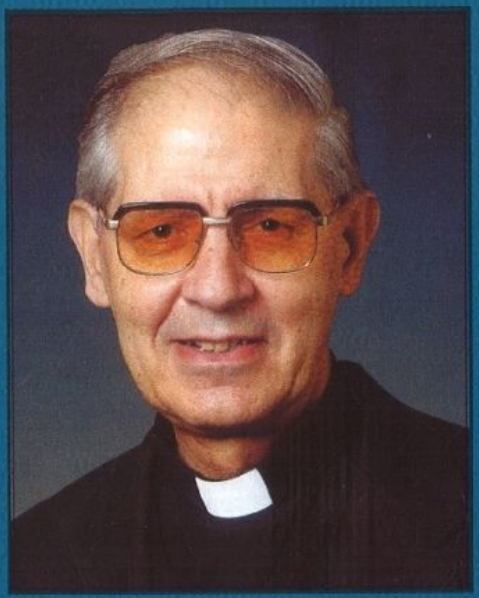
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The Cover: Scholastic Chan-Gonzaga, SJ brought back the photograph of a drenched Bible from Kalibo after the devastation of typhoon *Frank*. It is an apt symbol of God's unreserved presence with his people. As this issue of *Tinig Loyola* carries the theme of Social Involvement, it is best to remember that the Christian God is a truly and radically involved God. He is not content being in the comfort of a heavenly court. He pitched his tent among us and shared in our miseries. He revealed to us his love by being with us.

OUR NEW LEADERS

Chancellor



Upon his election as the Superior General of the Society of Jesus last February 2008, Father Adolfo Nicolas SJ became officially the Chancellor of Loyola School of Theology.

Father Nicolas is 72 years old. He entered the Society of Jesus in Spain on 14 September 1953. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1967. He graduated from the Gregorian University and taught Systematic Theology at Sophia University as a missionary to Japan. From 1978-1984, he was director of the East Asian Pastoral Institute, Manila. He returned to Japan to become rector of the scholasticate. He served as Provincial of Japan from 1993-1999. In 2004, Father Nicolas came back to Manila to lead the Jesuit Conference for East Asia and Oceania. During the thirty-fifth General Congregation, he was elected as the twenty-ninth sucessor of Saint Ignatius de Loyola as the Superior General of the Jesuits.

Vice-Chancellor



Father Jose Cecilio Magadia SJ, new Provincial Superior of the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus, is *ex officio* the Vice Chancellor of Loyola School of Theology.

Father Magadia was born on 19 December 1960. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1980 and graduated from the Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU) in 1985 with a degree in Philosophy. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1991 and pronounced his final vows in 2003. He has a Ph. D. in Political Science (Major in Comparative Politics, Minor in Political Theory) from Columbia University.

Among the many hats he has worn as a Jesuit are: English Teacher (Xavier Univeristy High School); Parish Priest (Mabuhay, Zamboanga del Sur); Associate Dean (ADMU); and Rector and Formator (Loyola House of Studies).

Cris Fajardo, SJ

Gold and Silver we do not have

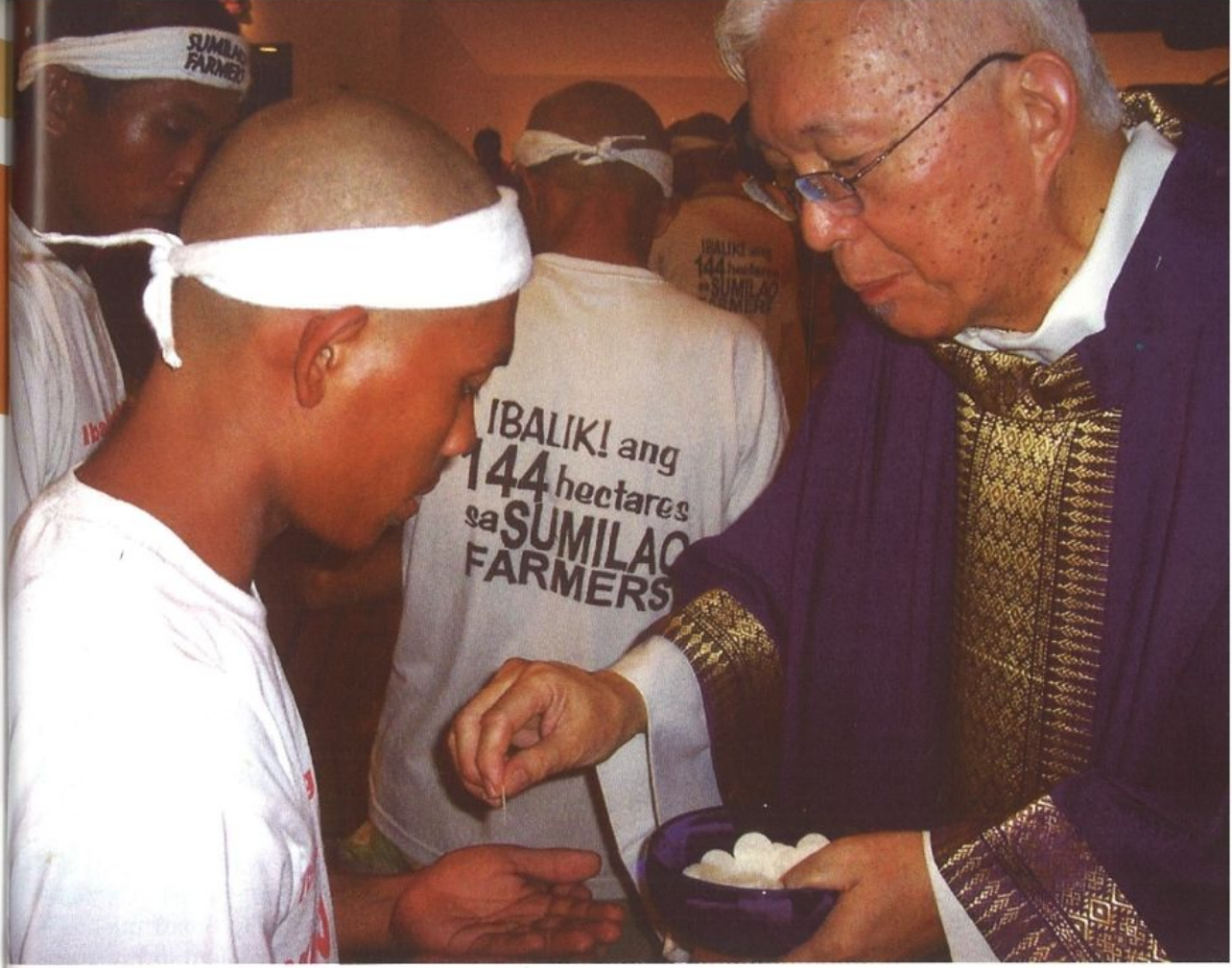
The Church unfailingly reaps the same criticisms everytime an important socio-political issue emerges. On the one hand, the Chruch is criticized for meddling too much, thus violating the separation of powers. On the other hand, the Church is blamed for abandoning the flock in the midst of ferociously confusing wolves of corrupt politics. Most of those who sing the first type of criticism are people guilty of crimes and will benefit from Church non-interference. Some of those who raise the second criticsm are political "players" themselves who might benefit from Church pronouncements, but not before twisting their official texts.

However, between these two types of critics are those who simply wait for their pastors to tell them what to do and what to believe. While it smacks of docitlity and obedience, this trait of Filipino Catholics also reflects deep-seated clericalism and moral infantilism. The Church—which is often wrongly understood as solely that of clerics and religious—does not possess omnicompetence. Though, as individuals, clerics and religious may be experts in various fields, as Church they are to maintain the role of being beacons of the escatological hope that serves as the standard of affirmation and critique of social reality as the case may be.

As found in the book of Leviticus, the role of the priests is primarily to keep the *fire* in the temple burning. This fire of course can be symbolic of many things. It can be the light of truth, especially at times when it is hidden and contorted. It can be symbolic of the role of keeping the people's passion alive and burning, especially in times when fatigue and indifference gnaws at the very heart of society. It can be the purifying force that toughens the genuine and burns the counterfeit to ashes. And lastly, it can be symbolic of the light that we should keep on providing our people, for them to have the clarity of vision to see the truth amidst the glitters of distractions and propaganda.

Unfortunately, by the rate it is going, it is apparent that the light has long been hidden under the bushel basket or under the bed. It is feared that the light has already been long put out. During time of social unrest, most of the audible voices from among the clerics are either of those knocking on the door of senility or of those who are clearly colored by non-Christian ideologies. Very few pastors inspire, very few carry the *gravitas* of modern-day prophets. Now more than ever, the Filipino nation hungers for the light that the Church can and should provide.

The present overly cleric-centered Filipino Church indicts the kind of formation we give to the lay people. They fail to see the role which is inherently theirs as members of the Body of Christ. It is the duty of the Church



to build up the laity to be who they ought to be. And this building up will not happen in usurping their roles. Karl Rahner wrote about the declericalization of the Church. He holds that the future of the Church lies in the constant and proper building up of the laity. It is part of our tasks to see to it that the laity are acting as laity, and that would mean non-laity should act as non-laity. The usual usurpation of roles cannot but yield to the mutual destruction of each other's self-understanding. Pastoral care of the laity therefore, especially in the Philippines, is not much unlike the process of raising children. We feed them and take care of them, but we also want them to grow and be who they are meant to be. They too are to reach their full potential—able to feed themselves from the Word of God, able to draw grace from the Sacraments after personal and deeper appreciation of their meaning, able to have their pride and claim over the Church into which they are incorporated in their Baptism. Indeed, it is with a fully realized laity that the priests and religious can also see the resplendent beauty of their own vocation and mission.

In the end, this is what Church leaders should provide our nation. Individually, we may contribute in the arena of politics, economics, sociology, and management. But as Church, ours is the role of providing the fire for our people—fire of thirst for truth, fire of passion for the common good, fire of wisdom and of discernment. Like Peter and John, we do not have gold and silver—we do not need gold and silver—but we have him who is much more needed in our present times, Jesus. And that is our role: to lead our people to Jesus. Like Peter and John, Jesus is all we have. Him alone, we can give.

CHURCH SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT: TWELVE QUESTIONS

James H. Kroeger, MM

"Posing complex questions" and "Desiring simple answers." These two phrases spring to mind as one listens to the frequent questions asked regarding the Church's role in civic and social matters. And, in the Philippines where over 80% of the citizens are Catholics, the actions of the national bishops' conference (CBCP) on social matters take on special prominence—particularly when they gather for their plenary assemblies every January and July. Because of its frequent statements on social realities (extending back to 1945), the "influential Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines" (a favorite journalistic phrase) is perceived as a strong voice or social conscience for the nation.

What is the CBCP stand on social justice, impeachment, charter change, and electoral reform? How do the bishops view gambling, extra-judicial killings, just wages for workers, family and population? Yes, these are complex questions, not answerable with quick, short, "sound-bite" responses. The most recent extensive CBCP pastoral letter on social concerns (*Shepherding and Prophesying in Hope*) was written in July 2006; the CBCP had declared 2006 as a "Year of Social Concern." Genuinely helpful in addressing many burning issues, the bishops employ both *principles* and *praxis* in their reflections. The bishops advised the faithful to read and reflect on their letter so as to "guide your own discernment, discussion, decision, and action" (4) [see *Boletin Eclesiastico de Filipinas* 82:855 (2006): 621-634].

