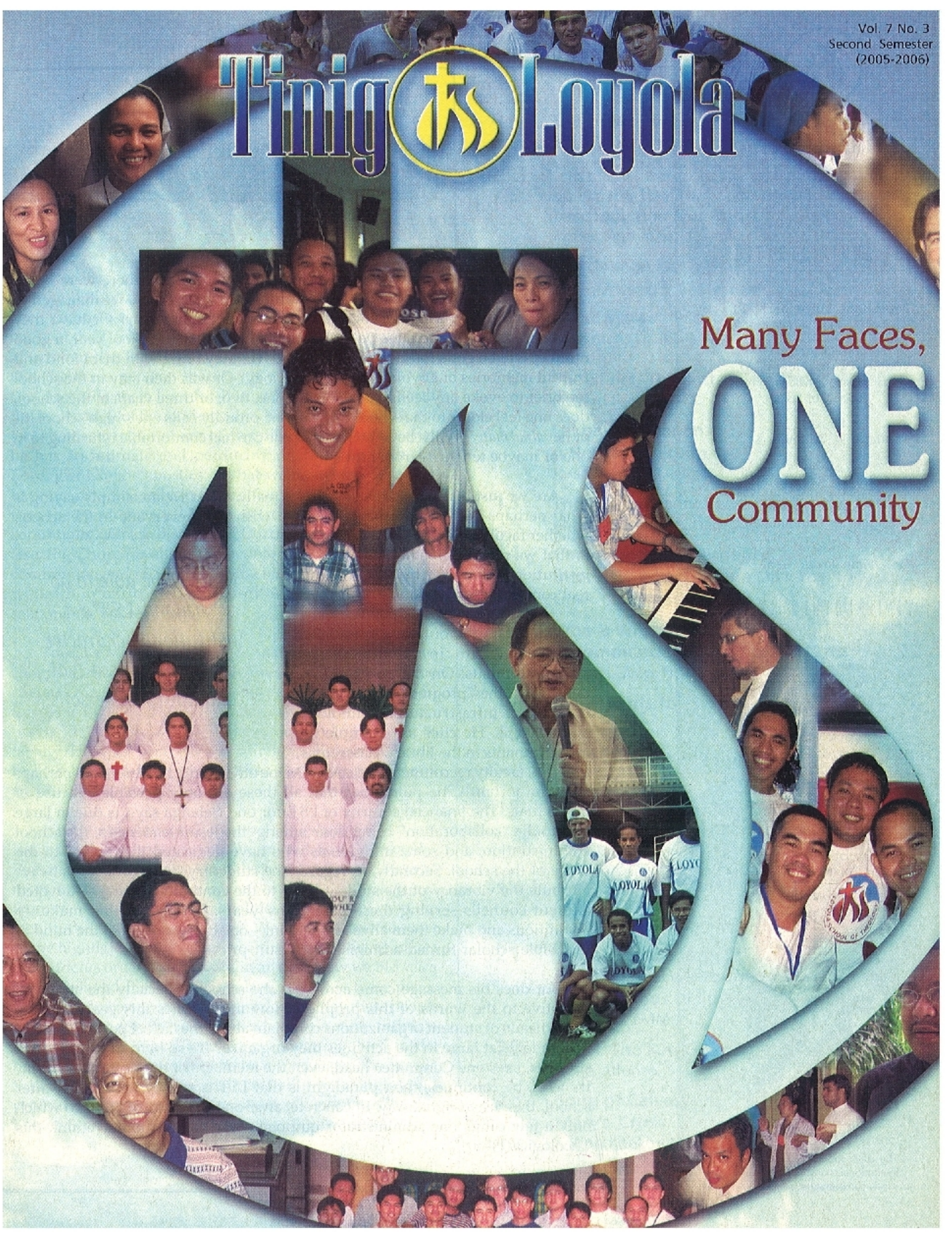
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(2005-2006)

Tinig Loyola



Many Faces, ONE Community

Tinig Loyola

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The cover looks beyond LST's institutional character by seeing it as a community of persons.

UP CLOSE AND

Another school year comes to a close. Ten months ago, there were many new faces among both the students and the faculty. Have we managed to get to know a few of them throughout the school year? Or have they remained nameless faces we passed in the hallways? Next school year, a good number will be gone for their pastoral year. Will they bring with them fond and fruitful memories of Loyola School of Theology? Or was their stay in the school too brief to evoke any feeling at all? After one, two, or three years in the school, does one feel closer to the school the way one proudly calls one's high school his or her *alma mater*? Will it be a "home" that one can feel comfortable returning to in one or maybe ten years from now?

Are we just being nostalgic here? Not really. What we are simply saying is what perhaps Father Vic Salanga's fervent wish is for everyone in the school, whether faculty or student—that we *own* it, that we may be able to go beyond its institutional character by seeing it as a real community of persons.

> *May we be able to go beyond* LST's *institutional character by seeing it as a real community of persons.*

One hears the outgoing president's constant refrain in all his official pronouncements. On the one hand, he talks about the "progress" in the school in terms of infrastructure, technology, and systems. He cites for example the improvements in the library, classrooms, finances, faculty recruitment and so on. On the other hand, however, and perhaps more importantly, he points out that all these are only possible because of individuals. The financial security of LST, for one, Salanga says, is due in large part to the "collaboration" being done among the Jesuit leadership, the school administration, and some individuals who have dedicated themselves to the cause of the school. Secondly, as regards the studentry, Salanga would always attribute the vibrancy of the student body to the continuous string of devoted student councils serving these past many years. It's people that make up institutions and make them alive and vibrant—one can almost read the mind of this Bible scholar-turned-administrator Jesuit priest.

