Tinig Loyola

Student Publication of Loyola School of Theology
Volume 9 ◆ No. 1 ◆ August 2007



Growing Pains

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The Cover

Any growth entails pain as much as new and more fruitful life requires certain forms of death. The cover art, "*Growing Pains*," is a work of Jesuit Scholastic Jason Dy as he reflects on the process of growth that Loyola School of Theology is presently undergoing. Jason provided the illustrations of the books, *Once Upon a Time in Asia* and *Eastern Wisdom for Western Minds* (Manila:Claretian/Jesuit and New York:Orbis Books)

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EDITORIAL

By Nono Alfonso, SJ

In Pursuit of
Life in Abundance

Growth can be painful, because it challenges us to change. And change can be difficult for it makes us face the inconvenient truths about our lives, makes us confront our demons and, as a favorite formation expression goes, it summons us to get out of our comfort zones. And yet, as Thomas Scott, Cardinal Newman's dear friend who influenced his conversion to Catholicism says, "growth [is] the only evidence of life." If we want to grow, if we want to live, change is inevitable. Not to change is to remain stagnant. Not to change is to slowly die.

Not only on the individual plane is change desirable. The Spirit also blows in the lives of institutions such as our beloved Loyola School of Theology (LST). When the school started out in the 1960s, it served only Jesuit, San Jose, and OMI seminarians. The teachers then were mostly Jesuits. After four decades, the school is now populated by about 400 students, religious and lay, coming not only from the Philippines but also from other parts of the world, especially Asia. The faculty is likewise growing, with non-Jesuit religious and lay professors as part of its roster. LST's physical landscape has vastly improved as well, with a competitive library and media-technology enabled classrooms.

Notwithstanding all these developments, the school, under the leadership of Fr. Jose Mario Francisco, SJ, is gearing up for more changes. Last year saw the launch of a series of dialogues and reflection sessions involving various sectors within the LST community. The starting point of these dialogues focused on the question: if our vision-mission for ourselves is to help build the Church in Asia, how do we get there? How can the school administration, the faculty, staff, and the students help one another flesh out this vision? What more can each group contribute or even sacrifice so the school can realize its noble goals?



Thinking like a good businessman, the LST President consulted the so-called clientele of the school as well. If our goal is to train and form Church workers, future shepherds and stewards, how do we ascertain the needs of our flock? How can we be more responsive and sensitive to these needs? Already, through the Theological Hour, we have begun these dialogues, listening to representatives from non-government organizations and the poor. During the semester, Philippine business great Mr. Manuel Pangilinan will address the school and talk about the delicate relationship between the Church and the business sector. In brief, the school is going through an internal and external auditing of sorts in order to strengthen her service for a Church that finds herself in the middle of a fast-changing world.

We at TINIG LOYOLA support these efforts of the school. We offer this issue as our humble contribution to this process of self-reflection that LST has undertaken. In fear and trembling, we approach this subject matter. We expect eyebrows to be raised, feathers ruffled, with our bold and daring look at the school, especially in the areas we feel need to be improved: the academic curriculum, our extra-curricular activities, the students and the faculty. We can do no less. Every school organ worthy of its name, must, within the parameters of the ethics of fair and balanced journalism, speak its mind as it were. We hope to do no less. For that is how we are being trained by the school: to be prophets, proclaiming the truth from our best lights. We hope that this issue of TINIG LOYOLA can provoke thought and spur further reflection among the members of the LST community on its way to further growth and more abundant life.

S is for SCHOOL

By Cris Fajardo, SJ

Loyola School of Theology is a Catholic and ecclesiastical theological school. Her *Vision and Mission* describes her as an **"institution and community of learning** dedicated to formative **theological education and research** within the Catholic tradition." Clearly, LST's core *raison d'être* is to provide adequate and efficient academic-theological formation. Though the clientele of LST is increasingly becoming more and more heterogeneous, seminarians still make up the bulk of its community. It is therefore interesting to take a glance at the special role that LST plays vis-à-vis the integral formation of future priests, which by extension may apply to lay students likewise.

The Updated Philippine Program of Priestly Formation [UPPPF] (2006), which draws heavily on *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, identifies four areas of formation for seminarians: *human formation*, *spiritual formation*, *intellectual formation* and *pastoral formation* (nos. 18-21). Though cognizant of the intricate interconnectedness of these four areas, it must be clearly affirmed that the competency of LST is in intellectual formation.

True, the buzz word nowadays is "integration." In fact, the same document affirms the ideal holistic approach in formation (no. 22). The human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral areas of formation are to be addressed simultaneously. Programs addressing them must complement one another. Formands are to be approached as human persons and not as aggregates of various faculties and components. However, unbridled and uncritical holism also has its perils. With the growing pragmatism in society and in the Church, some important areas of formation may be sacrificed on the altar of holism. Academic formation is perhaps one of the first victims.

If anti-intellectualism is present in society, it is also felt in the Church. At times, anti-intellectualism is even intelligently expressed. A friend of mine once quipped: "What's the use of Rahner to a hungry kid in Katipunan?" Cases of intellectual pastors who do not deliver pastorally effective homilies further strengthen the ground for protest. Given the need for socially involved ministry, the speculative and scientific dimension of theological formation can be seen as superfluous or even counter-productive. Activism is the tempting alternative. The pursuit of truth is given up for socialization, and knowledge is reduced to practical skills.



However, without denying some realities that provoke anti-intellectualism, future priests are expected to understand the deep mysteries of the faith and Tradition. As UPPPF asserts, they are expected to understand and respond to humanity's "many questions and concerns due to massive suffering and injustice … and new developments in the political, economic, social, cultural, technological, and religious life…" (no. 20). Inevitably, they are to be teachers and leaders of the people.

Furthermore, UPPPF asserts that the "intellectual formation can be regarded as a component of both human and spiritual formation" (no. 94). Indeed, a broader intellectual milieu provides wider horizons, perspectives and ways of appreciating human life and of understanding the mysteries of our faith, which are essential to future priests' personal and pastoral life. Aren't liturgical celebrations more meaningful after the course on Worship and the Sacraments? Aren't we more confident in facing our parishes after our course on Pastoral Methods? Didn't Christology help color and enflesh our contemplation?

While exerting all efforts at enriching and enlivening our theological studies with the pastoral, human and spiritual aspects of formation, at the end of the day, LST's mission is to form her students intellectually. The locus for ultimate integration remains the respective seminaries where the seminarians reside. It is there, guided by their particular charisms and mission, that the crucial integration must happen. A loss of focus on its primary goal of intellectual formation may altogether compromise LST's singular and precious contribution to the integral formation of future priests under her auspices.

We, LST students, should expect no less from the Loyola School of Theology. We expect her to train us in the rigor and discipline of theological studies, research and reflection. LST should, likewise, expect no less from us. We are here to study, to listen, to reflect, to ask questions and to seek for answers.

In the acronym LST, S is not for seminary, S is not for socialization, S is not for shortcuts. S is for SCHOOL. So, a school let us be.

BECAUSE YOU ASKED...

James H. Kroeger, M.M.

The Strategic Planning Process for the Loyola School of Theology, begun in earnest during the second semester of school-year 2006-2007, is a multifaceted endeavor. There are attempts to understand the LST environment through internal and external scans. Theological Hours with special foci have been organized. The planning process is drawing upon LST's history, experience, programs, vision and personnel resources, only to mention a few items. Special meetings and assemblies engaging both students and faculty surface valuable insights. New options and possibilities for LST will certainly emerge from this plethora of initiatives and activities.

Tinig Loyola, the official student publication of LST, is also actively engaged in the planning process. This modest contribution, requested by *Tinig* editors, attempts to provide some faculty perspectives regarding the LST student body. It seeks to complement student essays on various dimensions of the school, fostering a mutual exchange of perceptions and opinions—all with the goal of improving the service rendered by our *alma mater*.

An informal questionnaire was sent to several faculty members; over a dozen responses were received. Consider the variety of respondents: seven nationalities; both women and men; six theological disciplines; lay, religious and ordained; ages ranging from the 30s to the 70s. All took precious time to write their input; because the students asked, faculty willingly obliged. Faculty members were requested to respond to two areas: *I appreciate LST students because...* and *Areas where LST student improvement is needed include...* What follows is a brief composite panorama of faculty impressions.

Appreciation of Students

A representative sampling of comments received in this area spans a broad panorama—it clearly represents faculty appreciation of the students they teach. Each of the following paragraphs contains the comments of a specific professor (you'll never guess who)!

♦ "LST students are generally eager to learn the Church's tradition while at the same time concerned about the pastoral significance of their academic studies. They have a strong spirit of camaraderie. The seminarians, religious, and the lay relate quite well both inside and outside of class. They are generally modest in dress and behavior, witnessing to simplicity of lifestyle."

♦ "I appreciate LST students because of their sincerity in terms of their vocation and faith as reason for taking on academic studies in theology. Especially lay students are very sincere in their studies."