In this context and in connection with this thematic issue of *Tinig Loyola*, permit one more attempt to respond to commonly heard questions about the local Church's involvement in Philippine social questions.

Why does the Church get involved? The Church has been given a mission by Christ; it is a mission of evangelization, "renewed integral evangelization" (PCP-II 154-401). This means bringing the Good News into *all strata* of humanity" (EN 18). In short, *all* aspects of life (social, cultural, political, economic, environmental, etc.) are to be renewed and transformed with Gospel values. To do this mission is not an option; it is a duty for *all* Church members, not only bishops and clergy. Genuine evangelization is a long, challenging, and never-ending process.

How does the Church's social teaching enter into evangelization? To preach the full Gospel (not only dogmatic teaching) means manifesting the *moral* and *social* implications of Christian faith; how does faith impact people's lives? Christ's Gospel of Love and his Gospel of Justice



are one. The Church must both *announce* Gospel principles to guide people's actions and *denounce* those concrete actions that are contrary to Gospel values. Cardinal Sin has said: "The Catholic pastor should be a prophet of denunciation, but above all a minister of reconciliation."

Is this "social mission" of the Church something new? Absolutely not! Jesus himself took sides with the "lonely, least, lost, little, and last" people of his society; he came to bring good news to the poor. The respected Philippine Church historian, J. N. Schumacher, SJ, asserts: "The Philippine Church, in fact, was literally founded on the basis of its struggle for justice.... If the Philippine Church then is to be true to her tradition, [she must remain] in solidarity with those whose cause her Master principally came for—on the side of the poor" [see *Insta-San Jose Major Seminary* 44:2 (1984): 5].

What are the Church's political ambitions? It must be bluntly stated that the Church has no ambitions of political power. If she does have influence in the Philippine context, she desires to use it for the service of humanity. John Paul II asserts: "Man is the primary route that the Church must travel in fulfilling her mission" (RH 14). Cardinal Sin's policy of "critical collaboration" with governmental bodies (which he enunciated so well during the Marcos martial law years) remains an eminently useful guideline today.

Why does the Church get involved in specific social questions? Applying Church social teaching to specific "burning social issues" as the CBCP has done in its well-reflected pastoral letters is included in the Church's mission. In 1987 Cardinal Sin issued *A Catechism on the Involvement of Priests in Political Activity* [see *Cor Manila* March 22, 1987]. He wrote that a pastor fails his flock "when he preaches only general principles and fails to apply them to concrete situations" or "when he keeps silent about injustices and fails to defend human rights" (p. 2).

What has happened to the "separation of Church and State"? This principle is often poorly understood and some use it to advance their own political agenda. The principle asserts: "No religion is to be established as the official state religion, and no state should favor one religion over others." This principle does not intend to promote isolation or

competition between Church and civil society. Both institutions should facilitate the attainment of each other's goals, always seeking the common good and addressing matters of moral behavior in society.

How can the Church communicate her social teaching more clearly? Certainly there is always room for better communication. The Church has various options (print, television and radio, internet, etc.) In July 2006 ABS-CBN News Channel facilitated a better understanding of the bishops' message by providing a half-hour program to CBCP President A. Lagdameo to present, clarify, and discuss the CBCP pastoral letter. The Church's social teaching and the rationale for the bishops' positions found ample time for elucidation. Delicate and complicated social issues need adequate time for presentation and comprehension.

What else could the Church do to communicate her reflections? Church media personnel could employ simple, concrete images that ordinary folks can easily grasp. In 1976, in order to explain the Church-State relationship, Cardinal Sin used an image of railroad tracks, one track representing the Church, the other the State. "They run in the same direction, and so long as they remain parallel and separate, ... they can get people to where they want to go. But, if the parallelism is broken ... [there can be] considerable damage and loss of life" [see *Philippine Priests' Forum* 8:3 (1976): 27-30].

Why don't the bishops directly tell the faithful what to do (it would make things simpler)? Here two things must be noted. Paul VI has written: "In concrete situations ... one must recognize a legitimate variety of possible options. The same Christian faith can lead to different commitments" (OA 50). In other words, Christians can choose different yet valid, concrete responses to living their faith (always excluding violence). Secondly, the Church has the serious responsibility to ensure the necessary *formation of the consciences* of the faithful so they will make responsible moral choices in socio-political matters. The Church's mission of integral evangelization includes this important task.

How long has the Church been speaking publicly on social issues? It is popularly held that the tradition of "Church Social Teaching" (papal, conciliar, synodal, and episcopal teachings on the political, social, economic, and international order) began with Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* in 1891. In their document *Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions*, the United States Catholic Bishops identified seven key themes at the heart of the Catholic social tradition: (1) Life and Dignity of the Human Person; (2) Call to Family, Community, and Participation; (3) Rights and Responsibilities; (4) Option for the Poor and Vulnerable; (5) Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers; (6) Solidarity in Pursuing Justice and Peace; and, (7) Care for God's Creation [see http://www.usccb.org].

Are there any good resources for learning the Church's social teaching? Catholics are blessed with a relatively new source-book which contains a systematic presentation of the Church's social teaching. In 2004 the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace issued the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. Fortunately, this entire volume with an extensive analytical index has been co-published in the Philippines by the CBCP and Word and Life Publications, and it is very moderately priced. A review of the book appeared in *Landas* 18:2 (2004): 313-315. It is a worthwhile investment.

What should guide ordinary Christians in the "minefield" of social involvement? Many items have already been mentioned: a well-formed conscience, the Church's social teaching, the advice of the bishops who come from all parts of the country and who prayerfully discern social questions. Catholics should also develop a "spirituality of social solidarity." Such a spirituality will integrate deep faith, Christian charity, holiness of life, apostolic involvement, and a true love of God's *anawim*—the poor.

James H. Kroeger, MM has served mission in Asia (Philippines and Bangladesh) since 1970. Currently, a faculty member at Loyola School of Theology (Manila) and the Mother of Life Catechetical Institute (Novaliches), he has recently published *Once Upon a Time in Asia* (Claretian Publications and Jesuit Communications).

IMMERSED SPIRITUALITY

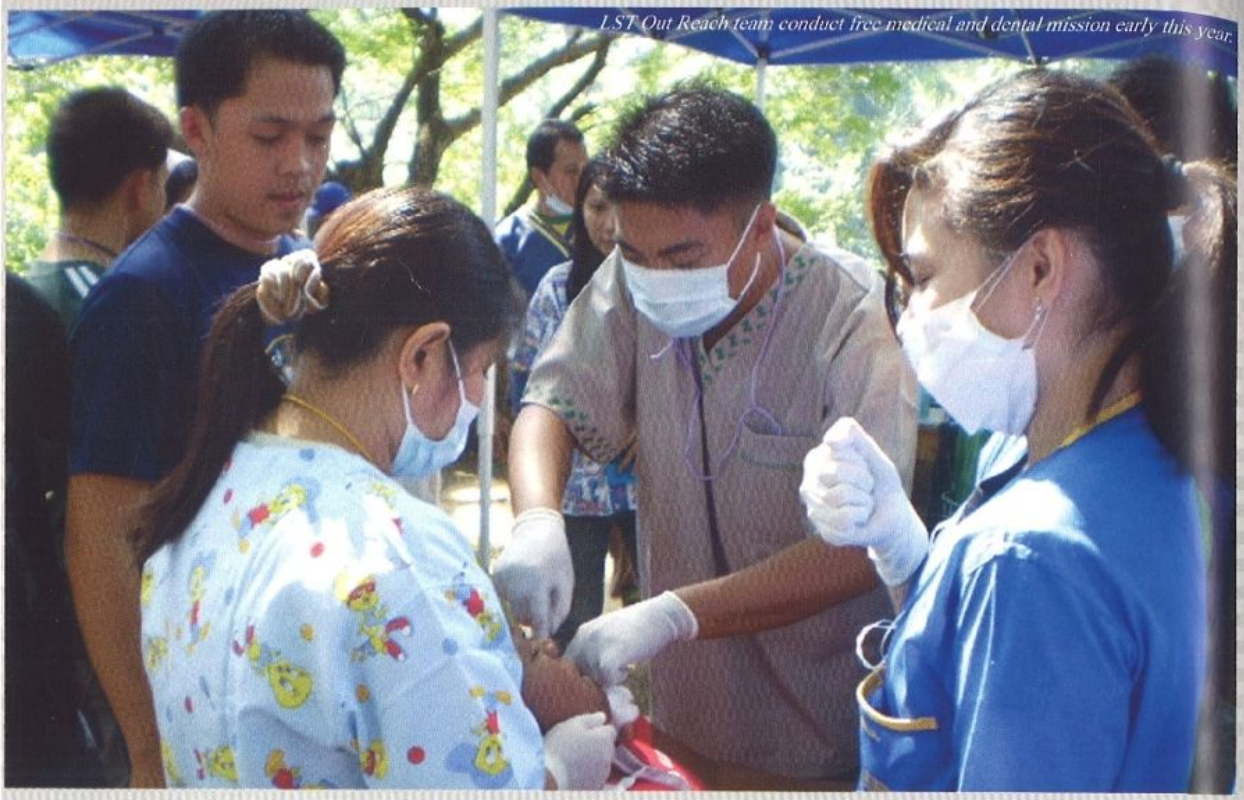
Vivinio B. Matugas, Jr., SX

HOW THE VARIOUS RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN LST CONDUCT THEIR SOCIAL APOSTOLATE

Chapter 25 of the Gospel of Matthew is a definitive sign of being a follower of Christ. I interviewed representatives of the various religious communities studying at Loyola School of Theology and asked them about the various ways and forms whereby they conduct their social apostolate. Here are their responses:

The Missionaries of Saint Charles (Scalabrinians) established the Migrant Center that accommodates poor Filipinos from all over the country who are applying for a job abroad. They are helped in processing their papers legally and stay in the center at a modest charge. Aside from seamen, Scalabrinians are also working for the marginalized, persecuted, oppressed people in society as well as refugees. Here in Manila, they give catechesis to the squatters in order to be present with the poor. They also visit the Brothers of Charity—an institution for the disabled, elderly, abandoned and sick people. In Cebu, they have a hospital for seamen, especially for those who were left by their families. They give spiritual and moral care to them aside from medical help.

The Congregation of the Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Claretian Missionaries, CMF) are "Servants of the Word" in all means possible. They build small communities in the slum areas, especially Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs). They give bible sharing, formation and leadership for the youth. In their Parish in UP, they provide scholarships for elementary and high school students willing to study. They are involved as well in Prison Ministry, Publications, Vocation Animation, Retreat Giving, Urban Missionaries, and Schools like ICLA and all the Claretian Schools in the country.



LST Out Reach team conduct free medical and dental mission early this year.

The Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (Dehonians, SCJ) run a parish in a remote area of Cagayan de Oro and some poor parishes in Zamboanga del Norte. They are working with abused children; they give education for those who are willing to study until they finish. In Payatas, they are handling three chapels for their pastoral work. They organize feeding programs for children as well in the said areas. They are giving catechesis, bible sharing and counseling. They also assist during Sunday masses in a Drug Rehabilitation Center. They visit the sick in Philippine General Hospital, and give them counseling. They, too, assist the priest in distributing communion.

The Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) give their social services particularly in Jolo and Tawi-tawi. They help in their parishes in giving lay leadership training. They are working in interreligious dialogue in Cotabato with indigenous people, as well as catechesis for children in schools run by the Notre Dame Sisters.