But does his message come across? Is the school, especially the students, receptive to the words of this prophet? How many times this year have we heard heads of student organizations complain about the lack of participation of the students at large in the activities they organize? It's so hard to mobilize the students, says one Committee head, even the members of the Committee itself. It's as if, he continues, their paradigm is that LST is simply for studies; after school, they leave right away. In concrete, after one Theological Hour to which only a few came, one administrator quipped, "maybe we should rethink this Theological Hour!"

NONO ALFONSO, SJ

PERSONAL

At a deeper level, this concern for owning the school may be hitting at the core of our theological studies, the very rationale for the existence of the Theologate. In our study of the Trinity which is the foundation of our faith, we affirm that the Trinity is all about the loving relationship that the three persons share with one another, and from this proceeds their love for humanity that brought forth the incarnation of the God-son. In Christology, we also learn that the basic requirement of any disciple of Christ is that he has an intimate and perduring relationship with the Lord, just like the apostles: "What we have seen, what we have heard...." Finally, in Ecclesiology, we assert that more than the hierarchy, the Church as Icon of the Trinity, is the community of these disciples of Christ. More than anything else, the Church is about the people of God; it is all about communion and relationships, the building up of which, as we learn in our course in Liturgy, is the objectives of the sacraments we celebrate.

Thomas Merton once wrote that one cannot hope to change the world through structures and institutions; one changes the world through the relationships one builds. In this issue of *Tinig-Loyola*, a similar insight is shared by Fr. Rocco Viviano, sx, one of the new faces in LST's roster of faculty. He says, from his work in interreligious dialogue, he has learned that what makes dialogue possible is friendship.

It is thus in view of all this that *Tinig-Loyola* for its last issue for this school year turns inward and "personal." Perhaps because it is also Lent, the season when we become more introspective, more inward-looking. In these pages then, we feature several personalities in the school from the faculty, the students and the staff. We also look back to some of the highlights of the school year in terms of the activities the students organized. Finally, in an interview we bid *adieu* to our beloved President Vic Salanga, SJ. May these pages help us appreciate our school more deeply. May these people we feature here help us see the school in a more intimate light. And may we all learn to get more involved in the building up of our community, our *alma mater*, the Loyola School of Theology. We wish you all a meaningful and profound experience of our personal and intimate God this Lenten Season.

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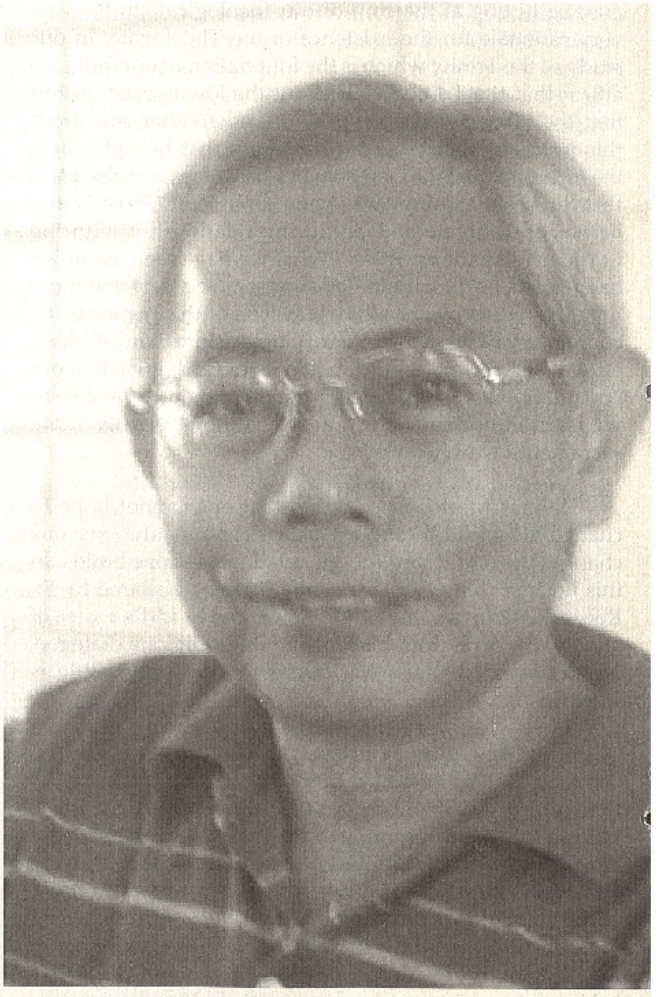
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The Great Collaborator

This school year marks the end of Fr. Vic Salanga's six-year term as president of the Loyola School of Theology. In this interview he shares the work he has done for LST as well as the consolations and desolations he has experienced throughout his term.

MA: Did you have a particular Vision for LST when you started?

VS: Actually, what I pursued was really a consolidation of the initiatives of the previous president, Joel Tabora, SJ and a five-year development plan of LST as an ecclesiastical faculty. After four years we had an evaluation with the whole faculty. One of the good things seen was the consolidation of the faculty for then it included at least six Jesuit emeriti professors. They could be called on but were no longer full time and so we did not have enough full-time Jesuit faculty. This was one of the biggest problems. Therefore we imported James Bretzke, SJ one year, James Keenan, SJ the other year; Dr. Tina Astorga would come in and out too. In Systematic Theology, Joseph Smith, SJ would take a hundred students, which was too much.



This year is the end of five years. What I will say is part of my report to the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. So what has happened? We have had the influx of people; first, Tony de Castro, SJ and Mike Lambino, SJ, followed by Manny Flores, SJ who came for Pastoral Theology, which we did not have before. Eventually, Romeo Intengan, SJ and Ritchie Genilo, SJ came in for Moral Theology, Rex Mananzan, SJ for Canon Law, and Manoling Francisco, SJ as well as two lay faculty members from the Servants of the Word, Dr. Joaquin Yap and Dr. John Yucom for Systematic Theology. One person I would like to mention is Eduardo Africa, OSB who was our first graduate as a Doctor of Theology and is now with Thomas Green, SJ in Spirituality. So, we are very happy that finally, apart from Jesuits, we have other people; hopefully we have theologizing from different points of view.