♦ "Our students are very polite and courteous. I do not sense discrimination against "others." I enjoy my classes when students are not afraid to ask questions, including those they may deem heretical. The more honest they are, the richer our discussions. Our students are very committed to social justice issues. Their academic formation is clearly viewed in terms of equipping them for future ministry among the poor and marginalized."

♦ "I like their sense of community, their pride in being part of and loyal to LST (I don't know of any LST student who would rather study in another theological school in the country), and their active participation in school activities."

Many of the particular nationalities have impressed me in particular ways... the Vietnamese and Chinese students inspire me by their readiness to sacrifice for the Gospel and by their diligence and discipline in studying in a foreign language.

♦ "I appreciate LST students because they are a multicultural group. The mix of cultures and experiences provides a variety of viewpoints and enriches the class discussions. Given their busy schedules, they initiate a range of extracurricular activities which benefit not only themselves but people's needs. Their outreach programs are good manifestations of their engagement with the world and sincere concern for those in need."

♦ "I like the multi-ethnic character of the student population. The mix of nations and cultures makes for an interesting environment. Many of the particular nationalities have impressed me in particular ways. For example, the Vietnamese and Chinese students inspire me by their readiness to sacrifice for the Gospel and by their diligence and discipline in studying in a foreign language. The Filipinos bring a cheerful sociability and wit. Being with Sri Lankans, Colombians, Koreans, Indians, Myanmarese and others is both delightful and a picture of the breadth of the Church. There is a lot of charity among the men and women of LST."

♦ "I appreciate LST students because, for the most part, they are earnest in their studies, prayerful and apostolic, courteous and friendly. Of course, there are (and will always be) different personalities and temperaments. Even in academic competence, there is considerable disparity, notwithstanding LST's screening and admissions process. In every class I've taught, there are those who participate actively, and those who prefer simply to listen (or are they really listening?). Personally, I have a particular concern and admiration for our international students: they are so diligent, trying so very hard to learn theology in a language that is usually their second or even third. Sometimes I think they put our students (who learned English since childhood) to shame, when they submit papers which have been painstakingly and meticulously written. But all in all, I am very pleased with our students."

♦ "This is just my third semester at LST so my impressions of LST students may be limited. They are interested in the course; in fact, they have many questions and take every opportunity in class to ask the professor. They do my assigned readings. The class reports and presentations have generally been above average. When you challenge them, they respond."

♦ "I appreciate LST students because they are warm and respectful, lively and spontaneous both in class and outside. They are receptive: they regularly attend my lectures and follow the discussions with interest. A good number of them (especially Jesuits and Josefinos) actively participate in class discussion and ask intelligent and thought-provoking questions. They are capable of giving feedback and dialogue. They are responsible."

♦ "LST students as a body represent all sectors of the Church: laity, religious, ordained ministers. As a teacher this is a constant reminder, and sometimes a "corrective," to use language (words and symbols) that speak to all. Their cultural background is richly diverse, as the student body is becoming more and more international. This helps me become more and more sensitive to other perspectives and points of view."

Areas of Improvement

The same informal questionnaire distributed to faculty members asked them to identify areas where LST students need improvement. All respondents readily noted that the school, both faculty and students, cannot rest upon past laurels. Faculty comments bespeak their deep commitment to the school and its students. Please note that the sequence of responses in this second area does not follow the same order as the comments given in the previous section (I want to keep you guessing!).

Apart from a few rare exemptions, they are lambs. They hardly ever question what the professor presents.... I wish that our students would take on a bit of the aggressive lions... based on solid class participation, personal study, and research.

♦ "This brings me to what is for me the greatest weakness of LST students. Apart from a few rare exceptions, they are lambs. They hardly ever question what the professor presents. This is understandable for first year, but by second or third year, students have had enough courses and presentations to note discrepancies and differences. Possibly a professor of dogma presents what the New Testament teaches about Christology differently from the Scripture professors. These differences never seem to come up in class.... I wish that our students would take on a bit of the aggressiveness of lions, but with an aggressiveness based on solid class preparation, personal study, and research."

♦ "I see the following areas for improvement: punctuality in coming to class; more active participation in class discussions; better time management to meet the demands of the various courses without falling into minimalism; greater resourcefulness (they need to use the library more and not just limit themselves to the input received in class); training in research and paper writing."

♦ "Areas of LST student improvement that are needed include their attitude to study. Some are not eager to study for themselves unless they are forced with exams; some never start to do their assignments until the last days of the approaching deadline. Some come to class always late; some go to the CR during class; some are doing other jobs during class. They should get the habit of reading books intensely and thinking more critically; they should not hesitate to ask questions during class."

♦ "I would hope that LST students would develop a much greater commitment to academic excellence; I say this

recognizing students' often limited backgrounds and language abilities. Some have great gifts, but they are content to just get by and they can do it because of their intelligence. I believe that too many students have far too many outside activities, in their seminaries and communities, in LST extracurricular activities, in their weekend apostolates and their social lives. Theological studies are not a clear priority for many students. I sometimes think that an individual will have forty years for apostolic involvement after ordination; most will never resume any kind of theological studies. For example, I think that first year students should not have any apostolic assignment—at least for the first semester. Finally, I think that superiors and formators must rethink the amount of outside activity that they ask or allow of their students. God's people deserve competent and professional ministers."

♦ "My list of student improvements needed includes: improving writing and expository skills; acquiring skills in academic research; writing papers with good form and substance; having less timidity in asking questions in class; punctuality in class, especially after a break; better proficiency in reading and writing in English; increased interaction between the Filipino and international students."

♦ "Many LST students tend to be minimalistic. They only do the things you require of them; so, they don't do extra research in the library to enrich their knowledge of topics we discuss in class. Is this minimalism in their attitude because they already have so much work in LST and at home in their seminary? Is the study of theology a priority for these students? Do they have too many apostolates? Maybe they need academic advisors to monitor individual students regarding progress in Theology."

♦ "Most fundamentally, students need to develop a true and profound theological *eros*, an attitude of learning that is self-driven, a proactive desire for the integration of their studies with the other areas of their lives, spirituality and apostolate most of all."

There is a dire need for competence, besides holiness, in order to proclaim the Good News effectively to contemporary society.

♦ "First, I suppose more time and 'leisure' for study and reading. Much of this is in the hands of formators and superiors, of course, but too many students are too busy with other things to give much to their studies. That is a pity and will cost the Church in the long run. Second, I would love to see more intellectual curiosity among our students, more desire to learn for its own sake, and for the sake of knowing more of the God who is Truth itself. Theology seems often to be almost a necessary, and sometimes resented, requirement prior to something else. I'd love to see the study of God, his works, his ways and his plan of salvation be a delight in itself for more of our students."

♦ "Writing skills in English have much to be desired. Several students in every class I teach cannot write a coherent paragraph in English. Related to this, many of our students seem to never have written a term paper in high school or college. Many are not familiar with rules on quoting authors and footnoting.... Many students do well 'parroting' what was lectured, but have greater difficulty comparing and contrasting various authors' positions, analyzing and assessing a theologian's thinking. In other words, many students do not have the facility for critical thinking."

♦ "I would like to see LST students more convinced that especially in our time, good Christian witness in general and pastoral ministry in particular, require a good understanding of Christian faith. There is a dire need for competence, besides holiness, in order to proclaim the Good News effectively to contemporary society. LST students can achieve such competence by taking their studies seriously. Concretely this means taking the necessary time for study, research and reflection. Now, my impression is that especially candidates for the priesthood (seminarians and religious men) are exposed to the risk of underestimating the importance of the academic dimension and giving more time for pastoral activities. This is most unfortunate, as Qoheleth would most probably agree, for there is an opportune time for everything, and now this is the time for studies, and as experience has taught me, such a precious opportunity will not be offered again!"

Conclusion. Readers will observe that ten bullet-points appear under each area; this is a representative selection of faculty feedback. Students, as you read, always balance the *existing* laudatory qualities with the *desired* renewal and improvement. My apologies to several faculty, because space constraints meant using only some of your fine responses; however, what I have included represents each faculty respondent and is quoted verbatim.

Evaluation, renewal, planning and future growth are greatly enhanced when based on solid feedback and data. This current exercise, envisioned by *Tinig Loyola* editors, is one more valuable piece in LST's strategic planning process. Faculty members were most gracious and forthcoming in their responses. As one professor noted in his response: "Because the students asked us to provide feedback, I will wholeheartedly and graciously respond. I believe in the future of LST, its students and faculty alike"!

MANY FACES OF LST STUDENTS

By Richard Escoto, OCD



Student participation has many faces. I asked a few students about the reason for their involvement or non-involvement in student organizations. This profile emerged.

First is the face whose eyes sparkle at studies. With so many school requirements like papers, examinations and reading assignments, this student will find excuses for not participating in student activities. The demands of classes especially as the semester comes to a close seem already too much to handle. For the record, this student has almost zero attendance in school activities, including the sports fest. This student did not sign up for any school organization. LST is primarily a place of learning. If there is a scheduled student activity, this one's query is, "Will the library be open?"