The Congregation of the Passion (Passionists, CP) is more focused on pastoral work like establishing parishes or the so-called parish mission. They have a tribal mission with the indigenous people in Mindanao, especially in South Cotabato. They also engage in foreign mission, preaching mission, urban poor, and retreats and recollections.

The Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (SS.CC.) run a poor parish in the Diocese of Novaliches. They have a scholarship program for those poor families who have at least one child that wants to go to school. They provide basic needs for them like buying new shoes, bags, books that are useful in school. They provide a little amount of cash money too. As to their weekly apostolate, they give tutorial class to elementary and high school students (English and Mathematics), youth awareness program, value formation, and micro-finance (savings) for the some residents in the area. The SS.CC. also initiates a small *botika* for the poor with low-cost, if not free, medicines.

The Order of the Pious Schools (Piarist, SchP.) continues, for thirteen years in the Philippines, to give non-formal education to both youth and poor children in the place where they are present. They

have a scholarship program as well. They are also educating parents with their family ministry. Their other apostolates are in juvenile prison in Tanay, Rizal, catechesis for elementary and high school students in squatter areas, and assisting the youth in their parish in Bicol. They recently opened a vocational school in Cebu where they grant scholarships.

The **Society of Jesus** (SJ) has a wide and diverse network of social apostolates coordinated by the office, *Society of Jesus Social Apostolate* (SJSA). Among the areas of engagement are policy advocacy, mass organization, electoral education, relief operation, and enviromental protection. The Jesuit theologians engage in pastoral work in Payatas, in chapels entrusted to them by the parish priest. At election time, Jesuit scholastics man the election monitoring centers that are organized in all Jesuit schools in the country.

There are two works that the **Pious Society of Saint Francis Xavier for Foreign Missions** (Xaverian Missionaries, SX) are doing in the Philippines: formation and vocation animation. As one way of enriching the poor, the Delegation accepted the offer to run a poor parish in the Novaliches Diocese and initiating the *Sagip Kapwa* Program (money saving) in one of the depressed areas in Quezon City. They take charge of the chapel in this area as given by the parish to them. Their other social apostolates and involvements are: catechesis for children, formation for the youth, peace maker circle (a gathering of different faiths, traditions and indigenous people), juvenile prison in Molave Youth Home and advocacy for justice and peace.

As is commonly known, the **Order of Discalced Carmelites** (OCD) focuses on spirituality and giving retreats and talks. They do not have specific programs to give financial aid to the poor. Their apostolic concern is helping the parish in forming Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs), formation for youth, social services, and vocation animation.

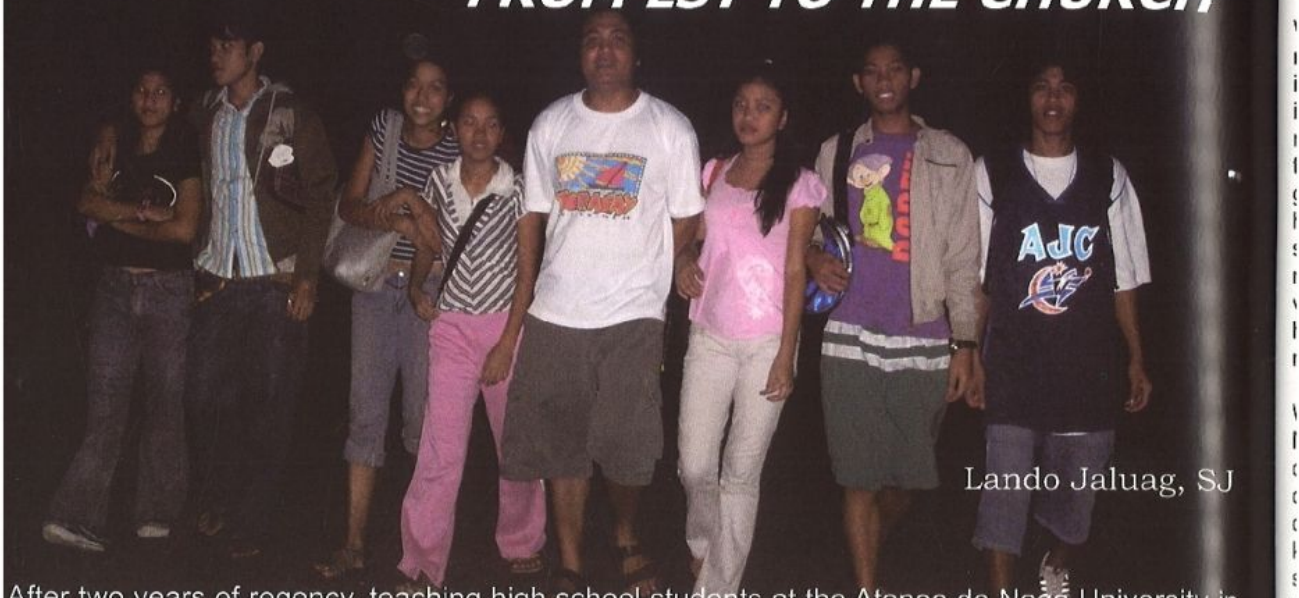
The **Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette** (MS) help the parishes. Every weekend they go to squatter areas and provide communion services, especially here in Manila. In Isabela, they run a university and give scholarships to the poor students there.

The main concern of the **Religious of the Good Shepherd** (RGS) is establishing residences that shelter abused women and children both sexually and physically (battered wives, victims of domestic violence, sexual molestations and rape). They run schools too. As part of their social apostolate they are building Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs) in slum areas, particularly here in Manila, connected always to the parishes.

One of the interesting programs done by the **Religious of the Assumption** (RA) is the "Mission Schools"—built up and intended for the urban and rural poor. They have the so-called socialized tuition fee scheme whereby big schools of the Assumption support the mission schools. They have the students in the big schools immerse themselves in the poor ones. They provide scholarships as well. Other forms of the apostolate are promotion of justice, peace and integrity of creation, vocation promotion, youth ministry, government alternative learning schools for the out of school youth, and helping the Igorots in Baguio. They have schools for Christians and Muslims together in Lanao del Norte, a school of peace sanctuary and dialogue.

The **Daughters of St. Paul** (FSP) are called to proclaim the good news through media of social communication. In the Philippines they do not have direct apostolates with the poor. As we know, they are working with a publishing house, TV masses, radio programs and audiovisual production. They have also a media literacy school that educates people to be responsible in using media. During summer they used to go house-to-house in the poor areas and give out their books with just a little donation. They are also giving catechesis for both adults and young people.

THURSDAY SERVANTS:
FROM LST TO THE CHURCH



Lando Jaluag, SJ

After two years of regency, teaching high school students at the Ateneo de Naga University in Bicol, and now living in a comfortable and supportive Jesuit community where "we do not own anything but have everything we need" especially in terms of material things, I felt a sense of restlessness within me. I wanted so much to feel and experience again what and how it is to be poor. With this, I was still grappling with my own inner poverty—the demons were still there—after two years of non-stop work and apostolate in the high school.

The author (center wearing white) walking with the youth, both literally and figuratively.

I asked permission from my superior so I could spend a week in Payatas for immersion as I felt very strongly that it would be very helpful for my formation as a Jesuit. During the immersion, I was with young people most of the time. They would bring me to their houses and we would spend time leisurely chatting and playing basketball (my little skills in this sport hopefully did not embarrass me). There were times when we would make illegal trips to the dumpsite in another area. For some nights, we just talked and grappled with life and youth-related issues. One time even, we organized a community- and leadership-building activity. Of course, there was the usual jamming with songs and guitar, or at times, with videoke machines.

While I found the youth of the chapel very much what youth are supposed to be—dynamic, happy and hopeful—outside the chapel I saw young people just watching what we were doing. At some point, I gravitated to them and spent some time with them. I was so surprised and even disturbed that many of them—some with their colored hair, pierced ears, toughie projections, and street-honed language—do not dare to dream anymore. They are too afraid to hope because perhaps of the many experiences of failures and frustrations. They feel that nobody wants to give them a chance. Even local scholarship programs have set guidelines that do not accommodate them. In the chapel youth ministry, the active ones are mostly those in school. I was deeply disturbed by this situation for I have always thought of young people as idealistic and stubborn dreamers, courageous to face the world.

When I got back to my community and to LST (I was a first-year theologian back then), the impact of my immersion became a matter for my prayer and dialogue with my superior and spiritual director until I came to share this with Adie Isidro while in class. It was to her that I first shared my immersion experience and how I continued to be disturbed by the reality of the marginalized youths. From there, on a Thursday afternoon, we invited two more friends to a chat over cookies and bottles of softdrinks. That initial encounter proved to be the start of a series of sharing sessions as more of our classmates in LST—who are from different congregations—joined in and were quite ready to be disturbed as well. After some prayer and discernment, research and consultation with our respective superiors, we agreed that we could not just

remain merely disturbed. Hence, we organized Thursday Servants; and we can say that LST has been the rightful birthplace of this mission that has inter-congregational and inter-charism seeds.

We went through countless consultations, meetings and workshops as we began venturing into the mission with nothing but the seemingly insatiable desire to do something for the marginalized youth. On every step of the way, there was a constant exchange of ideas and the generous sharing of experiences, expertise and humble admission of our apprehensions. I can say that within us was a persistent but subtle nudge to keep going and take our individual visions for the mission seriously—no matter how much or how little we talk during our weekly meetings.



Volunteers of Thursday Servants *spend time with young people in Payatas.*

We invited next youth leaders from the diocese of Novaliches and they became our point persons on the dynamics of youth ministry. As most of us were students of Father Manoling Francisco, SJ, we asked him to be our Spiritual Director. To this he readily agreed, upon knowing the main goals of Thursday Servants. We shared the plan with more lay classmates, most of whom were from CEFAM; many of them became our apostolic collaborators. Soon enough, Fathers Jack Carroll, SJ and Nilo Tanalega, SJ also agreed to be our Apostolic Advisers. Fathers Ruben Tanseco, SJ and Manny Flores, SJ also gave us their valuable support and input.

After we thought that we had already articulated our vision and mission, and conceptualized and named our programs and formation strategies, we had to face a more crucial issue—finances and facilities. Thus, we wrote some friends, and for two years now, they have been our regular benefactors and supporters. As we were able to request the administration of LST for office space, more and more students approached us for youth formation materials and facilitation assistance. In a sense, Thursday Servants has served LST students as a training ground and a hub for resource persons and materials for youth formation.

It was certainly not easy to set up an NGO, especially when your primary mission is to study and prepare for the priesthood. It would have been so much easier to stay uninvolved in such an undertaking. In a sense, as I allowed myself to be disturbed by the call to help the marginalized youth, all the other aspects of my life were also affected. I had to be very creative in balancing my time and many times, I spent more time with the group than with my studies and my community. I also recognized the danger of making it an excuse from difficulties—be they internal or external—and from tasks that did not really interest me.

Through it all, however pure and impure motivations have factored in, it has been an enriching experience. For many of us, it was a vocation-affirming endeavor. As we try to work on the formation of our youth-partners, we ourselves are being formed with our own personal issues and struggles. Prayer has become integral to our mission and personal individual involvement in it. It has been like a constant and continuous consultation with God, and on every step of the way, it is very humbling to see more and more that He is the main Mover in this mission.