I am very grateful to Herb Schneider, SJ who initiated and hosts a theological discussion among professors: Rocco Viviano, SX who teaches Interreligious Dialogue; Dr John Yocum gives an elective on Thomas Aquinas; Herb Schneider, SJ himself on John and Living Koine Greek; and, Dr. Jake Yap on Mary for all Christians. One whole area of faculty recruitment addresses a need of our students. We have people from Arrupe Residence, Jesuits from different Asian countries. Aside from Asia, we have increasing foreign-born population from South America, Africa and Oceania. We have become international. We need a curriculum that still gives the basic fifteen units per semester but allows for required electives. For this I am thankful to Fruto Ramirez, SJ who steers the change. In this area of recruitment, I'm thankful too to the

By Mary Rosalie M. Abellanosa, OSB

An Interview with LST's Outgoing President

Jesuit Provincial who allowed Jesuits like Rene Oliveros, SJ to give a course on Islam and later on Buddhism, Hinduism, etc. The curriculum should not only cater to Filipinos but all Asians; hopefully it is something that is international. All these initiatives were not mine, they are contributions of many people.

In an evaluation before the end of the five-year plan (i.e. on its fourth year of implementation) had three suggestions: 1. Hire a development officer who handles systematically faculty recruitment that includes fund raising to assure adequate remuneration for them; propose and design programs to maximize LST resources. 2. Seek professional advice on management and financial concerns. 3. Work in synergy with other Jesuit institutions, Ateneo de Manila University, Emmaus Center, Center for Ignatian Spirituality (CIS) and Jesuit Communications.

There is an intellectual component, but build more on the spiritual foundation of your studies. Do this with firm hope that you, including the lay and the religious, become ministers of the Word. Therefore, when you proclaim the Word, proclaim not only what comes from the head but more so from the heart.

Let us start with the last. We had the *"Bayan Umawit,"* a very successful concert, which was even televised. With the signing of memorandum of agreement with the CIS, those who take these programs may receive credit in LST so they can get an MA in Pastoral Ministry specialized in Retreat Giving. After we evaluate the implementation of this agreement, LST and Emmaus will do something parallel. Likewise, I thank Jesuits Fruto Ramirez, Joseph Roche, Tony de Castro and Mike Lambino who are involved in finalizing the signing of memorandum of agreement between LST and Ateneo de Manila University. See, it is really about collaboration!

Regarding seeking help to handle management and financial matters, I feel at this point we do not need this for our treasurer J. Gana is doing that. He continues to ask the assistance of our former treasurer Lani Nañagas who is now chairman of the Development Bank of the Philippines. I hesitated hiring an officer for development because we do not have the money. Anyhow, we have been silently fundraising. We did a tribute to John Schummacher, SJ and Joseph Smith, SJ, where we also launched the *Didaskalos* Faculty Fund. We will sponsor another tribute to Catalino Arévalo, SJ and Ed Hontiveros, SJ. The *Didaskalos* fund is for persons not remunerated like those who are from the Loyola House of Studies (LHS), San Jose Seminary, Jesuits of the Philippine Province and Arrupe Residence. The others get paid but do not receive industry rates according to their expertise. They teach with generosity as an apostolate. This is one thing students should realize. They really are on scholarship. We also had *Babette's Feast* where we sell tickets, draw winners who watch *Babette's Feast*, have a discussion and in the end, we bring them to the Arrupe Room where Herb Schneider, SJ has cooked and served a feast like that in the movie.

Part of the five-year plan is the improvement of school facilities. The library was the biggest and major thing as soon as I came in, a project that was in the beginning stages when Fr. Iabora left. That was part of my trial because I did not know how to go about it, especially in the financial aspect; however, we were able to renovate it, the third floor became the "people's floor." We made sure to put back the air-conditioning and placed the security alarm system to protect the books. All books are accessed in the OPAC Library system; we added desks and computers in the first and second floors. Through the years God is there; he only asked that I trust and do my work. In addition, there are the faculty rooms in the second floor of the old building and the upgrading of computers in the multimedia room. The last project before I go will be an Audio-Visual Room. Our former AVR was in the LHS building; it eventually became part of the Jesuit Province's Archives. The new one will be in the mezzanine; it will be adjacent to some more additional of rooms for the incoming faculty. Hopefully these will be finished by the beginning of the next school year.

Reading the letter from the Jesuit Provincial commending the financial stability of LST, I thank the Lord. At least we are

not in the red. By maintaining the tuition rates, which we have decided with the Administration Council (AC), students and superiors, we can have a fall back resource in case of inflation. Our budget is projected to balance the number of enrollees.

Next consideration is Alumni Relations. The biggest results are the alumni homecoming and alumni directory updating done periodically. What is interesting though is that a number of our alumni are religious assigned outside of Metro Manila and therefore cannot be present during homecoming. This needs to be reviewed. On scriptural and research publications, I am happy to note that the *Landas Journal* is coming out regularly. We are also able to publish *Landas Lecture Series* and *Landas Monographs*. Actually, the scriptural publication is under Catholic Biblical Association of the Philippines (CBAP). Since we house CBAP, we shepherd its publications. Our theological outreach program expanded from Adult Catechesis to updates in Christology and Moral Theology, public lectures of scholars on Scripture and finally the Holy Week Triduum retreats.

I will come back an ordinary citizen, thanks be to God! I would like to teach full time; that is my hope.

The Student Council (SC) has really worked well. Apart from verbal support, they now have sufficient funds to sponsor various activities and programs starting with the leadership of Jessel Gonzales, Florge Sy, Martin Mroz, Francis Magnaye, and now Oscar Boongaling. We have vibrant student activities and publications. The *Tinig Loyola* has improved a lot; it even won a Catholic Media Award. The *Teologo* publication is also becoming regular.