How will you motivate such a person to join student activities? Had the student activity been a class requirement, would this student attend? If the Theological Hours were proposed and required by professors or superiors, would they be well attended? Were study groups for examinations given priority despite the many hectic seminary activities? We may have a big number of students but what is quantity if the students are there mainly due to the merit system? How can LST be reclaimed from just being a place of theological studies, of accomplishing masteral or doctoral degrees, of intellectual training?

Every seminarian, religious, or lay person is gifted with talents and skills which the student body needs. These can be contributed in many different ways.

The second face is that whose smile is the apostolate. This student is the active type. This one is willing to share time and expertise with the student council. However, this passionate student hardly finds time to be involved in any student organization. One is so engaged in his apostolic commitments in the congregation that he opts not to participate anymore. True, there are activities in the council that overlap with congregational apostolates. Likewise, the schedule of school activities conflicts with his time allotted for the seminary apostolate. If there is a student activity, this student asks, "Why join if it's the same apostolate I am doing each week?"

How can this student be involved? Every seminarian, religious, or lay person is gifted with talents and skills which the student body needs. These can be contributed in many different ways. As one student says, participation ranges from the pre-planning to the post-evaluation phase of an activity. This student could be involved in the planning stage and that could be his valuable part. He can only give that much. Indeed, students at LST are not mere students. They are also members of a community; they are religious; they perform many tasks in their respective congregations. In their hearts, they are willing to share and serve. Participation then can come in the form of joint responsibilities among seminarians, sisters and the lay. There is one body and this one body constitutes many parts and functions that could complement each other. Which





committees reflect this profound blending of the religious and lay? Which committees practice shared responsibilities? Compare the structure of the Theological Hour and the Creativity Board Committees to that of the other committees? How do the seminarians and lay share leadership and responsibilities?

Thirdly, one sees the face whose eyebrows are raised. This student has been supportive and participative from the beginning. But he is the critical type. When activities are announced, this student would not immediately join but ask, "Are these activities the real needs of the students?"

No doubt, the many initiatives of the student council manifest its enthusiasm and commitment for the school's vision of community building. Aside from the regular student organizations, new committees were launched this year, which offered venues for student involvement in various matters like apostolic synergy, student constitution and by-laws, Church of Asia, social awareness, academic papers, etc. However the question is: Do these concerns of the student council reflect the real concerns of the student population? How does the student council prioritize its projects and resources? And given its one-year term, are these projects feasible? The council's priorities and projects are definitely worthwhile undertakings. Yet these have to be adequately explained, communicated, and digested first by the various committees before the council can reach out to the wider student body. It is important to ask, where does dialogue usually begin—from within or from the outside?

However the question is: Do these concerns of the student council reflect the real concerns of the student population?

The last is the face of the excited regular participant. Despite the many pressures from his academics and from his congregation, this student finds time to involve himself in student activities. He sees his involvement as an extension of the learning experience in the classroom. Likewise this student feels he belongs to the LST community. There is so much to learn in Theological Hours, Social Advocacy programs, Outreach efforts and even in sports fest. LST is not just an academic institution but a community of people, and we learn through the people, for the people, from the people.

Honestly, these regular faces are only a few. Just like in the parishes, there is a phenomenon of the *sila-sila, kami-kami lang* participants. Few attend the programs and these few are the same old faces. *Sila-sila na lang palagi.* Why? The student body has not failed to disseminate information. I commend the council for employing the necessary means to invite and reach out to students. Still, there are few who heed. One may ask, "Where is the majority?" But instead of asking this old question, we can ask: "What does the majority prefer to do?" At the same time, we commend those regular participants. They find the wisdom behind student participation. Can this be shared so that others will learn to get involved? LST is basically a community. We are concerned for others, we let others discover also the value of active participation. Are our hearts at peace if our brothers and sisters are not with us?

The students at LST do not wear an identical face. They are multi-faceted. They are graduate students, clerics, seminarians, religious, or lay. They are men and women. They are Filipinos, Asians, Africans, Europeans, and Americans. They are Catholics. They are non-Catholics. They have various concerns. They have priorities as individuals and as communities. To neglect these various faces is to undermine the possibilities of greater student participation in the school.



VOX POPULI, VOX LAY

By Grace Abigail C. Gana

I didn't know what to do after I was rejected by a religious congregation. I was depressed for months, hiding, questioning, searching. I was also angry, confused and miserable. What is the meaning of my life now? Where do I belong, where is my place, where will I go? Deep inside me I knew I was not ready to face the "real world," for where I had been was a totally different world; I had a life that was enclosed, very secure and seemingly very close to God, to heaven. In that ideal world, I forgot how to be independent and confident, I even forgot how to have a casual conversation, to articulate my thoughts, for the language we used there was very different; it was so "holy."

Here at LST, I am rediscovering myself, making myself whole, relearning who God is and who I am in His presence. I am here not only because I am in a transition period but admittedly because I am still afraid to go back to the real world, afraid of the competition, of the challenges, of the rejection, of the unknown. So what does all this have to do with my article?

Maybe it opens a door for me to share why a lay person is studying here. LST is a safe place for me, maybe for others too. The school can be an answer to those who are in crisis or in their midlife, looking for new direction, hope and peace. It can also be the locus for one's quest for knowledge, one's search for the true God; or, it can be a means to improve oneself, to be more effective and efficient in one's particular ministry.

Whatever the answer, LST has become our refuge, our sanctuary and our peace, except when papers are due and exams are coming and their coverage is beyond our imagination. Although I can say that professors are compassionate with us lay, still sometimes I feel that they are shaping us for the priesthood! In general though, the theology subjects, as one lay student shared, affirm his ministry. He said "the more he knows God, the more he likes to serve." LST stirs him to be more passionate in sharing the Good News, the gospel of love, of compassion, of justice and of peace. Talk about empowering the laity!

Below are more comments by lay students like myself on how LST has played an important role in their lives.

Carlo Gimena said that he had a very enlightening stay at LST. He found the professors approachable and open minded. He was satisfied with the library, with its comprehensive acquisition of books and reading materials and its hi-tech facilities. He was also grateful for the welcoming atmosphere given by his seminarian classmates.

Mellie Cruz shares that "on the whole, as a lay person and as a person from another Christian tradition (Evangelical), I have been pleasantly surprised with the welcome, openness and reception I have received, both from LST and CEFAM, and with the many things in common that we share in faith. It has been and it is a wonderful learning experience that has deepened my spiritual walk." She suggests however that LST should provide avenues where the lay people can get more involved in the school, like an organization for the lay. On a more practical concern, she requests that there be more psychological/psycho-spiritual books in the library because the books in the CEFAM library cannot be borrowed. She hopes that the LST library can have a similar collection as that of CEFAM.

Evelyn commented, "Oh, there's something old and neglected about it when you look at it from the outside but wait till you get inside the class. That's when things get refreshing, stirring the imagination as well as the soul. I'm so glad to be here."

Last but not the least of the generous lay who gave their time to respond to my request is Abbie who suggested that the lay students meet with professors in more informal setting in order to get to know them better, their stories, their vocation and their struggles. Like Mellie she also suggests the gathering of lay students so that we can have our own little community here. (My gratitude to the rest who shared like James, Marilou, Marichu, Lala, Luz and Lito. Mabuhay kayo!)

In conclusion, LST has been a blessing to me as a person, a woman, a daughter, a sister, a friend and a Christian. I can say that I am still in the process of healing and desiring wholeness. Well, we all are, but I can vouch that I am a better person now. I am more ME! What God wants me to be.

Striking the Balance

By Mark Reyes

As the famous saying goes: You cannot give what you do not have! And so, as future ministers of the Word, the seminary serves as a good training ground for men preparing for ministry. Hence, seminary formation is designed to be one which is holistic, aiming to form seminarians more and more like Jesus Christ, the model of all shepherds and ministers.

In line with this, San Jose Seminary has identified the four main pillars of seminary formation in accordance with the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines. It is therefore the aim of San Jose to form men of Virtue, Learning, Spirit and Service. All in view of the holistic program that San Jose strives to provide those who pass through her portals.