It has been a humbling experience for me as well, as a number of people have decided to share in my dream and claim the mission that sprung from this dream. People from as far as Germany, Netherlands and Hawaii have joined the group because they believe in the mission—not because of me. The little that we started with has become much because of the generosity of many others who share in the mission. As to the question whether Thursday Servants is really God's will, I would like to believe that it is. But in the end, only time can really tell.

Thursday Servants is now a SEC–recognized non-governmental organization with more than 40 members and 65 youth-partners. And currently, the heart of our mission is in Payatas while a new unit is being organized in Bicol under the supervision of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart Sisters (ACI). Since our first year was our organizational year, the second year had been our testing and implementation year. Now on our third year, we are embarking on an evaluation and re-examination of the process.

Always, it is a grace that we have been able to hold on to the faith that God would not hesitate to bless and guide us unless it was not in His will for Thursday Servants to be there. Each of us has his/her own life with our respective communities and career-paths; but from the start and even up to now, God has "appeared" to take the mission seriously. And with this, there is no other way but to be directed by this divine earnestness, even disturbance.

TIME AND THE TEACHER OF THEOLOGY

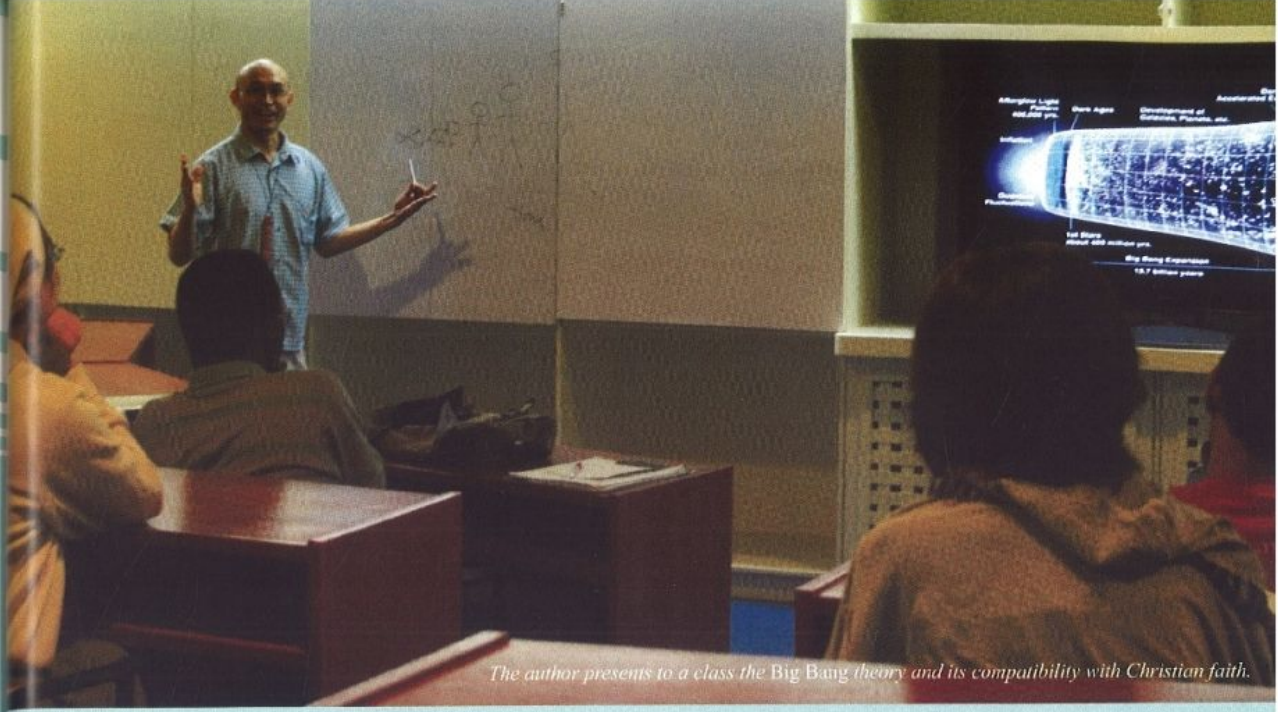
. . . amid our growing knowledge of the structure of matter and in the light of ever more advanced inventions, we clearly see continuous progress towards an ever greater mastery of nature. Yet in the field of ethical awareness and moral decision-making, there is no similar possibility of accumulation for the simple reason that man's freedom is always new and he must always make his decisions anew. These decisions can never simply be made for us in advance by others—if that were the case, we would no longer be free. Freedom presupposes that in fundamental decisions, every person and every generation is a new beginning.

—*Spe Salvi 24*

Oliver Dy, SJ

I have often wondered at the enigma proposed by Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas that time is discontinuous. It was upon reading the good words of Benedict XVI that I received a bit of enlightenment on this strange feature of time. While our Holy Father claims that there evidently is continuity along the time-line of material progress, he warns us that this is not necessarily true for the historical trajectory of morality. That a previous generation has correctly learned how to live in a morally upright way does not automatically mean that the next generation will also be at least as equally ethical. Each new generation has to learn to use the freedom given it by God. It has to make its own moral decisions during its own life time. Time can therefore be considered to be discontinuous because any upward moral momentum bequeathed by a previous generation could always be radically halted and overturned by the next generation. There is always an existential ambivalence throughout human history in terms of the vertical direction of either moral progress or regress. Time is discontinuous along the moral line because each new generation has to determine by its collective decisions whether the time-line of its moral status would be an upward progress or a downward regress.

When a teacher of theology teaches one batch of students, he cannot automatically assume that



The author presents to a class the Big Bang *theory and its compatibility with Christian faith.*

what he teaches will automatically spread to other succeeding batches. He has to teach each batch of students anew. Each batch is discontinuous with the other batches. From a teacher's point of view, time is discontinuous because it begins and ends with each batch of students.

There is, however, a locus where time can be made continuous, and that is the teacher himself. It is the teacher who passes on to the students "the realities and the words which have been handed down" (*Dei Verbum 8*) from the very beginning. It is in the teacher himself where the continuity of the tradition counters as it were the radical discontinuity of time. In the absence of the teacher, the tradition is likely to be broken as a generation is left in ignorance, misinformation, or deformation. What Saint Paul said of the preacher could very well be applied to the teacher:

> "But how can they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to preach? And how can people preach unless they are sent?" (Rom. 10:14-15).

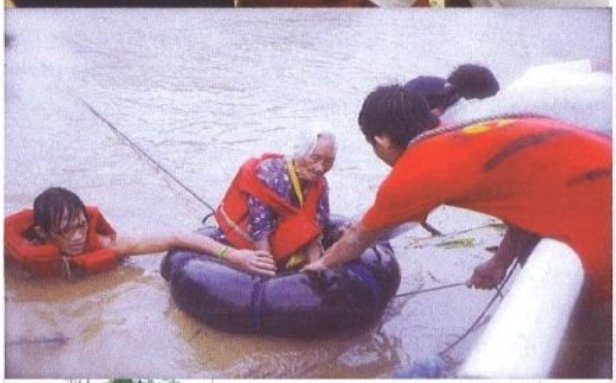
When the Lord sends the teacher to each generation, he also gives the grace for the teacher to speak the language of that generation. One has to be a teacher not only once, but as many times over as there are new generations, even as many times over as there are people. For the teacher, "every person and every generation is a new beginning."

For the teacher to be faithful to what is handed down, he has to probe within himself to find the right words to say to each person and each generation. He has to relive in his interiority the historical journey of truth through the ages in order proclaim that very same truth in words that are digestible and understandable to each person and each generation. In his private study, he has to allow himself to be carried by the waves and waves of theological thought throughout the centuries, but in the end, remain with the residues of age-old truths carried by these passing waves. He has to be conscious that the message always exceeds him who is the messenger. He does not define what he teaches, but is instead defined by what he teaches, and as he teaches what he teaches. This is the cross of the teacher; this, too, is his glory.

If time is indeed discontinuous, it is only to the extent that God sends no teacher of the faith.









KALIBO

a story that must be told

It was a little past noon of July 5, 2008 when our group entered the city of Kalibo. Huge trees along the road were down and uprooted, still untouched. We could hear the splatter of mud against the mud guards of the bus tires. The aura of the city was quiet and low. People walked silently past one another, head bent low, unable and maybe unwilling to gaze eye to eye with others. We were silently looking outside the windows of the bus we chartered for the relief operations. I saw Father Manny Uy, SJ, shake his head in disbelief.

We had to do around two detours into the heart of the city, because the main streets were still impassable, even two weeks after the typhoon. We watched as trucks and bulldozers of the MMDA worked their way into the still flooded streets of Kalibo. A thought entered my mind at once, "MMDA sure is far from Manila, *ang galing naman.*" And then I saw the huge tarpaulin picture of "Mr. MMDA" himself, and I remembered, "*Oh, and I forgot how our politics work.*" We continued on slowly into the city until we reached the cathedral and city plaza. Scholastic Errol Nebrao SJ, exclaimed, "*God, dito kami last year paikot ikot during Ati-atihan*!" As our bus came to a complete stop in front of the bishop's residence we readied ourselves for our second drop-off of relief goods. Still a little taken aback, we quietly started to carry sacks of relief goods into the residence. I could see papers and logbooks and bibles being dried under the sun in the courtyard of the bishop's residence. The catechist who was there to welcome us saw my shocked curiosity and she told me, "*Those are almost all the records of the diocese: marriage certificates, baptismal certificates, birth certificates, even ordination records.*" The cathedral area is considered the highest point of the city, and yet during the typhoon, the

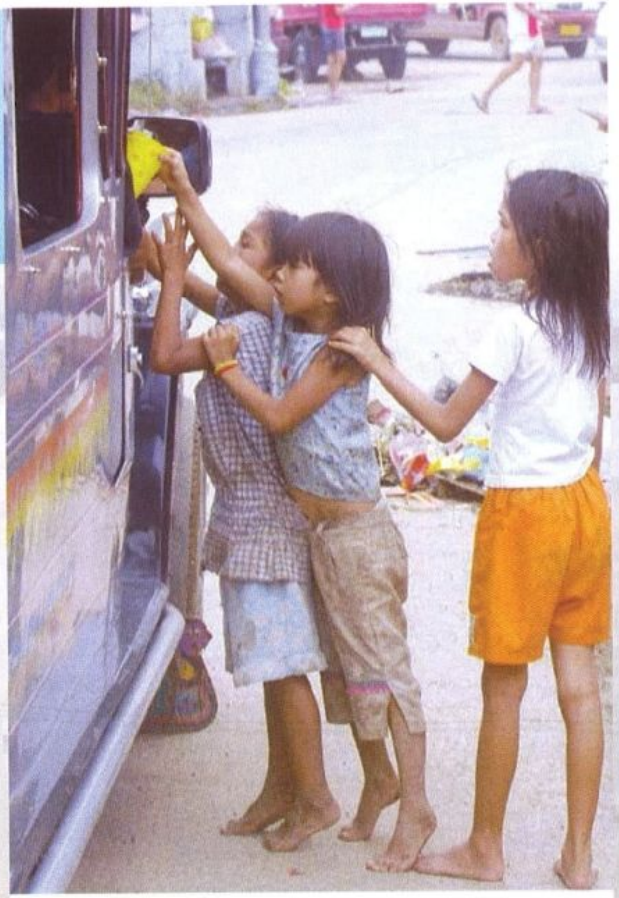


With the sinking of Princess of the Stars and the devastation in other more promninent cities, the devastation in Kalibo, Aklan, was not so much in the news. **Ismael Jose Chan-Gonzaga SJ**, *Executive Director of Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan, personally went there to monitor relief operations and reports on site.*

water and mudflow were up to a person's waist in that area. One can easily imagine how it would have been in the other parts of the city. The smell of mud and water and rotting things was painful to the nostrils. When we finished unloading the goods, I sat down along the sidewalk of the plaza which was just in front of the cathedral. I saw the battered, tattered Philippine flags that no one even bothered to lower.