MA: With all this work, how do you manage to survive?

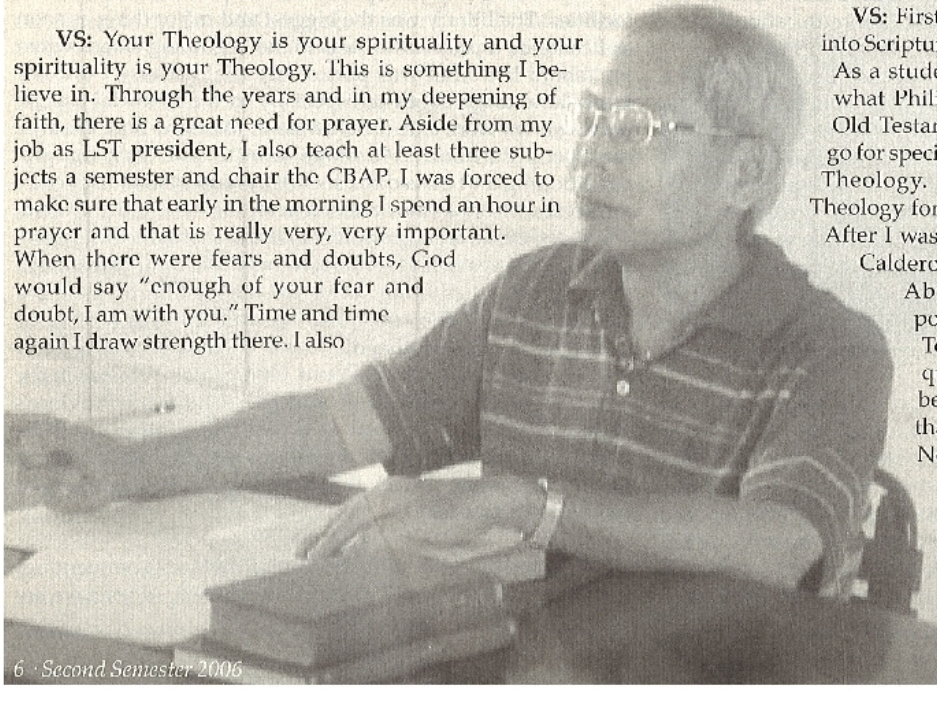
VS: Your Theology is your spirituality and your spirituality is your Theology. This is something I believe in. Through the years and in my deepening of faith, there is a great need for prayer. Aside from my job as LST president, I also teach at least three subjects a semester and chair the CBAP. I was forced to make sure that early in the morning I spend an hour in prayer and that is really very, very important. When there were fears and doubts, God would say "enough of your fear and doubt, I am with you." Time and time again I draw strength there. I also have to pray early because I want to run. I need to exercise. Prayer and exercise help me through the day. Not known to many, we have had some difficulties with some staff. Prayer and exercise help me resolve problems and keep my balance.

MA: What would be some of your consolations, desolations, or significant experiences as president?

VS: Certainly there were desolations. First of all, as I have said, these were fears because of LST's financial concerns. I was coming from a background that is in Scripture, in teaching, and in formation. When I was Rector of LHS we had a treasurer and minister who took care of material things. Later as Socius to the Provincial my job was basically office work. My consolation, again, is in collaboration. It was Dr. Patty Arañas, together with our treasurer, who helped me a lot in handling LST's finances. I grew in confidence not because I learned how to go about things, but that I grew in trust in the Lord. First of all, this is God's work not mine—whether or not the *Babette's Feast*, the Holy Week Triduum or the concert become successful, whether or not we have Christological or Moral Updates, more or fewer enrollees. I grew in deeper and deeper faith, believing that God will take care of everything.

MA: I'm one of those students who are really edified by you and what you teach. One time Fr. Dean asked me why I still risk being in your class when I only get low grades. Really, your person and the depth of the content you give in class are worth the risks. Do you have some words of advice for the students?

VS: First, thank you for "risking." I went into Scripture because of my love for Scripture. As a student here I was so enamored with what Philip Calderon, SJ taught us on the Old Testament. When superiors told me to go for special studies, they had in mind Moral Theology. I did not wish to go to Moral Theology for I was barely passing the subject. After I was Socius to the Novice Master, Fr. Calderon had a heart attack. I asked Bill Abbott, SJ if there was still a possibility for me to go into the Old Testament given that I was already quite old; he said YES especially because Fr. Calderon would not be that strong to teach. I talked to Ben Nebres, SJ, who was responsible for special studies and so I was sent to study. I started to teach when



I came back. I teach not because it is my duty but because what I teach are matters that helped me. For example, when I talk on *berith* (agreement) especially on unilateral *berith* where God on his side promises to be with you, it is really something. God says I am promising you this, do you believe? One example: do I believe that work in the library would reach completion because he will accompany me? Do I believe that the work on the AVR will come true? It is as concrete as that. I teach not only syllabus components but learnings coming from what I have seen in my life. This comes from the desire to pass on things; in my life it happens. So, to students, my message is that you see in your subjects a connection to your life. Do not see only requirements or take them because you want to be ordained. Yes, there is an intellectual component, but build more on the spiritual foundation of your studies. Do this with firm hope that you, including the lay and the religious, become ministers of the Word. Therefore, when you proclaim the Word, proclaim not only what comes from the head but more so from the heart. I think with that you will become effective ministers of the Word.

MA: Do you have any words for the incoming president?

VS: Fr. Mario Francisco, SJ has a free hand to make his plans for the next five to six years. I think he will find his place, in whatever area he will go, by way of his leadership. He will find a staff and student body who will rally behind and support him. Fr. Mario has a very creative mind, which I do not have; I depended on others for that, so I'm sure he will be able to bring LST to greater heights.