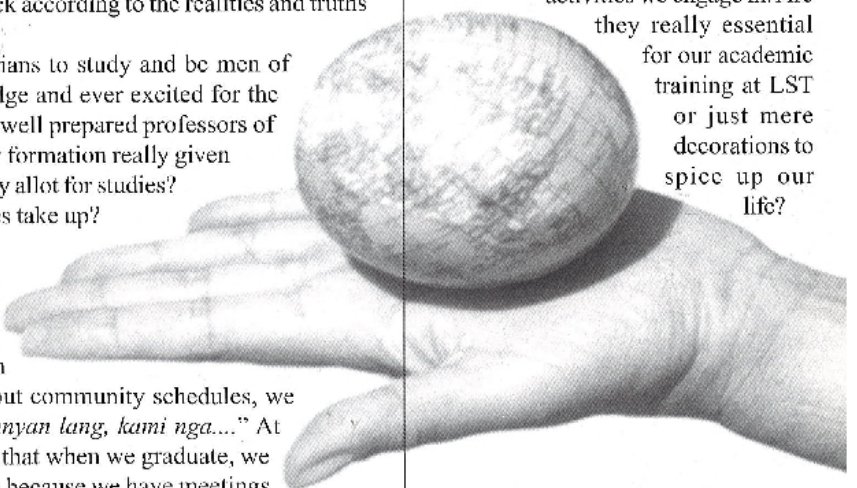
A big part of formation is centered on the learning aspect: academics. *Fides Quaerens Intellectum*, as St. Anselm puts it. The Loyola School of Theology plays a great role in the academic aspect, that is, the theological formation of priests-to-be. Fr. Thomas Green, SJ once told me during spiritual direction that, while maintaining a healthy apostolic and community life, the two things a seminarian should focus on while in the seminary are prayer life and studies. These will be the two main things that will get me going in the ministry. Our Apostolate Director, Fr. Cel Reyes, SJ, during one of his lectures said that our primary apostolate is studying. Yes, we are full time seminarians, but we are also full time students—graduate students at that! During the height of the preparation for comprehensive exams, I joked our well-loved Bishop Chito. I told him that in the parish, people will not ask about the mysteries behind the Trinity and the Church and what the Councils and their *anathemas* have to say about them. Rather, they will be asking questions like, "What is the route of this evening's procession?" or "What novena prayer should be used for this and that saint?" The Bishop's answer was plain and simple. He said that though the people may not ask such questions of great theological depth, it is still the duty of the priest to guide his flock according to the realities and truths of our faith.

Okay, so it's important for seminarians to study and be men of learning, always in search for new knowledge and ever excited for the lessons of the next day by the very able and well prepared professors of LST. But is the academic aspect of seminary formation really given justice? How much time do seminarians really allot for studies? How much time do extra-curricular activities take up? Is the library just a photocopy center?

Striking the balance between studies, community life, apostolic endeavors and other extra-curricular activities may, from time to time, prove to be difficult. When students meet at LST and begin to talk about community schedules, we will often hear the line, "*Buti nga kayo, ganyan lang, kami nga....*" At San Jose, our Jesuit formators would tell us that when we graduate, we should also have an MA degree on meetings because we have meetings to prepare for meetings to prepare for meetings.

Well, at the end of the semester, we will end up with high grades of 1.0 and 1.5, so it's okay. Or is it? They say that the important part of the journey is not the destination but the journey itself. It's really not about the end product (unless you're the grade conscious type that locks himself up in his room if he gets a grade of 1.5... ehem), but the preparation. This is when we learn, when we digest what we read, when we understand, when *fides quuaerens intellectum* takes place. The fact that we hear complaints left and right, people having to stay extra hours to prepare for a student activity (which is just a mere duplicate of what the different seminaries and congregations have anyway), and cramming 'till wee hours in the morning, maybe is a sign of an imbalance somewhere. I think it would be wise to objectively evaluate the activities we engage in. Are they really essential for our academic training at LST or just mere decorations to spice up our life?





In the end, I believe we will benefit from the great Chinese philosophers trying to strike the balance with the doctrine of the mean, the yin-yang, and the like.

THE HOURS

By Michael Liberatore

The Theological Hour series of talks was created to expand the conversations that take place in the classroom and allow for a forum for discussing important and relevant ideas which could not be addressed directly in class. A variety of topics have been covered over the last several years. Some concerned pressing social or political issues, others took advantage of specialists who were here from abroad, while most were topics requested by students themselves in surveys distributed at the beginning of each academic year. On many occasions, good conversations have taken place with useful information presented and discussed by the presenter and the audience.

The importance of the Theological Hour as an integral part of the formation and education program of LST is evident by the prominent place it receives in the schedule (a reserved and privileged slot during which no classes are scheduled) and the commitment of the President and an appointed faculty member who both serve on the Theological Hour Board and help to set the direction and identify relevant speakers and topics based on the survey responses. There are then five to seven theological hours scheduled each semester, totaling around twelve or thirteen for the year. This works out to approximately one Theological Hour every two or three weeks.

However, while these are laudable goals and ideals within the structure, the theological hours have not always been met with success in terms of quality presentations and participation from students and faculty. The result has been a series of questions raised by the committee and others about how to improve the Theological Hours.

The biggest question concerning the Theological Hour is attendance. Consistently there is a fairly large participation at the beginning of the semester which then wanes as the semester goes on, only to increase again, for the final theological hour of the semester. However, some students say the reason they do not participate more during the semester is because the topics are not as interesting or relevant to them. Thus, the identified inconsistency of attendance may also have to do with the topics. However, the question becomes how to encourage people to attend the Theological Hour. Even our highest attended theological hour this year only drew between 25-33 percent of enrolled students in LST. Is this an effective and acceptable percentage?

It has been the intent of the committee to try to match as much as possible the theological hours with speakers and topics identified by students. However, this was not always possible because either suggested speakers were unavailable or schedules could not be worked out. But even in cases where a speaker or topic was well-represented in student surveys, there often would still be a low turnout. And some popular topics (e.g. "Married Priests") were not even mentioned in survey responses.

For the good of students and to allow other committees to utilize the "free period" for their committee meetings and



Their Exellencies, Bishops Ambo David, Luis Tagle and Francisco Claver, graced one of the Theological Hours and shared with the audience their own readings of the state of the Philippine Chuch. The event was hosted by Fr. Mike Lambino, SJ and Sr. Bubbles of the Cenacle Sisters.



Fr. Renato Oliveros, SJ, an Islamic Studies scholar, conducts the Theological Hour tackling the issue of Muslim-Christian Dialogue.

to allow other committees to initiate activities, one suggestion was to limit the theological hours to just a few per year and make them special events. Instead of regular theological hours, one suggestion was to have something more like a "speakers series" where there are maybe four or six (two or three per semester) theological hours during the year. These might be focused around a specific theme or identified topics, with time for a student or faculty member to respond. This way students will not get "burned out" from too many theological hours, while each one can be a successful and effective event.

Another concern that was raised was the lack of questions and responses generated by students. In fact, one of the most frustrating and disheartening parts of the Theological Hour is when students get up and leave right after the speaker finishes. One of the goals of the Theological Hour (and why the speaker is asked to limit his/her comments to 45 – 60 minutes) is so there can be audience reaction and comments. However, when students leave right after the presentation, it implies that only what the speaker says is important. This is too bad because the interaction between students, faculty and the speaker on the topic discussed are an important part of the learning that can be taken from the Theological Hour.

These questions might be addressed by having a larger presence of faculty at the theological hours which will allow them to integrate the topics discussed into their classes. In this way, the Theological Hour goal of being a supplement to the class room can become clearer and more intentional. To encourage faculty to attend, the Theological Hour Board (which chooses the topics and speakers) might also be improved if it had one or two more faculty appointed to it in order to diversify the input and connections to potential speakers. If the Board had three or four students and three faculty (plus the LST President), it might allow for a clearer vision, focus, and seriousness than it has when it is perceived as just a student activity.

Many students responded positively to specific theological hours (e.g. "Mary for All Christians," "The State of the Philippine Church," etc.) because of the way the topic was discussed between the speakers and its relevance to future ministry. It is the hope of the Theological Hour Committee that such theological hours can become models for what the Theological Hour can be.



Dr. Jake Yap's presentation on *Mary for All Christians* was one of the best attended of the Theological Hour sessions last school year.

GIFTS AND CHALLENGES OF OUR DIVERSITY

By Cris Fajardo, SJ

DIVERSITY: A BOON AND A DETRIMENT

The diversity of students in Loyola School of Theology is a precious gift. LST student population is, first and foremost, multinational, and thus, multicultural and multilingual. Statistical counts put the non-Filipino students of LST at around 30% of the entire population. This school year, around 25 nationalities are represented in the school. Secondly, we are blessed with variety of spiritualities. The number of congregations represented in LST can easily number at least 20. Third, while the bulk of LST students are seminarians, 40% of them are not. In fact, they come from various walks of life and different sectors of society—religious sisters, pastors of Christian Churches, businesspeople, psychologists, teachers and other professionals. There are also devoted housewives and husbands. Another facet of diversity, which is not entirely isolated from the ones enumerated above, is in the academic background of the students. Noticeable too are the ranges of students' linguistic proficiency, both in English and in native Filipino.

This diversity is a big plus. It makes for broader exchange in terms of culture, tradition, reflection and contextualization. It also allows wider collaboration. **The Updated Philippine Program of Priestly Formation (UPPPF)** has this to say: "Some schools of theology have a good number of students from other parts of the world. They should use this as an opportunity for the formation of seminarians in multi-cultural communion and in awareness of the needs of the worldwide church" (no. 140). In many ways, LST – both on the institutional levels and on the level of individuals – draws much fruit from this precious diversity.