Scholastic Errol came and asked me what I was thinking. I told him, "*I remember Ormoc again. The only difference (which is very fortunate) is that the typhoon hit Kalibo in the daytime. If it had been in the evening, I can't even imagine the extent of casualties.*" I could picture so vividly again the sight that met our contingent seventeen years ago, as our trucks entered Ormoc City. Two dead bodies in a box were right beside the street, unclaimed. The smell of rotting flesh and dried mud was too much to handle. One of my companions vomited. I was only grade six then. I was part of the student council of my high school in Tacloban City and we decided to respond to the needs of Ormoc. I was so excited then about the whole "relief operations" idea that I never recovered from that first tragic sight. And so, when we entered Kalibo, I felt a knot in my stomach.

It would be around nine hours later before we arrived back at Ateneo de Iloilo. The entire "mission day" saw us pass through the four provinces of Panay and drop off relief goods at four different parishes. As I prepared for bed that night, all I could do was remember the faces of the people we met and talked with during our operation. And now, back in Manila, I will forever carry with me their tales of loss and suffering, but also of experiences of compassion, love and hope.









The Church as Communion
A *BAYANIHAN* EXPERIENCE



Ricky Montanez, AA

Recently in Ecclesiology class, we were discussing about the importance of the concept of communion in what it means to be Church according Vatican II. As I thought of how this could best be represented by the Filipino psyche, the practice of *bayanihan*, which is surely not uniquely my idea, came to mind. Nevertheless, this custom best exemplifies the Filipino spirit of unity among the members of the community, one's sense of volunteerism and the capacity to celebrate with others the accomplishment of a common task. Thus, I thought it appropriate to explore certain aspects of the concept of Church as communion that are in some ways depicted by the Filipino practice of *bayanihan*, particularly the communal dimension of this custom and how it is related to the concept of communion, which "lies at the heart of the Church's self-understanding."

The communal nature of God's plan of salvation makes its scope universal and inclusive; it is the communal dimension of the *bayanihan* that gives it its value. Besides, no work in the *bayanihan* perspective becomes possible unless it is a collaborative and communal labor. The Church believes that God has called us not as individuals or as a particular group of individuals but rather "it pleased him to bring all together as one people, a people which acknowledges him in truth and serves him in holiness" (LG 9). God makes of them a community that partakes and enjoys this gift of salvation. It is through the Church that God continuously pours out his

merciful love toward his people and through her, that this work is collectively and continually pursued. In bringing all peoples together, God enters into a covenant with them. The call to communion is none other than God's call to all people to enter into a relationship with Him.

Similarly, in the context of the *bayanihan* custom, there is a kind of relationship akin to a communal spirit that is established and strengthened, first of all among the individual members of the family being helped and the people of the community who have assisted them, and consequently, among all those who have offered their assistance to the family themselves. In the course of the accomplishment of this common endeavor, all persons involved in the task are given a common experience by which they could develop a sense of camaraderie among themselves that hopefully would foster more unity as a community.

This new relationship "instituted by Christ in his own blood" (LG 9) and sustained in the Church by the Holy Spirit is best expressed in Jesus' invitation through the prayer he taught us wherein he instructs all of us to call God, our Father—our *Abba*, our *Tatay*. In addressing God as our Father we acknowledge that we belong to the one Family of God, which is the Church, where all are joined together regardless of our numerous differences by both visible bonds of interpersonal fellowship and the invisible bond of a deeper spiritual communion of all the faithful.

When applied to the imagery of the *bayanihan* practice, one notes that the reason why the people in a community come together and work as a group in one common task (in this case the transferring of the house) is not so much tied to any visible connection among them such as blood relation or any possible form of material compensation from the work. Rather it has more to do with something that is more interior, an invisible connection among the community by which a deep sense of solidarity and communal obligation toward the neighbor is felt by the members of the community, motivating and compelling them to assist those members of the community who are in need.

Furthermore, the act of doing the *bayanihan* whenever the occasion calls for it and its handing down from one generation to the next become occasions for it to be shared and enriched with others through time and in different settings. In the same way, when the People of God come together (in the spirit of communion) to become a Church, there is not only a mutual spiritual enrichment among the faithful that takes place, but also a sharing of the spiritual goods in the form of faith, the sacraments, different charisms, traditions, and spiritual resources that are made available for the faithful to enjoy in the spirit of fellowship.

The Church, acting as a dispenser of these sacraments in the person of her ministers, becomes an agent of communion that makes possible the union of the faithful in God through these visible signs of God's grace. "Since the sacraments unite all the faithful to God" (CCC 950), the term "communion" can be applied to all of them. However, "the term is better suited to the Eucharist than any other, because it is primarily the Eucharist that brings about this communion" (CCC 950). "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them" (Jn. 6:56).

The term *bayanihan* is also understood as the Filipino spirit of collectively pooling resources and efforts not only to get a job done but more importantly to help someone in dire need. Today the term is used to denote certain projects that highlight the spirit of cooperative effort involving community members. Through the sharing of the gifts and resources of some members of the community, for example, the poorer sectors of society are helped to build integrated, holistic and sustainable communities throughout the country and in doing so pave the way for the empowerment of the less fortunate communities.

In the same way, the Church as communion of the People of God encourages the common sharing of gifts and resources among her members. Each one is granted unique gifts by the Spirit and "each individual part should contribute its special gifts to the good of the other parts and of the whole Church" (LG 13). Each one is to give according to the rank and the gifts received "for the building up of the Church" (CCC 951).

Another aspect brought about by this reality of the Church is the diversity that exists among the members of the Church by virtue of the different gifts and ranks received by the individual members from the Holy Spirit. There may indeed be differences in gifts and ranks, but there is unity among them because of the One Spirit from which these gifts and ranks come from. "Now there are a varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but the same God who activates all of them in everyone (1 Cor. 12:4-6). >>>

... THE CHURCH BECOMES A PROTOTYPE, AN IDEAL, AND A MODEL OF COMMUNION BETWEEN PEOPLE AND NATIONS, BETWEEN RICH AND POOR, WOMEN AND MEN.



This diversity of gifts and ranks finds its unity concretely in the members' use of these gifts to promote the common good of the entire community. Thus, this unity in diversity becomes a source of mutual enrichment rather than a cause of division for the entire community. "According to the gift that each one has received, administer it to one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God," as the apostle Peter puts it (1Pt. 4:6).

This also implies a readiness on the part of all Christians to attend specifically to the needs of those in special need especially those considered the lost, last and least in society who become the primary recipients of the Church's social projects. In them the Church is challenged to become true to her missionary character and at the same time to seek to continually become an ardent promoter of human dignity among the entire people of God.

The Church as an exemplary model of communion considers ecumenism as part of its long-term mission. The Church hopes to gather together from all corners of the world all her children who have been scattered from the fold. The Church is continuously working towards an ecumenical reconciliation among the separated Christian Churches, primarily the Orthodox Church. This reconciliation does not simply mean a return, but more importantly an achievement of a full communion with them so that the Church becomes truly what she is: a herald of communion.

Lastly, the Church becomes a prototype, an ideal, and a model of communion between people and nations, between rich and poor, women and men. This parable of communion is best experienced in the Eucharist. Through our participation in the Eucharistic meal we become one people and become united in Christ's Body, the Church. It is in the Eucharist that we find all our differences recognized and celebrated. The Eucharist becomes a reminder for us that He who unites us is stronger than those things that divide us.

At the end of the communal work in the *bayanihan* spirit, the host family prepares *fiesta*. There is indeed a reason to celebrate. The work is done! Yet the Church's mission of bringing all people together is far from being over. We are continuously being invited as a Church to foster communion as we look forward to the heavenly Church—where this unity of the People of God that seems elusive in this earthly life will find its eschatological fulfillment.

CHURCH OF THE POOR?

Remembering the Sumilao Farmers

Ismael Jose Chan-Gonzaga, SJ

How will the Church respond when the "rich and privileged" who pay for our parish chapels, for our seminarians' studies, for our annual pilgrimages to Rome, or even for our parish social services, are the same "rich and privileged" who shackle the dignity of the poor and trample upon the rights of those who are weak and downtrodden? Allow me to illustrate the most recent struggle we, as a "Church" (or at least something close to being one), fought for—the Cause of the Sumilao Farmers.

Indispensable Background

On 9 October 1997, 29 farmers, members of the MAPALAD farmers' association, from San Vicente, Sumilao, Bukidnon staged simultaneous hunger strikes outside the DAR offices of Metro Manila and Cagayan de Oro. They were protesting the illegal Conversion Order by the Office of the President (OP) of 144 hectares of land that was previously titled to them by virtue of a Certificate of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). The Conversion Order was signed by Executive Secretary Ruben Torres after a petition by then Bukidnon Governor Carlos O. Fortich, asking to allow the conversion of the land of Norberto Quisumbing Sr. from agricultural to agro-industrial land. The conversion offered an irresistible development plan which included a Science High School, a Museum, a hotel, and a golf course.

For 28 days the farmers camped outside the DAR offices refusing to take in anything but occasional water offered to them. Their supporters were moved by their great self-sacrifice for the sake of a measly 144-hectare plot of land out of more than a thousand hectares of agricultural land in Sumilao. Pressured to resolve the issue, President Fidel Ramos offered a "win-win resolution" that saw 100 hectares awarded to the farmers and 44 hectares to Norberto Quisumbing. The farmers rejoiced in what they thought was a victory for them. They ate and broke bread with their supporters and went home joyful and hopeful. But tragedy struck just a few months after, when the Supreme Court nullified the President's "win-win solution" and re-affirmed Executive Torres' conversion order. In an instant, the joys and triumphs of the hunger strikers turned into weeping and desolation. After a long and tedious legal battle that saw one farmer commit suicide and the farmers' two promising young lawyers by the names of Bobby Gana and Caloy Ollado die in a plane crash while on their way to Sumilao to deliver the bad news of the Supreme Court's decision, the farmers of San Vicente remained landless, depraved and cheated by the very law that was suppose to protect them.

Yet, hope springs eternal. Even as the High Court ruled against the farmers and allowed the conversion order to be implemented, it included a clause that stipulated that if the development plan was not implemented within five years from its approval, then the conversation order is thereby revoked and the land in contention is immediately subjected to agrarian reform, ready for distribution. The Supreme Court's judgment became final and executory in 1999; thus, development should have finished by 2004. However, Norberto Quisumbing Sr. had no plans of development. Instead, he sold the idle, undeveloped land to San Miguel Foods Incorporated (SMFI) in 2002. The farmers and their support groups immediately petitioned for revocation of the conversion order in 2005. The DAR national office did not act on the case for two long years, issuing a decision only in 2007 stating that it does not have the power to revoke the order since it was the OP that issued the conversion order in the first place. All the while by December of 2006, SMFI began rushing the building of a piggery project (contrary and not part of the original development plan of 1997) in the contested land.