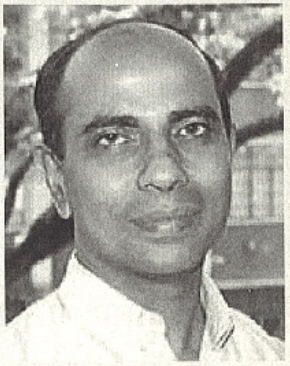
MA: This is so humble of you Father. May we have a glimpse into your paths after this semester?

VS: I will go for a sabbatical; I have not yet finalized where I will go. The Provincial has granted me one year. I will be here till June 21st. I will open the school year and prepare for the installation of Fr. Mario on June 21 which is also the Mass of the Holy Spirit. Then, I disappear. As far as I know I will come back to teach but that really depends on Fr. Provincial. I will come back an ordinary citizen, thanks be to God! I would like to teach full time; that is my hope.

By Xavier Alpasa, SJ

FR. JEYARAJ RASIAH, SJ:

AN ASIAN THEOLOGIAN IN OUR MIDST



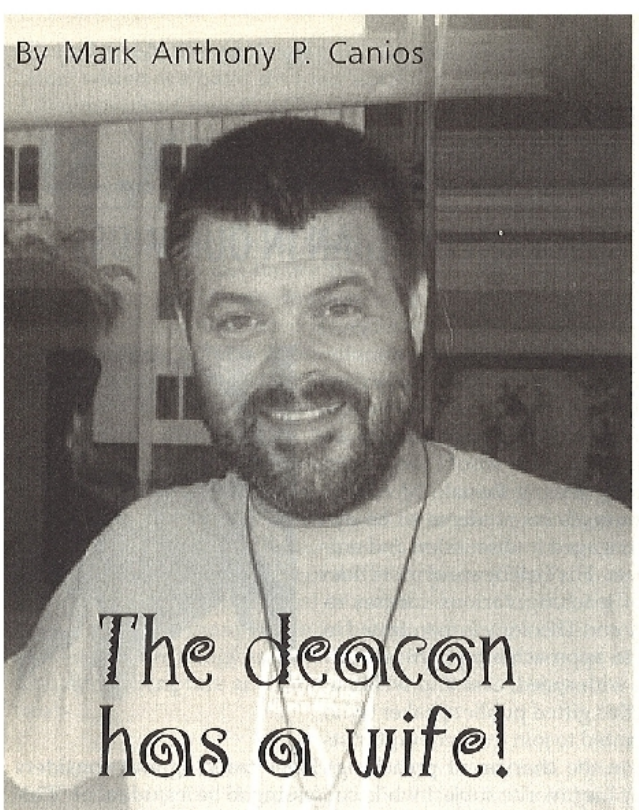
Considered to be a brilliant professor by many students, this Sri Lankan Jesuit priest lectures with an evocative passion that could easily dwarf an auditorium. The class would also be in rapture as Fr. Jeyaraj Rasiah, SJ relentlessly encourages his students to be dynamically engaged in discussion and animated debate. His experience of more than 12 years of teaching various courses in Philosophy and Theology is manifested in his ability to approach a topic from various angles with speed, ease and wisdom. Evidently, this gifted public speaker (who initially wanted to join the Redemptorists and share in the charism of preaching) loves teaching and considers Christology his favorite subject while confessing to be a student of "Philosophy for Life."

Holding a graduate degree in philosophy from India, an STL in dogmatic theology from the premier Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome and a doctorate in philosophy from Sri Lanka, he has engaged in various research projects including Indian religious traditions and *Bhakti* literature. Before joining the East Asian Pastoral Institute (EAPI) in September 2004 and becoming its current director, he was involved in the formation of religious in Sri Lanka and functioned as the Province Coordinator of Formation of the Jesuits there.

His various assignments in different places is a living witness to the Jesuit hallmark of obedience; he considers doing what the Society wants to be his supreme satisfaction. His discernment also led him to the decision to teach in the Philippines rather than at the Gregorian, because he believes he could contribute more in the area of Asian theology and spirituality. This is also his aspiration for LST, i.e. more openness to Asian realities for theological reflection. He also advises students to learn how to theologize and not just study theology letting reflection emerge from concrete life situations rather than from theological books alone. He considers memorizing theological formulas and earning a *magna cum laude* easy but the real challenge, he says, is to let our realities compel us to take Asian theology more seriously.

On a more personal note, Fr. Rasiah considers being "human" his greatest challenge. This "human" theme runs through his life; he gives credit to the Society of Jesus for having contributed immensely to his human growth. This theme burns especially in his desire to touch hearts with his homilies aimed at making people more human and in his own words, more divine. It should be no wonder then, that his challenge is also his consolation. How very Ignatian!

By Mark Anthony P. Canios



The deacon has a wife!

Deacon Barth E. Bracy, MSOLBS (Missionary Society of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament), Moderator of the League of Eucharistic Guardians, had already been happily married for a year before he was ordained a permanent deacon on January 11, 2003 at the Basilica of St. Anastasia in Rome. In current Church practice, a married man, he explains, may be ordained to the permanent diaconate after having reached the age of thirty-five. However, a man who has been ordained a deacon may not marry.

Likewise, if the wife of a permanent deacon passes away, he is bound to observe celibacy. For some reasons, he muses over the fact that there has not been any ordained Filipino permanent deacon in the history of the Filipino Catholic Church. In the Philippines, as moderator of the League of Eucharistic Guardians, together with other members of the group, Deacon Barth is tasked to teach the rules and norms of Eucharistic Adoration in the country. In addition to this apostolate, he is taking some units in theology at the Loyola School of Theology and at the same time doing further studies in philosophy at the Pontifical University of Sto. Tomas (UST).