However, this multifaceted diversity also brings an enormous challenge, especially for the professors who face the task of navigating along the difficult academic terrain that diversity inevitably produces. Cognizant of these diversities, teaching an LST class is like aiming at a moving target. By divine providence, most LST professors are so gifted that they are able to teach effectively despite the limitations brought by the diversity. A few, from time to time, tend to resort to some "weak" approaches such as the following:

Challenging Approach – this approach operates on the "swim or sink" principle. They maintain the high scholarly standard that LST classes should have, and challenge the students to rise to the challenge. Oftentimes, the benchmark is located on the best students. Trust is placed on the students' ability to strive for excellence. While this approach stimulates the students' generosity and sense of *magis*, it tends to overlook the diverse background and foundation that LST students have. It also presupposes that all students have equal resources (intellectual, time, linguistic, logistic) at their disposal.

Babysitting Approach – this approach tends to wait for the last of the herd. The benchmark is located on the lowest achievers' bracket. It encourages the strugglers, and allows the fast ones thorough learning. While, it ascertains that every single brain learns the valuable lessons, this approach may tend to bore the fast learners and induce lethargy and resentment.

Shotgun Approach – With many moving targets, one can not be frugal with ammunition. This classroom approach tends to provide students with voluminous materials, lessons, methods, examples, exercises, testimonies, resource speakers and what not. It is hoped that among the items in the academic *sari-sari* store, the students will eventually find the stuff and the combination thereof that would suit them. While it provides the widest and broadest scope, this approach may sacrifice depth and organization. It may also induce academic and intellectual fatigue.

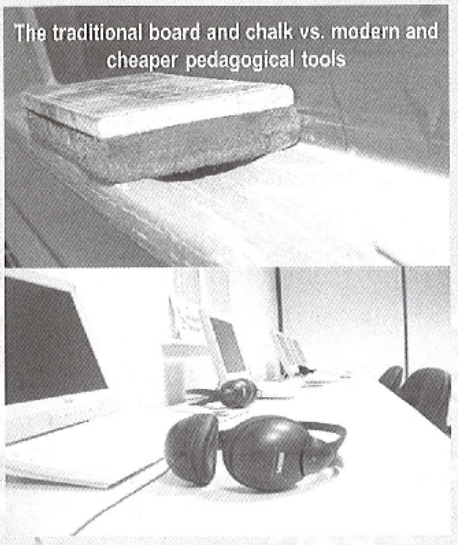
X-factor Approach – Aware that the playing field is rendered imbalanced by diversity, this approach pegs the classroom criteria on unconventional factors. A student gets high mark because of performance in examination, while another gets the same mark because of an excellent paper. Still another gets the same mark for a good report, and another for having perfect class attendance, or for writing an extra course paper. While respectful of diversity, this approach lacks

standardization and may be open to unilateral or bilateral abuses.

Surely, there are other approaches that we may identify. It must be affirmed though that a few professors resort to these approaches precisely because of the persisting difficulty brought about by diversity.

UNIQUE CARE FOR EVERY PERSON

When Nietzsche criticized Christianity for its "herd mentality," he must have overlooked the Society of Jesus. Jesuit *Ratio Studiorum* has always put mileage on the personalized and student-centered education and formation. The **2006 Philippine Jesuits Formation Guidelines** provides: "Indeed, there should be real attempt to match teaching approaches to students' abilities, recognizing that greater scope must be given to the initiative and creativity of certain students. Other students, however, need more input, simply and clearly presented, and more guidance in assimilation. The theologate must give concrete recognition to this diversity in its course offerings and pedagogy" (p. 76). Albeit tangentially, this is also implied in the **UPPPF**, which says, "Schools of theology, for their part, especially those run by religious communities or consortia, must be ready to address the formation needs of seminarians who come to them and not to consider exclusively their congregational and consortium needs" (#140).


The traditional board and chalk vs. modern and cheaper pedagogical tools

While LST is already exerting efforts at addressing the challenges that diversity brings, it is not superfluous to further explore ways of improving personalized and student-centered pedagogies. Likewise, it is probable that both the institution and the students may benefit more from greater sensitivity to the variety of congregational spiritualities and charisms. In line with this, some specialized forms of courses may be explored in addition to the normative classroom set-up. Here are three possibilities:

Online course – Father Herbert Schneider, SJ, already employs this for his New Testament courses. This allows students to devise their own schedule for research, reflection and writing. Guidelines for reading materials and guide questions are provided online. Submission of course papers (also online) are required on a periodic basis. Students may email the professor for clarifications and inquiries. Nothing prevents them too from seeing the professor personally for periodic discussion. Students are spared from attending the regular classroom sessions. Its eco-friendliness (no printing out!) is an added value.

Reading course – Upon approval of competent authorities, the subject professor gives qualified students the course reading list. Instead of attending regular class, the student is held held responsible for reading and digesting the materials. Periodic sessions (individually or in small group, if applicable) with the professor may be arranged to monitor progress and direction. These meetings may also be loci for theological exploration and reflection. For course requirements, oral examinations or course paper, or the combination of both may be required. Father Manoling Francisco, SJ, offers this track for the courses he handles.

Research track – This is like Reading course, but more personalized. Upon approval of competent authorities, the student gets the course reading list from the professor. The student is held responsible for the basic things to learn. In addition, a research topic is agreed upon by the professor and the student. Research topics may be based on the student's area of interest. It may also address particular research needs of a congregation or a diocese as long as it is in line with the theological course enrolled. Here, some sort of mentorship really transpires, which can be a good preparation for eventual thesis-writing.

Further and wider consultation may result in more models of extra-classroom courses and pedagogy. To ensure efficacy and efficiency, a strict screening-qualifying policy and monitoring system should be in place. Care must also be taken that scholarship is not sacrificed in any way.

Serious theological studies and reflection, both on the part of clerics and laypeople, are integral to the life of the Church. Hence, Loyola School of Theology cannot stop short in exploring all possibilities of enhancing her learning structures and systems. Truly, she has to at once tap the precious gift of diversity and respond to the challenges it poses.

Community Building:

HOW FAR HAVE WE GONE ?

By Jenny Capindo, OMI

The Student Council, spearhead by Lando Jaluag, SJ (President) together with his colleagues Leo Medina, CS (Vice President), Grace Gana (Treasurer) and Michael Ortiga, DC (Secretary), had community-building as the primary concern or goal of school-year 2006-2007.

This community thrust of the council is pursued through three directions and hopes. First, the council renews and revivifies the school vision to serve the student body as a community of persons and friends. It tries to reach out to all students by encouraging them to share and to participate in any form of theological discussion either inside or outside the classroom. Secondly, the student leadership aspires to promote LST as one of the prime institutions for theological studies not only in the Philippines but in the whole of Asia. The presence of international students who are actively involved in school activities reflects this aspiration. Lastly, the thrust seeks to respond to the most pressing and urgent social issues that the Philippine society experiences. This brings into consciousness the need to share the fruits of the students' theological endeavors by reaching out to our less fortunate brothers and sisters.

The enthusiasm of the new set of officers is clearly ardent. They are able to organize the different committees to work on various activities in order to support the school administration and to meet the needs of the students. This year, due to the immediate need for much effective and efficient service, the



LST Students as they literally bond together during LST Sportsfest 2006

council created special committees. These are: Constitutional Commission, Committee on Asian Church Matters, Apostolic Synergy, Library, Student Theological Development Committee, Teachers Evaluation Committee, Special Projects, and SC Newsletter Committee.

How far have we gone?

According to the SC president most of the student committees have been effective in their respective responsibilities, thanks to the creative leadership of the heads of every committee. The SC president cites first and foremost the accomplishment of the Social Advocacy Committee. The said committee made a successful exhibit for all the victims of judicial killings and invited their direct families and relatives to give factual testimonies of this brutal and unjust murder of innocent citizens. By the same token, the Theological Hour Committee has faithfully attended to their task of providing speakers for theological hour sessions every other Wednesday. The Sports Committee also creatively led the community by conducting a sports fest and invitational games and by providing sports equipment for both indoor and outdoor games. The Creativity Committee has actively prepared a friendly ambiance for every school activity. The *Tinig Loyola* Committee also has succeeded; this year, it published October and December issues and the March issue is in preparation. The publication enabled the students to be aware of the "issues" within LST and to be reflective on current social and political issues outside the school.

Furthermore the special committees created this year have done well. They have been able to carry out the mission that the SC gave them. For instance, the Constitutional Committee was able to write a draft of the SC Laws, which can be finalized by the next council. The Apostolic Synergy Library provided modules of the apostolate and programs of different congregations, including reading materials for the *Kapihan* corner. The SC Newsletter Committee published one issue on "Synergy" which was distributed to LST students as an update for SC activities. Lastly, the Student Theological Development Committee has been working on the papers of students who joined the *Academic Excellence for Fr. Horacio De la Costa Award* for the best student paper.

Noteworthy as well are the other committees, which though not so visibly perceptible were at the forefront of the school's affairs as they performed their duties. These include the Liturgy and Outreach Committees. They are the silent workers. The Outreach Committee, for instance, organized LST students to volunteer for a Gawad Kalinga Project, building homes for the poor in Maralita, Parañaque. It also conducted a visitation to a juvenile prison in Molave, Quezon City Hall. Finally, it initiated



San Jose seminarians preform during the Acquiatance party 2007

a relief drive for the victims of the calamitous typhoon "Reming" in the Bicol region. For its part, the Liturgy committee solemnly facilitated the school's liturgical ceremonies and rites on various occasions such as the Holy Spirit Mass and the President's Day.