The Struggle Continued

And so, exactly ten years after that first hunger strike, 55 farmers, this time, composed of two organizations, MAPALAD and SALFA, began their historic march on foot from Bukidnon to Metro Manila. They were two groups because together with some of the original hunger strikers of the last decade were their sons and daughters, now belonging to SALFA who, instead of inheriting parcels of



land from which they could feed their future families, have inherited the struggle and bitter reality. They continue to be foreigners in their native place, denied of the very God-given right to till the land they should be calling their own.

They awoke national interest with their non-violent means of protesting the non-action on their petition for agrarian reform on a 144-hectare prime agricultural land. As they walked to Manila, they had nothing but two sacks of corn-rice and impregnable faith in the Divine. God held them truly in His hands. Two super typhoons threatened them in Bicol, yet not one reached landfall. Sickness and injury threatened them in Samar, yet not one of them needed to be rushed to the hospital. By the time they reached Laguna, they already had five sacks of rice and more than ten boxes of canned goods. Ordinary citizens went out of their way to offer whatever they had. Priests of Eastern Visayas and Northern Mindanao made sure the farmers had a roof above their heads when evening came. They became an uniting figure for many of us. When they arrived at the Ateneo de Manila last December 5, 2007, no less than Cardinal Rosales himself met them, celebrated mass for them, and instructed the Church to stand with them in their struggle and make sure that his personal letter be hand-carried safely to the President.

Stand by them the Church did. On 17 December 2007 priests, brothers, sisters, and seminarians, together with other supporters—students, professionals, ordinary citizens—escorted the farmers to Malacanang to meet the President. The following day, the Office of the President issued an order revoking the conversion order of 1997. The entire nation rejoiced but the farmers kept silent. They were afraid that the treachery of 1997 might happen again. Yet, they were hopeful. They trusted that the President would not betray them. On 22 December 2007 they took the President's offer of a C-130 military plane and went back home to San Vicente, Sumilao, Bukidnon.

January 2008 came and yet, no distribution had been made and SMFI continued to build on the disputed land. Each day that passed, the land in contention became smaller and smaller, thanks to the non-stop construction of SMFI. Their fear was coming true: it was 1997 all over again! They are betrayed all over again. And so, twelve of their leaders came back to Manila to continue the struggle and keep the advocacy alive. We stayed with them day and night as they walked around the Metropolis, moving from school to school, parish to parish, religious house to religious institution. We knew something was wrong, SMFI continued to build as our farmers continued to grow hungry. The Cardinal himself and Bishop Pabillo quietly met with Ramon Ang and SMFI and yet they continued to stall the negotiations. On 1 March 2008, 132 farmers arrived from Bukidnon to supplement the 12 leaders already in Manila. All in all, 144 farmers representing the 144 hectares of land they were fighting for were ready to continue the struggle here in Manila. They decided to march

WHEN OUR SOCIAL ADVOCACY UNITS LIMIT THEMSELVES TO ONLINE PETITIONS AND CAMPAIGNS, OVERLOOKING THE HUNGRY POOR AT THE VERY DOORSTEPS OF OUR ESTEEMED UNIVERSITY, I ASK: DO WE UNDERSTAND WHAT BEING *CHURCH OF THE POOR* REALLY MEANS?

around Malacanang doing a *Jericho March* until the land be returned to them.

The numbers and the support that started to swell again for our farmer brothers and sisters were just too much for the stone-hearted. The government did nothing but the people proved our patience too has a limit. In panic, the government and SMC tried to send feelers that they would act on our case as long as we do not continue marching. They asked for a gesture of goodwill on our part as if ten years of suffering and 1,200 kilometers of frustration were not enough. But goodwill we had and the *Jericho March* was forestalled. The farmers camped on the lawn of Caritas Manila at the mercy of the weather. Many of the farmers started to get sick. A few had to be hospitalized, while the negotiations got delayed repetedly. Time was definitely not the famers' ally. They were left with no option but to pick up the march once more.

And then, the miracle came. SMC conceded and a compromise agreement was reached. Fifty hectares from the contested 144-hectare land would be "donated" back to the farmers and the balance of 94 hectares would be taken from nearby farmlands that SMC would buy for the farmers. During the days leading to the signing of the agreement, the farmers and their supporters could not sleep out of nervousness but also out of hopeful anxiety. Finally, on 29 March 2008, the farmers—together with their support groups—marched for one last time from Caritas Manila to San Carlos Seminary for the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement.

Early morning of March 30, a C-130 and another aircraft brought home the farmers to their beloved San Vicente, Sumilao. They walked, together with their supporters from Cagayan de Oro, starting at the boundary of San Vicente all the way to the contested land. Tears and wild celebration marked the symbolic entry to the fifty-hectare land returned to them. Finally after twelve years of struggle, the farmers enter into the contested land. Finally, their children can reap the tears, sweat, and blood of their struggle. They are farmers once more!

Church of the Poor?

"This is an issue of justice," Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales exclaimed before the media during the return of twelve Sumilao farmers to Manila last January 17, 2008. "Development and Progress must never be built on an injustice," the Cardinal said further. *"If we let this case go and compromise our very principle, then we are saying that it is perfectly moral and acceptable to simply pick any land or property, without respect for its owners, and all for the sake of 'progress' claim it as your own."*

It was Manila Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Pabillo who reminded me that we are a Church of the Poor. We were together one evening preparing to find ways to help the farmers and I asked him about the Church's position on matters like this. He told me, "Read PCP II, it says we are a church of the poor. It should be clear." I simply nodded, but to my mind, several questions sprung up: When seminarians are admonished by their bishop for appearing in a rally in favor of the poor because the personalities involved are "major benefactors," was *Church of the Poor* operative? When an archbishop, who is so vocal about almost anything under the sun from *jueteng* to the marriage license requirements, writes a letter of support to the very corporation that continues to rape the poor's very source of life and future, is *Church of the Poor* really that clear? When your bishop literally turns his back on the faithful who approached him begging for his support for the Sumilao farmers, are we truly being a *Church of the Poor*? When our social advocacy units limit themselves to online petitions and campaigns, overlooking the hungry poor at the very doorsteps of our esteemed university, I ask: do we really understand what being *Church of the Poor* is?

Then I remember the many ordinary individuals who came to the farmers' camp, day in and day out, bringing food or clothing, or simply to keep them company. There, I saw the true *Church of the Poor*. I remember the students from different universities, every day, after and even in between classes, visiting and accompanying the farmers and encouraging them, and I truly see the very finger of God. As I remember the sisters, brothers, and priests who opened the doors of their institutions and the use of their buses and facilities for the farmers—schools, orphanages, retreat houses, and hospitals—I cannot deny that for those months of 2007-2008, God Himself truly walked with and amongst us. Yes, it is much clearer to me now. We are *Church of the Poor* after all.

The DEVIL Question

LST Theological Hours *featured early this year a conference delivered by Father Jose F. Syquia, a known exorcist and author. He recounted his experiences of exorcism and his thoughts on the existence and nature of the devil. The interesting conference led Tinig Loyola to pursue the Devil Question and* **Father Joseph Smith SJ**, *emeritus professor of Systematic Theology, graciously proposed the following text as springboards for further research and theological reflection.*



"The devil is not a mythological personification of evil in the world but an existent being. On the other hand, the devil must not be seen as God's independent and equal antagonist. He is an absolutely finite creature whose evil nature remains circumscribed by God's power, freedom, and goodness."

(K. Rahner & H. Vorgrimler, *Concise Theological Dictionary*, rev. ed., 1983, p. 123).

THE DEVIL IN CHURCH TEACHING:

"A definition of the Fourth Lateran Council categorically declares that 'evil has not existed from the beginning but that everything evil has temporal limits and arises from the free choice of creatures' (DS 800 = ND 19)." "In this connection, it is stated that God created Satan and other devils good by nature but that they became evil of their own accord. Thus, this definition presupposes the existence of devils, which is not however expressly taught." "This doctrinal text presents no explicit teaching about the existence of the devil, but simply presupposes it." (Fourth Lateran Council (1215), K. Rahner & H. Vorgrimler, *Concise Theological Dictionary*, rev. ed., 1983, pp. 121, 123-124).

In the context of H. Haag's book Abschied vom Teufel (1996), *in a General Audience on 15 November 1972, Pope Paul VI delivered the address "Deliver Us from Evil," in which he said:* >>>

"Evil is not merely a lack of something, but an effective agent, a living spiritual being, perverted and perverting. A terrible reality. Mysterious and frightening. It is contrary to the teaching of the Bible and the Church to refuse to recognize the existence of such a reality, or to regard it as a principle in itself which does not draw its origin from God like every other creature or to explain it as a pseudo-reality, a conceptual and fanciful personification of the unknown causes of our misfortunes." (*L'Osservatore Romano*, November 23, 1972, p. 3).

THE DEVIL ACCORDING TO THEOLOGIANS:

The Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has commissioned an expert to prepare the following study, which the Sacred Congregation strongly recommends as a sure foundation for the reaffirmation of the teaching of the Magisterium on the theme "Christian Faith and Demonology." This is the same context of Haag's Abschied vom Teufel *statement quoted above.* >>>

"Briefly then, the Church's position in regard to demonology is clear and firm. It is true that in the course of the centuries the existence of Satan and of the devils has never in fact been the object of an explicit declaration of the Magisterium. The reason for this is that the question was never posed in these terms. Both heretics and the faithful, basing their respective positions on sacred Scripture, were in agreement in recognizing the existence of Satan and the devils and their main misdeeds. This is why, when the reality of the devil is called into question today, it is to the constant and universal belief of the Church and to its main source, the teaching of Christ, that one must appeal, as has been stated. It is in fact in the teaching of the Gospel and as something at the heart of the faith that the existence of the demonic world is shown to be a dogmatic datum. The present-day unease which we described at the beginning does not therefore call into question a secondary element of Christian thinking; it is a question, rather, of the constant belief of the Church, of her manner of conceiving redemption and, at the root source, it goes against the very consciousness of Jesus." ("Christian Faith and Demonology," *L'Osservatore Romano*, July 10, 1975, pp. 6-10).

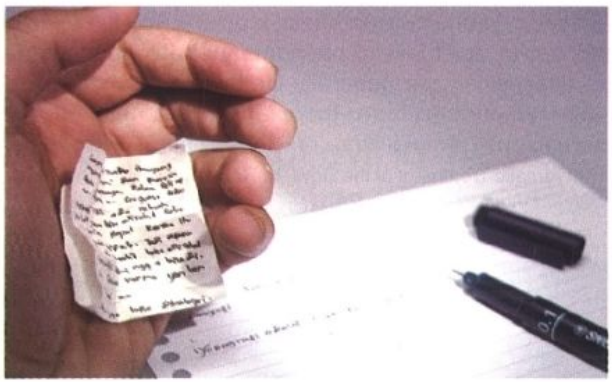
"There is no reason to put the doctrine of the devil in the forefront of the hierarchy of truths when preaching the faith today, as was to some extent done in earlier times (e.g. by Luther). Not because there is no enduring statement of faith concerning the devil, but because what it means for the actual practice of Christian life can be said, as far as its decisive content is concerned, even without explicit teaching about the devil. And at the very least, because access to this doctrine is relatively difficult for people today. Nor is the devil mentioned in the great creeds. Consequently we must very definitely avoid drawing on the traditional arsenal of popular pictures of the devil (distinct classes of demons with special functions, proper names of some devils, etc.). Probably the exorcisms at baptism, etc., will have to be more soberly expressed in the new liturgy. In defending genuinely dogmatic teaching about the devil, appeal to spiritualistic phenomena or to phenomena of possession are generally ineffective, for both meet with skepticism from [people] accustomed to the scrupulous empiricism of the natural sciences." (Kerygmatic Treatment of the Devil. K. Rahner, "Devil:II. The Devil," *Sacramentum Mundi*, II, p. 74).