"Parang kailan lang..." were my thoughts when I first set foot on the premises of Loyola School of Theology. It seemed like I was entering a whole new world.

Coming from my first missionary assignment in Zambales where I worked with an Aeta tribe, everything in LST seemed to be the opposite of my rural sojourn. There, I could breathe fresh air, while here in Manila, there is only polluted air. There, the mode of transportation was the carabao and it took me hours to reach my destination; here I ride the LRT and arrive at my destination within minutes. There I was surrounded by simple people who are sometimes looked down as "uneducated" because they are not able to study in a formal school, but who possess an inherent wisdom and a deep faith in God and live the spirit of the Gospel in their own culture. Now, I am surrounded by bright and promising religious and lay students who dissect the Gospel and study it to the last detail.

For the first few months, the comparisons came endlessly along with the nagging doubt that any good could come out of all these "heavenly" and dogmatic studies while many go hungry. To my surprise, in spite of my resistance and initial struggle, the Spirit however worked through the lectures, through school events, and through the people I encounter.

Time has flown so fast; the second semester is about to end. Now, I look back with gratitude for this school year, not so much for the knowledge I acquired (though not discounting it) but more for what I have become in the course of my study.

Fifteen years from now, I might probably forget the time of the Babylonian exile (may Fr. Vic Salanga forgive me) or the Greek term for Revelation or the different ptonouncements of various Councils. But I will surely not forget the many people (sisters, seminarians, lay), whom I have come to know even by chance or passing encounters, and the events and circumstances that revealed to me the face of God.

Who would forget the mind wracking Revelation exams of Dr. Yap? I might not remember them all, but I will remember the bond created in among us, his students. How could I ever forget the feeling of panic as I groped for answers in thin air in one of my oral exams? I came out dejected and humbled, but God allowed me to experience his consolation through Ate Levy. I remember clearly our

By Maricris Licup, FMM

WHAT MATTERS MOST



Now I *realize that every experience has a meaning if I am sensitive enough to see Jesus in each one.*

conversation. "Ate Levy, hindi ako nakasagot!" Ate Levy got up from her chair and said, "Bakit, sister, ano'ng nangyari?" with real concern in her voice. I might forget all that Bishop Ted Bacani said in class, but seeing him smile and patiently teach us after the "storm" he had gone through in his life taught me much about forgiveness and faith in the Church which no words and propositions can eloquently express. The same goes with Msgr. Vengco whose commitment to evangelization is edifying. I will surely forget the little details, especially the dates in the study of Scripture but Fr. Salanga's constant refrain would long remain with me: "Our God is a God of love and mercy"—a love which he manifests in his person as he teaches with fervor and shares his deep love for the Word of God.

In the final analysis, it is not a matter of simply getting good grades or being able to memorize and recall all the teachings of the Church. What matters most is how this knowledge has led me to be more loving and Christ-like. Now I realize that every experience has a meaning if I am sensitive enough to see Jesus in each one. Then I can say, my LST education has not been in vain.

By Richard Escoto, OCD

The Stairs, The Letter, The

Coming for the first time to Loyola School of Theology was an unforgettable experience for Angelita P. Makalinao. "On the day I went to enroll in LST, I fell down the stairs and broke my left shoulder." She was then 70 years old.

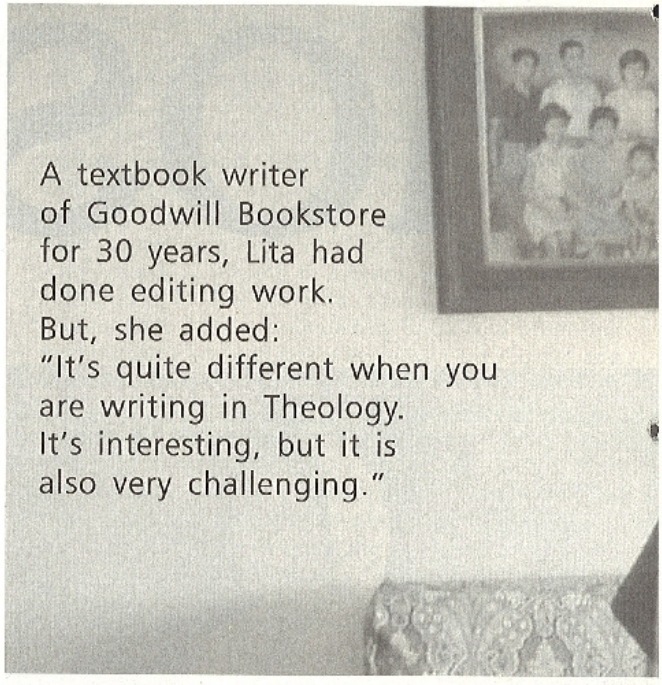
Angelita took this accident as a sign not to go to LST anymore. "I made a resignation letter. For three weeks I could not make it to class." She prayed, "Lord, you told me to go to school and I obeyed you. But I met this accident; now I can't do it."

Nonetheless, there were persons who encouraged her not to quit. First was her daughter who advised her to take the injury as a test from God. Then there was the LST secretary who helped her to talk with the professors about her absences. Lastly there was her Old Testament lay teacher. "It was because of his inspiration and teaching that I decided to continue." She was impressed the way the lecture seemed alive and interesting despite its unholy time slot in the schedule.

Tita Lita, as fondly called by friends, is a joyful mother of eight—six are married and have settled abroad while two are single and have stayed with her. For raising them up well, she was awarded the 1995 Outstanding Mother of the Year by the City of Makati. Her husband who died seven years ago was a doctor and a professor at the UP College of Medicine. She took her MA in Education in Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska. She taught in De La Salle University-Manila for ten years and in the University of the East and the Centro Escolar University for thirty years. After her retirement in 2001, she continued teaching, this time it was catechism classes for the high schools in her area. She currently heads the Volunteer Catechists Misistry of the National Shrine of Sacred Heart in Makati City.