Learnings and Challenges

Still, there were committees that were inactive throughout the year. One reason is that academic matters became so demanding. The members of these inactive committees did not have the spare time to participate in student activities.

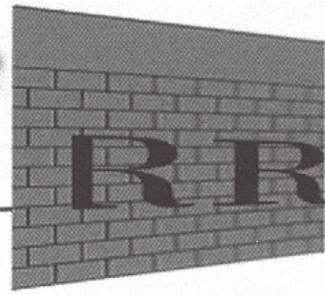
Second, some seminarians, religious nuns and lay students continue to lack interest in joining or leading committees, fearing that they will be given many responsibilities that they could not carry them out. In some cases also, committee leaders were for various reasons forced into the position (*napilitan lang*).

Third, according to the SC president, many seminarians are still on the stage of being "vocation-conscious." These seminarians are very cautious of preserving their vocation in line with their studies. They are afraid that if they fail to maintain their grades, their respective formation houses will send them out.

Finally, the SC president said that since the students voluntarily join the different committees, the SC cannot force them to fulfill their responsibility. We don't have the constitution and by-laws yet. What we have as of now is the traditional mandate by verbal agreement.

Much therefore depends on willing students or members who will initiate, dedicate, and sacrifice for the sake of community building. A heartfelt thank-you to all who served so generously this year.

Facing the Language BARRIER



By Sherwin Keith Tan

English is the primary language of communication used at the Loyola School of Theology. It is presumed that students here are well equipped in the language. However, during the Formators' Meeting last January 19, 2007, LST President Fr. Jose Mario Francisco, SJ, stated that "the English proficiency of the students is declining." His words alarmed many formators because of their obvious implications. As the medium of instruction at LST, English is used in lectures, class discussion, research papers, oral examinations, group reports, and so on. Proficiency in English then is the key to doing theology at LST. The concern then of formators is, if students are deficient in the language, are they sufficiently learning theology?

The deficiency in English, or the language barrier can spawn other problems such as intellectual dishonesty in the form of **laxity in one's studies, cheating,** or **plagiarism.**

Laxity in studies for instance, is a clear indication of laziness and passivity in learning, an act of doing something for the sake of doing it without a sense of passion for intellectual growth. This happens at times because the student could not comprehend the lectures in class and does not know where to find the resources for coping with such confusion. Consequently, to the faint-hearted, the motivation to study and to learn is diverted to other activities like sports or the more pleasurable on-line chatting.

Next, cheating is "when a person misleads, deceives, or acts dishonestly on purpose (Kidshealth.org)." True, it is an extraordinary issue for a graduate school student to be involved in this offense because the graduate school is considered superior in honesty and truthfulness. Students in graduate institutions, especially theological schools, are considered responsible, mature, and morally upright their conduct. Though cases of cheating are rarely heard of at LST, the fear of failure can pressure students to resort to this unthinkable crime.

The Ateneo de Cagayan has a joke about its engineering students, which can be projected in any field of life: "How could you trust a building if an engineer is a cheater?" This question does not only point a finger at engineering students but to everybody reminding them of the grave consequences of cheating. The very act of cheating depicts the intellectual and moral deficiency of a person. It is self-betrayal.

Lastly, plagiarism is a common offense committed by students in writing a research paper especially because the resources are vast nowadays. Also, the possibility of committing such an offense is so tempting and almost unavoidable for "there is nothing new under the sun." Citing sources, for instance, is one major problem; the student tends to forget the citation of borrowed ideas. A worst case of plagiarism is patchwork plagiarism which refers to a collection of ideas cut and pasted to create a research paper. This happens out of carelessness in citing sources and in using the idea(s) of other people. Fr. Antonio de Castro, SJ, once said in his Church History class that "plagiarism is the mortal sin in the intellectual enterprise."

When a student does lack skills and the experience in writing a research paper, it is a very clear sign of deficiency in one's intellectual capability. This issue is not openly discussed in school; even if this, in fact, does not degrade the standard of the institution, it pertains more to the deficiency of students who need assistance. Humbly facing this issue however is a step towards change.

At LST, students are challenged to be prudent in formulating research papers and to be honest in taking quizzes and exams. Perseverance in overcoming one's deficiencies in the spoken and written word is highly encouraged. Ambassador Howard Dee in his talk on 27 January 2007 during the Theological Hour said, "In war, the enemy is the other person while in the real field of life, the enemy is the self."

Life is a process as much as learning is. Learning needs time management and honesty with oneself which means keeping a sense of focus and creating a solid foundation for one's intellectual development. These two are the basic tools for Socrates' "the unexamined life is not worth living." Self-motivation for personal and social concern is part of the education LST provides. Studying is not merely forming and developing one aspect of life—the intellectual faculty—but the totality of the person. Undoubtedly, honesty is the key not only to intellectual maturity but more importantly, to inner growth.

PROFILE: Roselyn M. Taray, CPA, MBA

Assistant to the President

Tinig Loyola: What made you leave a high paying job?

Roselyn Taray: It was a long discernment accompanied by the right time and opportunity. As early as 2000, I already had the desire to resign because I did not see myself doing the same job for the next five years in spite of its benefits and stability. I also wanted a balanced life and a change. I always search for meaning in what I'm doing.

It was the Lenten season last year when my search for life's purpose became apparent again during YUPPLEACE's monthly recollection at Don Bosco Seminary in Bicutan. The recollection highlighted the importance of what one really wants and God's support in your choice. Four days after the recollection, an early retirement package was offered to employees, so I discerned again. In spite of my fears, I availed of the early retirement and surrendered to God not knowing what would happen next.

TL: How would you compare work in Magnolia Inc. (a subsidiary of San Miguel Corporation) and Loyola School of Theology?

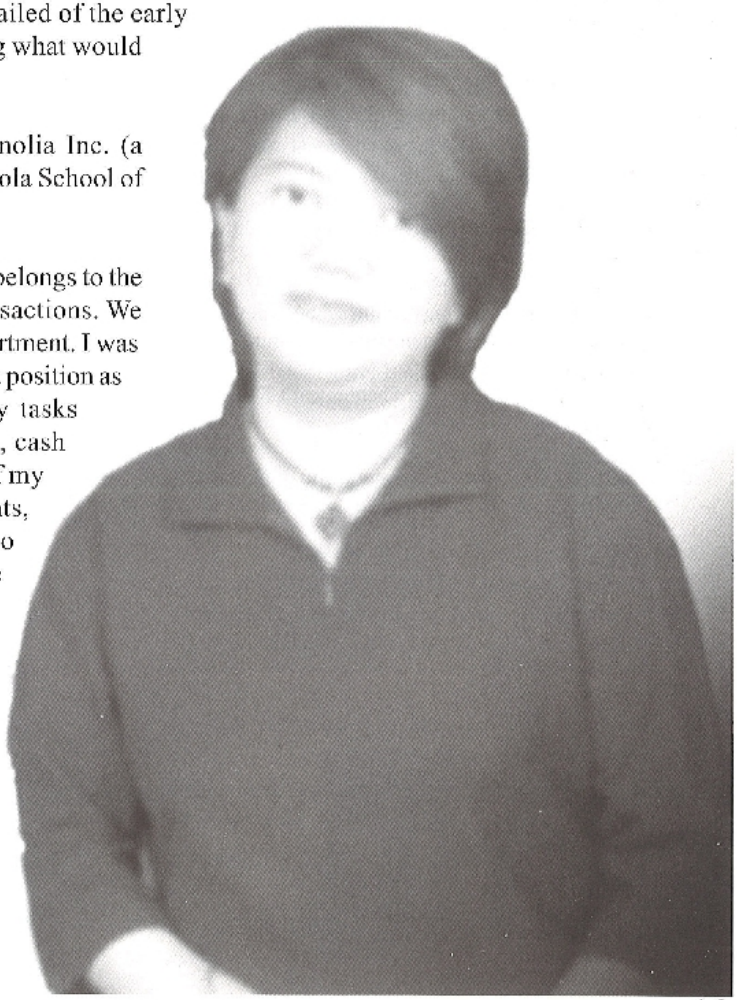
RT: Magnolia Inc. is a manufacturing firm that belongs to the top 1000 corporations so it has numerous transactions. We were trained to do multitasking in the same department. I was exposed to almost all areas in Finance. In my last position as Cash Management and Operations Head, my tasks involved audit and approval of cash planning, cash disbursements and cash mobilization output of my group, plus other funds and service requirements, internal or otherwise. Prior to this position, I also handled Treasury, tax and budget functions. Like any typical Finance Department, I had many and different deadlines to meet.

LST is a small organization. Aside from Finance and Treasury functions, I also handle Administrative functions plus all other tasks given by the President. My work here is broader in scope than Magnolia. Various events at different dates have different requirements, so I have to experience one cycle in order to be familiar with the demands.

TL: What have been your personal gains at LST?