Saint Anthony and the devil in guise of a woman by Master Osservanza

NIPPING IT IN THE BUD!

Nono Alfonso, SJ



WHEN FUTURE PRIESTS CHEAT—THEY WHO SHALL BECOME MORAL BEACONS OF THE NATION IN THE FUTURE—IS THERE REALLY HOPE OF REVERSING THE ENDEMIC CULTURE OF CORRUPTION THAT PREVAILS IN THE PHILIPPINES? CHEATING ON AN EXAM TODAY SHALL TRANSLATE TO MILLIONS IN BRIBERY MONEY AND QUESTIONABLE "DONATIONS" IN THE FUTURE.

Utterly scandalous! Terribly shocking! Totally brazen! Nope, these expletives are not meant for the systemic corruption in government being epitomized by the aborted NBN-ZTE deal or the Northrail Project. They are meant for an anomaly that transpired within the very walls of our school this past semester and perpetuated by allegedly God-fearing seminarians. In particular, the incident involved cheating on a quarterly exam.

According to *Tinig Loyola* sources, the class (we are not going to mention the year level) was scheduled to take an exam early this year. The students therefore had ample time to review during the long break in December. On the day of exam, the professor somehow miscalculted the length of the test he was giving. He agreed to give the students an extension but unfortunately another class was to occupy the room. The professor himself was also needed elsewhere. He and the students then agreed that those who had no more class could proceed to the library and continue the exam there; as for those who had to attend a next subject, they could take it afterwards. And thus, one group went to the library and another took the exam after their next subject. To both groups, the professor appealed that without anyone proctoring them, the "honor system" should be observed. He initially hesitated making this reminder since it seemed superfluous or unnecessary to students of theology, the majority of whom were either religious or seminarians. He would be proven wrong in his assumptions.

A day or two after the exams, first hand witnesses, much like Jun Lozada, came to the professor and reported cheating. According to one, who took the exam in the classroom, he saw three students either pulling out their class notes or soliciting the right answers from fellow students. What was further disturbing for this witness was that he saw these same guys cheating

in another exam during the first semester. Shocked at this discovery and feeling betrayed of the trust he accorded his students, the professor confronted his class. Initially the students were dumbfounded, especially a lay student who said she could not believe this could happen in a theological school. Then two or three students denied that cheating happened in the exam. Finally two students stood up and admitted seeing a couple of students cheat. One seminarian even made an appeal. He said before becoming a religious, he admittedly cheated on his college exams. But as a religious, such an activity, he said would be totally unacceptable. It betrays one's very identity and violates the very religious vows one has made. The professor then decided to nullify the exams and asked for a retake, despite the complaints of perhaps the honest ones in his class. And a week later, reminiscent of the retakes conducted last year by government for the nursing and engineering board exams, the theology students retook their own exams.

Whether the professor or the school conducted further investigations on this cheating incident which they should *Tinig Loyola* sources could no longer tell us. Can the professor, for example, be held accountable for creating a situation of temptation, leaving his ward unattended? But can he be faulted however for trusting them too much on the ground that they are, after all, theology students? All this notwithstanding, definitely this recent incident of cheating is not a solitary incident. In the past, cases of plagiarism on term papers, cheating on exams, and even the theft of library books have been reported. Penalties for these crimes have varied from being asked to rewrite a paper, flunking the student involved or expulsion. Definitely such crimes have no place anywhere but more so in a theological school. It is no secret that the Church has lost credibility because of the corruption that exists even within her. She cannot effectively preach truth when she herself commits lies and untruths. The Loyola School of Theology is said to be training ground for the future leaders of the Church. It does not only try to give its students theological instruction but value formation as well. It behooves the LST community therefore to nip this anomaly in the bud lest the school contributes later on to the further erosion of the Church's credibility. As for those involved in this cheating exam, an expletive against government howled at the Jun Lozada exposes is most apt: *"Mahiya naman kayo!"*

country rank	country	2007 CPI score	surveys used	confidence range
1	Denmark	9.4	6	9.2 - 9.6
1	Finland	9.4	6	9.2 - 9.6
1	New Zealand	9.4	6	9.2 - 9.6
4	Singapore	9.3	9	9.0 - 9.5
4	Sweden	9.3	6	9.1 - 9.4
6	Iceland	9.2	6	8.3 - 9.6
7	Netherlands	9.0	6	8.8 - 9.2
7	Switzerland	9.0	6	8.8 - 9.2
9	Canada	8.7	6	8.3 - 9.1
9	Norway	8.7	6	8.0 - 9.2
11	Australia	8.6	8	8.1 - 9.0
...	...	...	...	...
131	Burundi	2.5	7	2.0 - 3.0
131	Honduras	2.5	6	2.3 - 2.6
131	Iran	2.5	4	2.0 - 3.0
131	Libya	2.5	4	2.1 - 2.6
131	Nepal	2.5	7	2.3 - 2.7
131	Philippines	2.5	9	2.3 - 2.7
...	...	...	...	...
172	Chad	1.8	7	1.7 - 1.9
172	Sudan	1.8	6	1.6 - 1.9
175	Tonga	1.7	3	1.5 - 1.8
175	Uzbekistan	1.7	7	1.6 - 1.9
177	Haiti	1.6	4	1.3 - 1.8
178	Iraq	1.5	4	1.3 - 1.7
179	Myanmar	1.4	4	1.1 - 1.7
179	Somalia	1.4	4	1.1 - 1.7

In the annual survey of Transparency International, Phillipines consistently landed among countries whose corruption index worsens constantly. In the 2007 Corruption Perception Index, released early in 2008, Philippines ranked 131st among 173 nations (1 being the least corrupt; 173 being most corrupt).

Corruption in the Philippines is perceived to be so pervasive that it shows itself from the highest positions of government offices, churches, schools and other institutions that are supposed to be guardians of morality and integrity.

Reversal of this trend requires massive and radical action on the part of the new generation, those who can say, "We have been victimized, but the buck stops here"!

The Academic Year Thus far . . .

Holy Spirit Mass Held

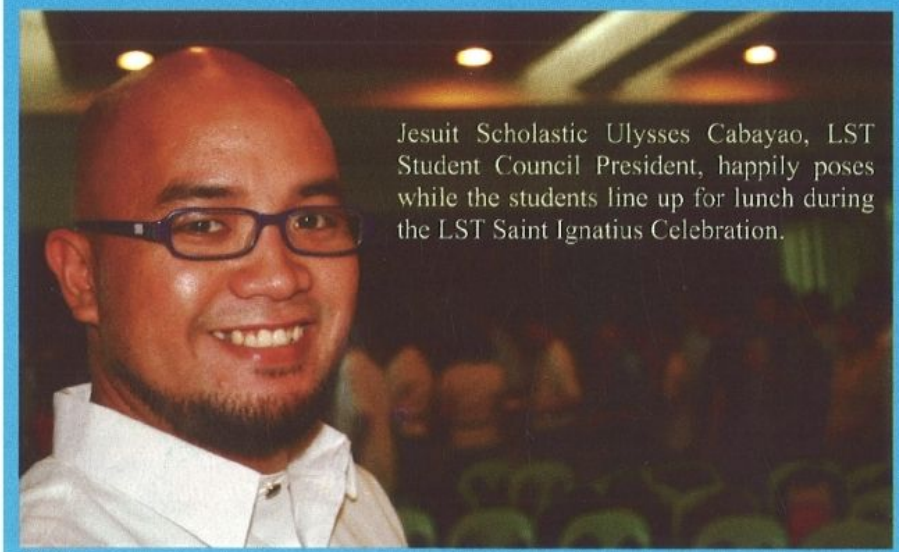
After a week of introductory lessons and settling down, on 18 June 2008, Father Jose Cecilio Magadia SJ, Provincial of the Philippine Jesuits and Vice-Chancellor of Loyola School of Theology presided over the traditional Holy Spirit Mass. The liturgy is traditionally held to invoke the grace of the Holy Spirit for the LST community for the academic year.

In his homily, Father Magadia challenged the community to overcome three "phobias," namely, Fear of Change, Fear of Rigour and Fear of the Ugly—those realities in life from which we tend to insulate ourselves either by denial or by various forms of escapism. The usual acquiantance party at the Cardinal Sin Center followed the liturgy.

Students Elect Student Council

On 2-4 July 2008, Loyola School of Theology students exercised their right to vote and elected this year's Student Council. With a good majority of LTS students voting, the following results emerged: Jesuit Scholastic Ulysses Cabayao was elected President, Andro de Vera, a San Jose seminarian was elected Vice-President, Oblate of Mary Immaculate Jericho Venarta was seated as Secretary, and Xaverian Seminarian Vivinio Matugas Jr. was elected as Treasurer. The campaign period was almost uneventful with the candidates going from room to room, not so much as competitors but as members of a team.

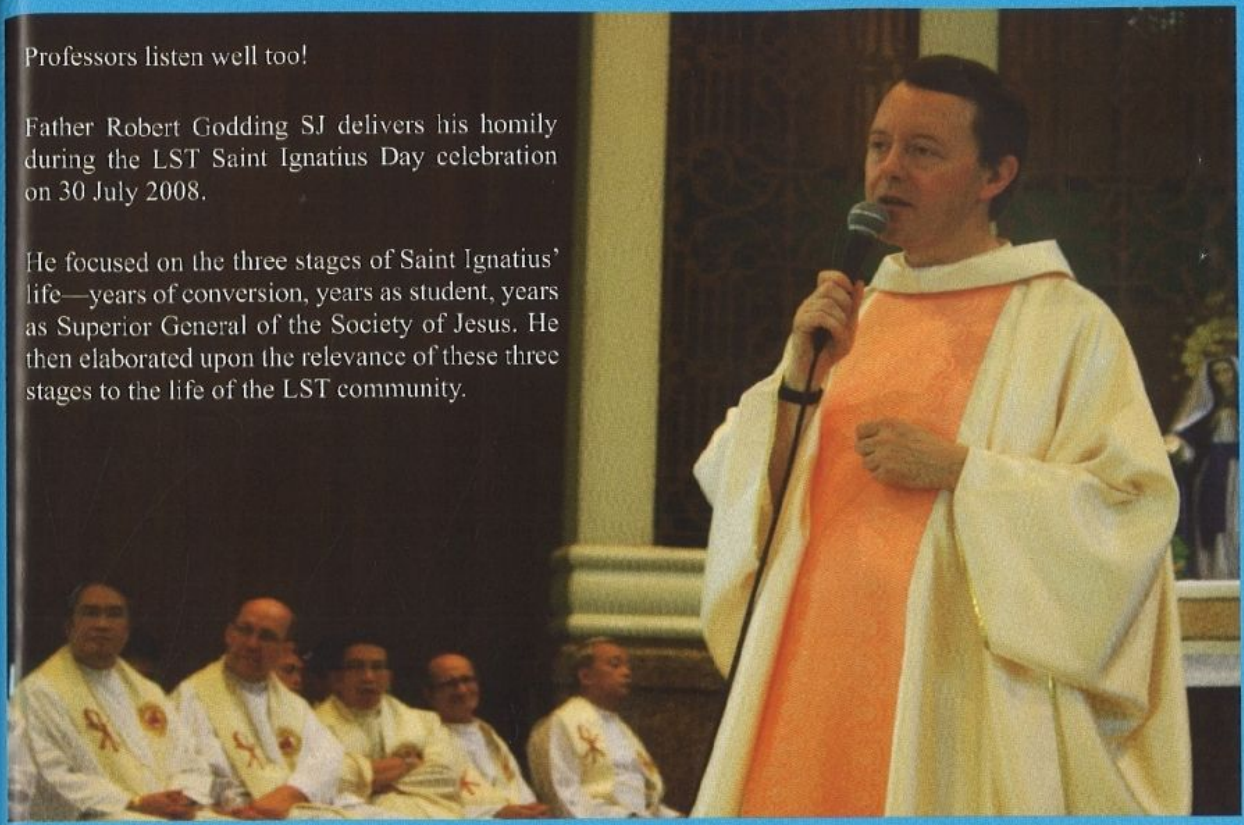
On 9 July 2008, they were inducted to their respective offices by Father Mario Francisco SJ, President of Loyola School of Theology. After the induction rites, the reorganization of the various committees followed. New sets of officers were elected to man the various auxiliary teams that assist the Student Council officers.