She was sent to LST as a scholar by the Apostleship of Prayer movement which she served as president for six years. Her initial reaction then was: why in Ateneo? "Do you know how far Ateneo is from De La Salle! Traveling for hours, this I can't do," she complained. She decided nonetheless to retire from La Salle and to study in Ateneo with the Jesuits, officially the propagator and advocate of the Apostleship of Prayer.

Lita found herself in the midst of seminarians, religious sisters and lay persons in class for five years. "I really enjoyed student life again after all these years of being the teacher. I didn't really think of grades. Actually, I didn't see my grades, except for one—my grade in my favorite subject which happened to be my lowest grade, the first subject I took."



It took her some time in LST because she was choosing subjects that primarily interested her but were not necessarily part of her program. In some classes, she found herself as the only rose among thorns. "Studying with seminarians was fun. It was okay and I really enjoyed it," she grins.

Recently Lita defended her thesis entitled, *Devotion to the Sacred Heart Among Urban Filipino Catholic Families in the Archdiocese of Manila: A Contemporary Study with Catechetical Modules.* Asked about her learnings from the thesis-writing process, she emphatically answered, "Writing a thesis was just fine with me, not only because it was part of my job; but I learned a lot of things. With Fr. Jim Kroeger, my mentor-editor, I learned humility." A textbook writer of Goodwill Bookstore for 30 years, Lita also had done editing work. But, she added: "It's quite

Thesis

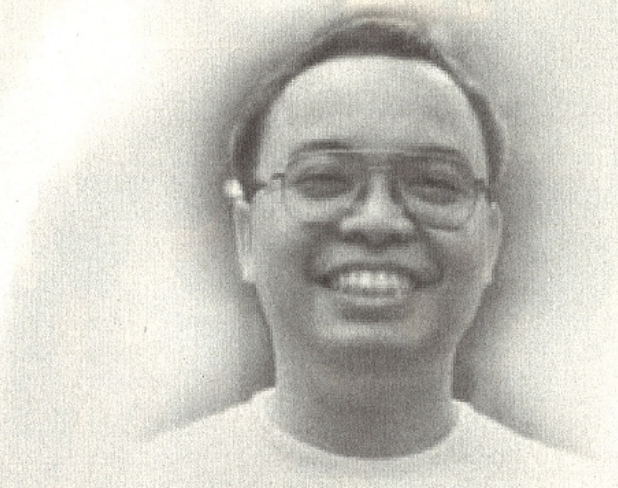


different when you are writing in Theology. It's interesting, but it is also very challenging."

She describes Theology as her renewal experience. "It's saying goodbye to the old self to be able to love and serve the Lord happily." Despite her busy schedule in the parish catechetical program and other ministries in the PPC, she enjoys her life. "You are not a Christian if you are not joyful." Now with her thesis completed, she hopes to bring the devotion to the Sacred Heart not only to individual members but to families as well.

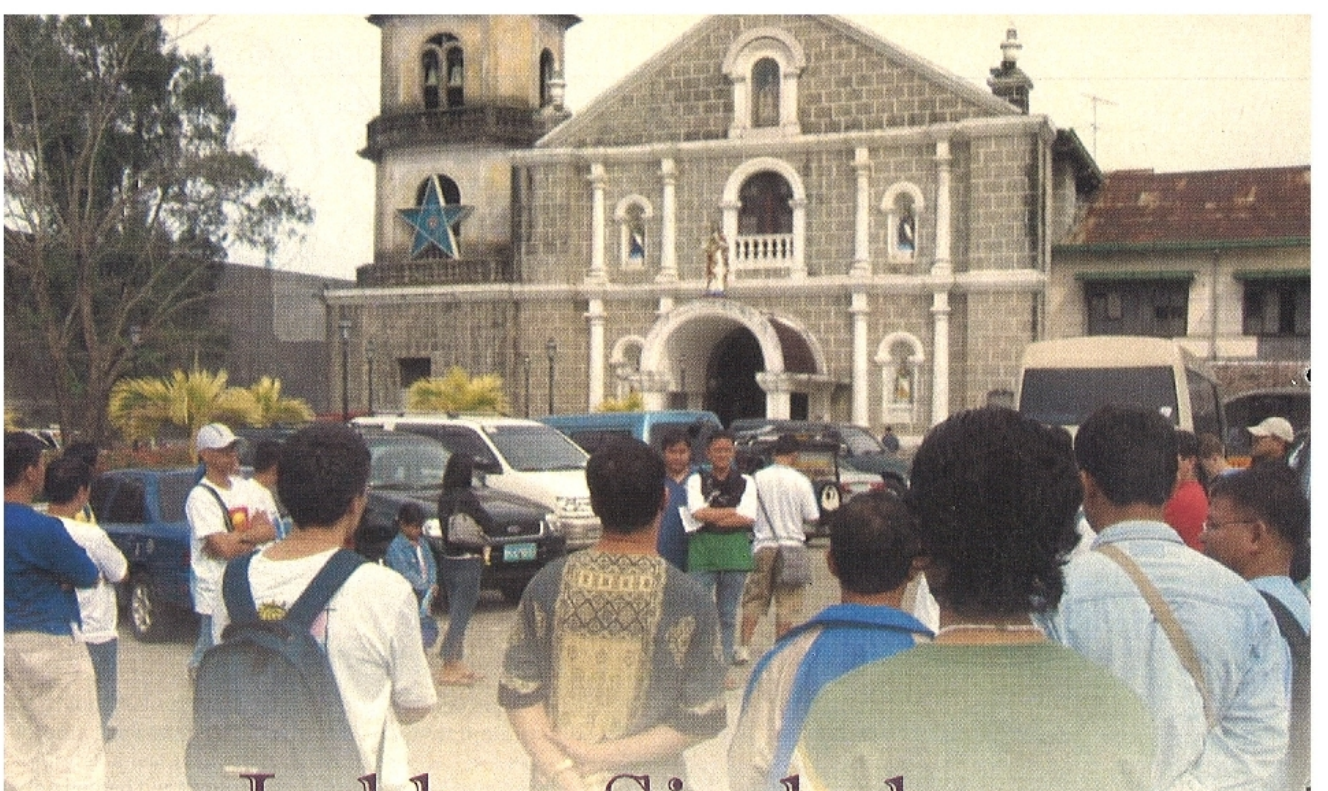
Five years have passed since that awful fall on the LST stairs, Lita was once again taking the steps down on the morning of February 15. She had just successfully defended her Thesis on Sacred Heart. She is now 75 years old, indeed one of the rare septuagenarians ever to survive LST studies. Her final words, "Praise God!"