RT: I just started last October 2006 and I appreciate the following:

- Meeting different kinds of people—religious or otherwise
- Developing new skills—very different from my specialization
- Enjoying the change of environment—conducive to personal reflection after a day's work



LST SURVEY: GENERALLY SATISFIED

To gauge the satisfaction level of students as regards the many aspects of their lives at LST, *Tinig Loyola* ran a survey in early March of this year. The questionnaire was rather a simple one, requiring an answer of a simple yes or no, and was meant to draw general perceptions or attitudes. Apparently, our objective was to get quantitative rather than qualitative data on student evaluation of the school's curriculum, faculty, co-curricular activities and facilities. We defer to a future date an attempt to do a more extensive and analytical survey on student life at LST.

Regrettably, when we conducted the survey the fourth year students were already done with their classes; their final exams happened in February. Thus, the survey only included first to third year students. Only a trickle of lay students was available for the survey. In all the total number of students that participated in the survey were **125**: 42 first year students, 41 second year, 19 third year, and 23 lay. Below are the survey results.

CURRICULUM

1. Content-wise, do you find the courses in LST substantial?
   Yes: 122 No: 3 A: 0
2. In general, do you find the requirements/ demands of the courses (e.g. papers, exams) reasonable?
   Yes: 107 No: 14 A: 4
3. In terms of pastoral application, do you find the courses useful?
   Yes: 109 No: 13 A: 3
4. Do you find the Theology in the school relevant to the questions and needs of contemporary times?
   Yes: 113 No: 9 A: 3
5. In general, do you find the Theology at LST engaging enough?
   Yes: 95 No: 21 A: 9
6. In terms of its formative value, do you think that the curriculum is helping you prepare for your future ministry?
   Yes: 117 No: 7 A:1
7. Are you developing the skills (includes methodology, research, and writing) to really do solid systematic reflection in theology (not just completing some theology subjects)?
   Yes: 109 No: 15 A: 1
8. Are there one or two subjects you could consider your favorite?

19 students, across year levels, cited Revelation; 18 cited Christology; 17 favored Fundamental Moral Theology; 13 cited Tradition/ Magisterium.

FACULTY

9. In general, do you find the teachers friendly and approachable?
   Yes: 115 No: 9 A: 1
10. Do you find the teachers competent enough in the courses they teach?
    Yes: 101 No: 22 A: 2
11. Do you feel that ALL the teachers prepare before their classes?
    Yes: 87 No: 36 A: 2
12. In general, are they able to communicate their lessons clearly and effectively?
    Yes: 102 No: 22 A: 1
13. Are they fair in making the grades?
    Yes: 95 No: 24 A: 6
14. Are there one or two faculty members you would like to commend for their effectiveness in teaching?

Although ALL the faculty members were named by at least one student, the top three favorites across year levels, were Fr. Manoling Francisco, SJ (32 votes), Fr. Jim Kroeger, MM (22), and Dr. Jake Yap (21).

CO-CURRICULARACTIVITIES

15. Are you a member of any school committee?
    Yes: 65 No: 49 A:11
16. Do you feel that there are enough student activities for the school?
    Too little: 18 Too much: 15 Just enough: 74 A:18
17. Do you feel that the student body has a real voice when it comes to school policies and programs?
    Yes: 66 No: 37 A: 22
18. Do you find the majority of the students active in the school's co-curricular activities?
    Yes: 31 No: 72 A: 22
19. Do you consider the student-led activities in the school essential to your academic formation?
    Yes: 79 No: 22 A: 24
20. What activity/activities would you commend for its/their formative value?

The Theological Hour topped the list of commendable student activities (23 votes).

FACILITIES

21. Do you find the facilities (e.g. classroom) in the school conducive to learning?
    Yes: 97 No: 18 A: 10
22. How often do you use the library?
    Very often: 46 Often: 54 Not often: 19 A: 6
23. Are the technologies available in the school being utilized for classroom use?
    Yes: 100 No: 12 A: 13
24. How often do you use the multi-media center?
    Very often: 18 Often: 39 Not often: 60 A: 8
25. What other technologies/facilities do you feel that the school needs to help the students in their academic formation?

Twelve students cited the need for a student lounge as well as a room for group work. Some of those who cited that the classrooms are not conducive enough to learning pointed out being distracted by the noise level around the classrooms (e.g. tricycles) and the heat inside at certain times of the day.

FIGURE IT OUT

Second Semester 2006-2007

373
students in LST

194
seminarians/scholastics

104
lay students

46
religious women

29
Student priests

21
foreign nationalities

- **17** Vietnamese students
- **11** Indian students
- **10** Chinese students

9
constitutional committees in Student Council

8
special committees created by Student Council

12
Highest number of active members in a committee

5
Lowest number of active members in a committee

74
Highest number of enrollees in one class

1
Lowest number of enrollees in one class section

133
Highest number in attendance at a Theological hour

35
Lowest number in attendance at a Theological hour

55
average number of attendance per Theological Hour

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TIMEKEEPER

Tick-tock, tick-tock, tick- tock
I wish every room had a wall clock.

To signal when class needs to start
Mostly, when it is time to depart.

I have much to say 'bout the latter
For you see, my dear sir and father,

I'm a mother and must cook and feed
My little Paul, Thomas, Karl, and Yves.

I'm a nun praying my examen,
My Vespers, my Lauds, my Matins.

I'm a dog, an ant in Makati
Struggling with mammon and my Eli.

Not to worry, my good, fine teacher
There's yet another day to suffer.

The apocalypse is not yet here
Neither is the parousia near.

Aren't we to Epicurus deny
Eat and drink for tomorrow we die?

Why not the virtue of temperance
As with time, be our holy guidance?

Is the world marching towards chronos
Or spiraling towards Kairos?

Quoholeth's words bear remembering,
Indeed, there is time for everything.

Tick-tock, tick-tock, tick- tock
I wish every room had a wall clock.





GEN K SPEAKS @ LST:

Words Became Flesh

By Adie Isidro

All were ready for the First Youth Conference. Everything was planned towards one goal. All eyes and hearts were directed to one event. This was the mood in LST as early as 7:30 in the morning of February 24 as coordinators and facilitators, headed by SC president Lando Jaluag SJ and event coordinator Rommel Felizardo DS, awaited the arrival of youth participants. They would be coming from different parishes and communities for the first ever youth conference at LST—Gen K Speaks @ LST.

More than 100 young people walked into the campus to register with the usual juvenile enthusiasm and upbeat mood. The excitement seen on their faces added hue to the youth-inspired decorations in the Cardinal Sin Center. Prompt responses to welcomes and the exchange of morning greetings foreshadowed a hopeful and high-spirited participation, and thus, a successful event. While most of the youth were invited by their shepherding brothers who act as their moderators in the parishes, a handful were there to experience and observe for the first time a youth gathering.

The highlights of the event were: the stimulating opening prayer led by youth animators from the Diocese of Antipolo; the two talks on the National Survey on the Youth by Mr. Jojit Guevarra of the Bukal ng Tipan Pastoral Training Center and on the image of today's youth by the National Coordinator of the Episcopal Commission on Youth, Rev. Fr. Conegundo Garganta; the Eucharistic celebration presided by Fr. Jboy Gonzales, S.J.; the midday jamming with the Josefinos and the animated energizers in which both participants and facilitators were powered up by music and dance moves; and of course, the group discussions which were very telling of how these young people are engaged in God's mission.

It is amazing that despite the participants' young age, they are very much aware of and immersed in the challenges of the modern times for the Catholic youth. They know that their small number and the high mortality rate in parish youth ministries would speak for the precarious future of the Church here in the Philippines, and they recognize their mission in the face of these threats. More importantly, they do know that: they have to be more attuned to the needs of their fellow youth; that what they are and who they become in doing their mission—*pakikipagkapwa-tao*—are essential in its success; that underlying this mission is love and an authentic living out of Christ's teachings; and that these will all be possible and strengthened with prayer.

For me, one of the gifts of this youth gathering was their warm response to our invitation to this event, whose goal was to help us future ministers discern what more we have to do from the results of the survey conducted during the conference regarding the effectiveness of our apostolic efforts in their areas.

As one of the facilitators, I was already greatly moved by the responsiveness of the participants as seen in their sharings. Apparently, they have been youth leaders hoping to be able to lead more of their contemporaries to be active members of the Church and to sustain this participation.

But one thing really grabbed my heart as the real situation came to me upclose and personal.

Her name is Jane. She is around 17 or 18. She was invited by the Claretian brothers to the youth conference. When I called her for her sharing, she turned shy and folded in. She tried to start speaking but could not find the right words. Finally, she confessed. She has not been to church for four years and she did not really know what to say. So, we decided to let her just listen while everyone else was sharing. In truth, I was torn between letting her stay and asking her to do something else, for I could see how her inability to participate in the discussion was eating her up. But I knew that her being able to hear all those things would be very helpful to her.

After our first sharing—still in our group formation—she braved to call my attention in a childlike manner: "Ate . . ." As I turned to look at her teary eyes, I was faced with the question, "*Masama ba ang Diyos* (Is God evil)?"