Jesuit Scholastic Ulysses Cabayao, LST Student Council President, happily poses while the students line up for lunch during the LST Saint Ignatius Celebration.

LST Welcomes Back Visiting Professors

Loyola School of Theology has always been graced with the presence of internationally renowned professors. This semester, LST welcomes back two prominent theologians in their respective fields to boost the roster of professors. The first is an expert in the field of Biblical Exegesis and Theology, Father John Keating SJ. He is handling the Pentateuch for this semester, and will handle the course on the Prophets next semester. Father Keating is a professor *emeritus* of Fordham University and one of the redactors of the New American Bible. Since he first taught here in 2006, Father Keating has come



Professors listen well too!

Father Robert Godding SJ delivers his homily during the LST Saint Ignatius Day celebration on 30 July 2008.

He focused on the three stages of Saint Ignatius' life—years of conversion, years as student, years as Superior General of the Society of Jesus. He then elaborated upon the relevance of these three stages to the life of the LST community.

back two times. This time instead of staying just for a semester, he is staying for the entire academic year.

The second professor is Father Robert Godding SJ, a member of the elite Bolandist association. Father Godding is an authority when it comes to Church history and research. He is handling a class on Early Church History and offers an elective course on the writings of the Church Fathers. Father Godding will have class only until mid-August, because he has to go back to Europe to resume his teaching there. He ordinarily teaches at LST every two years.

Fathers Ska and Dlugos Graced Theological Hours

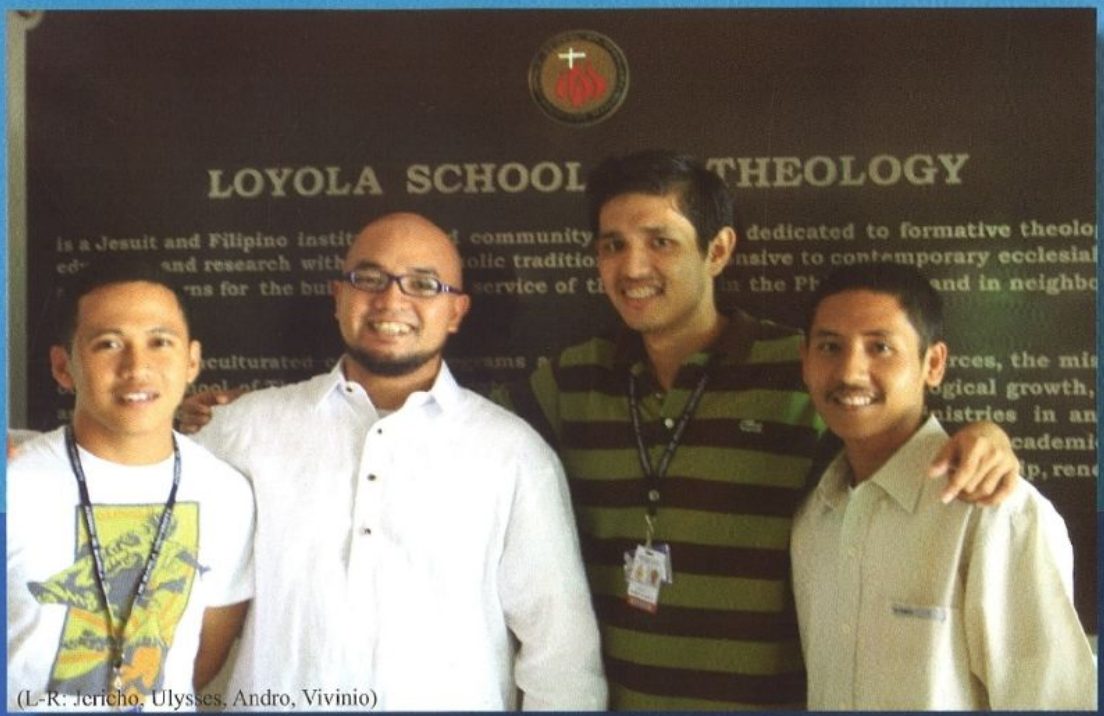
The past Theological Hours were indeed extraordinary as they featured conferences by two international experts. On 16 July 2008, Jean Louis Ska SJ gave a conference on Genesis 11 with the catchy title: "Who is Laughing at Whom?" On 23 July, he again gave a public lecture, this time on the Prophet Jonah and the conversion of Nineveh. Father Ska is a professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University and was also in the country to meet with the Bible scholars association.

An Augustinian priest, Raymond Dlugos gave a conference for the Theological Hour on 23 July 2008. His topic was on "Sexual and Affective Maturity among Priests and Religious." Father Dlugos is director of the Southdown Institute in Canada which is known to promote effective intervention concerning issues of sexual maturity and development among priests and consecrated people.

LST Employees CBA Negotiations

The Employees' Association of Loyola School of Theology and the LST Administration are currently reviewing the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). With the economic difficulties felt both on the domestic and institutional levels, the CBA is also experiencing challenges. Father Mario Francisco SJ, LST President, in his letter dated 14 July requested the LST community to pray for the resolution of the ongoing CBA process.

LST Student Council and Members of Various Committees



(L-R: Jericho, Ulysses, Andro, Vivinio)

Student Council Officers

Academic Year 2008-2009

President: **Ulysses S. Cabayao, SJ**
Vice-President: **Andro Q. De Vera, DS**
Secretary: **Jericho B. Venarta, OMI**
Treasurer: **Vivinio B. Matugas, Jr., SX**

Sports Committee

Coordinator: **Braulio Dahunan**
Secretary: **Joseph Brian Suficiencia**
Members: **Tran Kiem Van, Rommel Dupang, Darius Antigua, Herman Santo Djabur, Jeffty Mendez, Ian Paul Empig, Kirby Bagaslao, Rey Carvyn Ondap**

Liturgical Committee

Coordinator: **Roy Belocura**
Secretary: **Leo Lou Arche**
Treasurer: **Mark Neil Eronico**
Members: **Raymond Cruz, Jordan Orbe, Jason Dy, Jomar Momo, Ricky Montanez, Francis Ledesma**

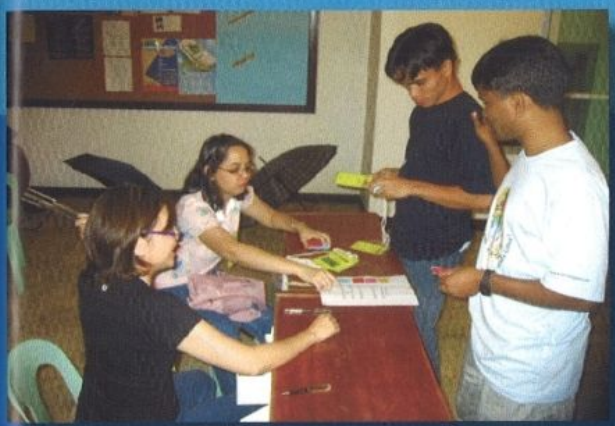
Social Involvement and Advocacy Committee

Coordinator: **Rachel Sanchez**

Secretary: **Kirby Bagaslao**

Finance Officer: **Froilem Bonn Barreto**

Members: **Angelo Roberto Diana, Mark Pagente, Karl Comiling, Jomari Manzano, Richard Ella Joseph Brian Suficiencia, Arvin Bellen**



Out Reach Committee

Coordinator: **Aloma Bao**

Secretary: **Eric Jun Viray**

Treasurer: **Leodie Riza Remedio**

Members: **Rolly Torillos, Jovy Garcia, Irvin Morastil, Marjeo Delfin, Diosdado Manzano, Karl Comiling, Roque de la Pena, Michael Matt Bertis, Suzanne Galan, Kennedy Neral, Candido Bayron Jr., Lucas Nepone, Robbie Sian, Jovanni Abad, Benigno Etulle, Gerald Supranes, Angelo Roberto Diana**



Publication Committee

(*Tinig Loyola* and *Teologo*)

Editor-in-Chief: **Cris Fajardo**

Associate Editor: **Ian Paul Empig**

Feature Editor: **Javier Alpasa**

Literary Editor: **Joseph Haw**

Circulation Manager: **Marjeo Delfin**

Business Manager: **Olivery Dy**

Staff Secretary: **Javier Alpasa**

Pool of Writers: **IJ Chan-Gonzaga Kell Ortega, Jenny Capindo Grace Gana, Vivinio Matugas Jr.**

Theological Hour Committee

Coordinator: **Noel Bava**

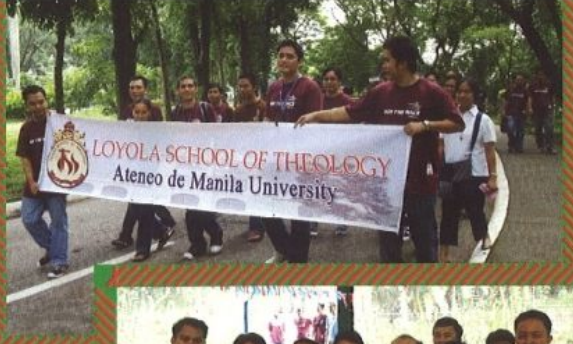
Assistant Coordinator: **Jody Magtoto**

Secretary and Treasurer: **Roberto Boholst**

Members: **Braulio Dahunan, Lando Jaluag, Francis Alvarez, Renee Bernardo, Marigail Gines**

Note: Some committees now have expanded membership.

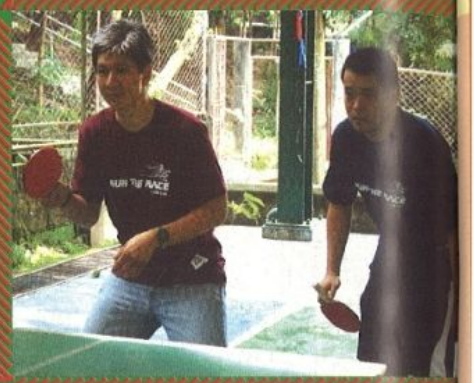




























LST Sports Fest 2008