The other members of the group looked at me, waiting for my answer. It surprised them.

It crushed my heart.

I knew then that that was what it was all about.

I tried to answer her by asking her the same question. That time, her tears just rolled down her face. Like a child angry but subdued—not violent nor hysterical—she told the group that she thinks that God is evil because he did not give her the chance to be with her family and to know them.

That was the time I noticed the other members of the group coming closer into a semi-huddle. Their body movements told me that they realize that this is one of the reasons why they were there, and moreover, why they are in the ministry. Their hearts, too, were crushed.



Young people share their stories and life during the Gen K Speaks @ LST.

Jane works as a helper in Quezon City. As we listened to her, although her tone was calm and her gaze was with fear, we felt the intensity of her anger—we felt the depth of her wounds, more than the depth of her woundedness. She is hurt. She is crushed.

I knew that we would not be able to answer all her questions which would give her peace, that she would not have a change of heart right then and there, and that we could not give an instant cure for her wounds. All we could give her at that time was our readiness to listen.

Jane is just one of the many young people whose hearts are maimed. She represents a very big group of youth who have lost hope and who are afraid of hoping. She is just one of those who are looking for answers.

We do not have all the answers.

We may offer her reasons and comfort her with our kindness. But we do not have hold of all the cures. We do not have the answers.

But we can help her find her way to the Answer. That is what we are here for! We—her big brothers and sisters! The shepherds in the Church!

That is what the whole conference was all about—making us listen to the youth speaking and seeing their words come into flesh!

The incarnation of God did not stop in Bethlehem nor at Golgotha. It gives us not just a reason to celebrate or commemorate. It brings us a mission. And this mission may be articulated in many ways, but one thing is certain—we are commissioned to be bearers of and sharers in this great mystery.

Jane is an enfleshment of what was talked about in Gen K Speaks—of the real situation and the challenges of the times to the Catholic youth. She is the incarnation of the real needs in the present situation and in the future of our Church.

And the call now for us, as it has been, is to be the incarnation of His faithfulness—of the love, hope and peace that God's coming into the world brings—to the youth, to everyone.

LST Lounge: *SANA'Y MAULIT MULI*

By Jesse James Luzano, CMF

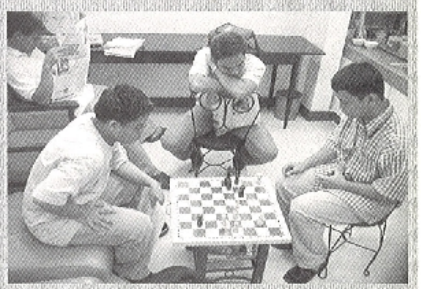
In the seminary, siesta is part of the daily routine. Indeed, some rectors monitor and are particular on the strict observance of this sacred hour. The seminary program not only provides academic and spiritual training, but also seeks the promotion of physical well-being so that one has a balanced and integrated formation. When I entered the seminary, it took me a long time to fall asleep after the lunch break. Considering that I finished my undergraduate studies outside the seminary, I was not used to having siesta. After my novitiate years, religious profession followed, then LST for my theological studies.

When we had our community outing before the school year began, some brothers in the community were jokingly telling us *"sulitin na ang tulog natin, para makabawi sa puyat pag pasukan na* (get some sleep now to make up for the sleepless nights ahead)." It caught my attention and gave me the impression of how demanding the academic year could be. Indeed, at LST, I started appreciating the value of siesta. In the midst of the semester, I finally could not bear my sleepiness. I needed to recharge while waiting for my afternoon class.

On my first try, I could hardly lie down on the deck due to the smell of the bed and the crowded atmosphere of the old lounge room for students. Yet, there was no other choice but to lay down and get some rest. "*Sanayan lang 'to* (I'll get used to this)." Eventually, one got used to it and came back again and again for the much-needed rest of the exhausted mind and body. We didn't actually know if the bed sheets and linens were regularly changed and cleaned. Sometimes, the pillows were not properly fitted with the linen cases. Nonetheless, students still faithfully came in spite of the discomfort. They had to bear it so as to endure and sustain the next class. Notwithstanding the discomfort, the students still felt fortunate that they had a resting lounge.

When school year 2005-2006 was over, some renovations and major repairs were done in the school. During the summer, the audio-visual room was fully air-conditioned; comfortable classrooms and offices as well as clean toilet rooms were constructed. Under the renovation plan, however, the school's lounge for both men and women was removed from its place. For the students, it would not matter if the place were just transferred to another location. The important thing was to have a resting place for students. With the lounge gone, students are now in diaspora. You may see them lying in empty rooms with folded hands and bowed heads. Moreover, you may notice that students are getting more diligent because the library is surprisingly full these days. In reality, their purpose there is to find a place where they can slowly close their eyes and get a nap. This could seem amusing but at the same time, pathetic. The administration should therefore take into consideration this sorry predicament of the students. It should provide complete facilities and amenities to accommodate the needs of students. The students who are seminarians, religious sisters and lay deserve the best education and formation in order to become effective ministers for the greater glory of God and for the service of others.

LST lounge, a comfortable place, a resting place for a weary mind: *nasaan ka na* (where are you)? Hope to see you again soon this coming school year! *Sana'y maulit muli mga oras nating nagdaan!*



For some LST students, *siesta time* is spent bonding and sharpening their neurons!

GLIMPSES OF THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

LST welcomes new school year with Holy Spirit Mass

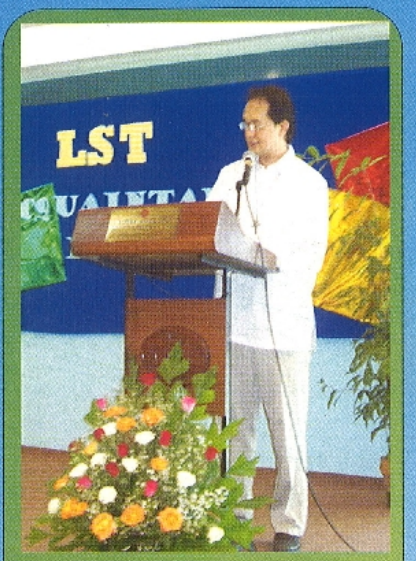
On July 4, 2007, school administrators, faculty, staff, and students of Loyola School of Theology officially started the new school year with the traditional Mass of the Holy Spirit. Bishop Pablo David, auxiliary bishop of the diocese of Pampanga and former Old Testament Professor at LST, presided over the Eucharist. Fr. Joseph Daost, SJ, president of the Berkley School of Theology, gave the homily. The mass was followed by the short talk of Bishop Pablo David at the LST Sin Center. Bishop David spoke about the recent elections, especially the election into office of a member of their clergy Fr. Ed Panlilio. He ended his speech by challenging the LST community not to lose their "romantic fire," or the Christian passion for bringing about societal change.

LST hosts visiting professors

Two new professors are teaching at LST on a short-term basis. The prominent Fr. Michael Amaladoss, SJ, is teaching an elective course on Asian Theology while scholastic Dominic Markl, SJ who just finished his doctoral degree, is teaching the Pentateuch. Both will be at LST for the first quarter of the year.

Students elect new SC

During the last week of June, the student body elected four new student officers: Elmer Cantular, CMF as president; Simone Picolo, SX as vice-president; Brian Suficiencia, SJBP, as secretary and; Sherwin Tan, SCJ as Treasurer. The new officers of the student council were installed on July 11, 2007. In his inaugural address, Elmer Cantular noted that the "battle cry" of his administration would be "team unity."



Bishop Pablo David delivers his speech during the Academic Convocation.

According to Cantular, the student council of last year, led by Lando Jaluag, SJ, tried to build community. Capitalizing on this, the new student council will focus on strengthening the different student teams or organizations so that they may be "well-oiled" in their service to the school.

New enrollees start life at LST

According to Ms. Rowena Macquilang, Assistant to the Dean, there are 109 new students at LST for the first semester. This number includes seminarians, religious and lay students who are in their first year of theological studies as well as students enrolled through the Center for Family Ministries for a degree in Pastoral Counseling.

TINIG LOYOLA editor passes away at a young age

Lambert Alfonso, brother of TINIG LOYOLA's editor-in-chief Nono Alfonso, SJ, died last March 19, 2007 of a massive brain hemorrhage. Lambert Alfonso served as lay-out artist of TINIG LOYOLA for four years, including the last two years. His untimely death forced the postponement of the publication of TINIG LOYOLA. He is survived by his wife and two sons. Lambert was only 41. TINIG LOYOLA mourns the passing of its lay-out artist and sends its condolences to Nono Alfonso, SJ and Lambert Alfonso's relatives. TINIG LOYOLA will miss Lambert's creativity and professionalism.



Former LST Student Council President, Lando Jaluag, SJ, briefs the newly inducted LST SC officers (L-R: Simone Picolo, SX - Vice-President; Brian Suficiencia, SJBP - Secretary; Elmer Cantular, CMF - President; Sherwin Tan, SCJ - Treasurer; and Lando Jaluag, SJ).