Congratulations!



Sumpaico is Class 2006 Valedictorian

Reverend Joaquin Sumpaico, SJ is this year's Class Valedictorian. Sumpaico graduated from the Ateneo de Manila University with a bachelor's degree in Development Studies in 1994. He then spent a year teaching at Sta. Maria High School in Iloilo as part of the Jesuit Volunteers Philippines. In May 1995, he joined the Society of Jesus. This year, together with the distinction of being Class Valedictorian, he also graduates with a masteral degree in Theological Studies, *magna cum laude*. In his valedictory address, Sumpaico enjoined the graduating batch to "believe, listen, and risk." He says, "Let us not be afraid to risk…our loving God risks everything for the sake of us all." *Tinig Loyola* congratulates Sumpaico who was its editor for school year 2002-2003.



Lakbay Simbahan: A Heritage Pilgrimage

By Jesse James P. Luzano, CMF

In 1521 Magellan discovered the Philippines; religious missionaries began to arrive in 1565 to carry out the work of evangelization, to spread the Christian faith. Over the centuries, missionaries built churches that have withstood the test of time. These old churches symbolize our Christian faith and worship across the ages. Not only do they demonstrate the Catholicity of our ancestors who were among the first Christians, the changes inside the churches also show a faith that has been enhanced and well-nurtured through Catholic education, catechetical instruction, and religious formation.

Early this year, the Loyola School of Theology—seminarians, religious sisters, lay and staff—participated in a long, sacred journey to some of these historical churches. In particular, they went on a pilgrimage to the historical churches of Cavite which are two hundred years old or more. Among the churches they visited were *The Purification of Our Lady of Candelaria* in Silang, *Gregory the Great* in Indang, *Imaculada de Concepcion Shrine* in Naic, *Santo Nino de Ternate* in Ternate, *Our Lady of Assumption* in Maragondon and *Mary Magdalene* in Kawit.

The pilgrimage which is an annual activity much awaited by the students was spearheaded this year by the Liturgical Committee. Dubbed as *"Lakbay Simbahan 2006,"* the whole day affair was intended to be a prayerful experience as well as an opportunity to discover and deepen our historical identity. At every church, a short prayer was offered in honor of the patron saint of the parish. It was followed by a brief talk about its historical background given ably by Fr. Rene B. Javellana, SJ, an art historian.

On the whole, the pilgrimage was a reminiscence of the past, a glimpse on how our cultural and religious values evolved. We are then called "pilgrims" in this life as we witness how God shares his life with us in our history and through time. Truly, in the words of Vatican II, a pilgrim Church.

By Khris Emmanuel L. Llacer, SSP

The LST Canteen: Food-trip for the Soul

There is more to the LST canteen than your usual delectable tray of food—be it your favorite *dinuguan* or *kare-kare* for lunch or *turon* for snacks. Adjoining the Cardinal Sin Center, the canteen inevitably becomes host to various occasions of prime significance in LST life throughout the year: acquaintance parties, Theological Hours, awarding ceremonies, Christmas and Lenten celebrations, and graduations. On ordinary school days, theology students just hangout here and trade their musings about current issues, their spiritual-highs, and the glories and pains of student life, in between spoonsful of rice and *ulam* of course.

The LST canteen is supervised by Mrs. Corazon G. Gallardo, fondly known as Ate Cora, who is assisted by her reliable staff of Maileen, Bordie, RJ and Nonoy. According to Ate Cora, their usual workday starts at 4 AM, except on Sundays, when they do the marketing in Marikina. Cooking begins by 6:30 or 7:00 AM in the canteen. Every day they have to come up with the standard of eight menus to satisfy the varying tastes of the LST community.

"Serbisyo ang priority ko dito kaya willing ako ibigay lahat," prides Ate Cora who emphasizes her good track record and loyalty to the school. She prefers being busy especially in the kitchen where she oversees the food preparation. Ate Cora always encourages her staff to improve while balancing a good working relationship with them.



Now with the rise of the student population in LST, every table in the canteen would be occupied especially during lunch time. Many college students from the other Ateneo units have also discovered this food-haven and are now regular customers.



The LST canteen is supervised by Mrs. Corazon G. Gallardo, fondly known as Ate Cora, who is assisted by her reliable staff of Maileen, Bordie, RJ and Nonoy.

Some years back, the canteen actually started as a kiosk when the building where it is now located did not exist. Few students would eat the food they served amid swarms of flies and mosquitoes. When the new LST building was constructed in the late 1990s, Ate Cora and her staff were thankful to God when the school administration asked them to run the new canteen.

Now with the rise of the student population in LST, every table in the canteen would be occupied especially during lunch time. Many college students from the other Ateneo units have also discovered this food-haven and are now regular customers. When asked to explain this phenomenon, Ate Cora cites a certain "harmonious atmosphere" that makes eating in the LST canteen a pleasant experience aside from the high respect students have in general for any Jesuit institution. *"Secondary na lang siguro 'yung mura at masarap na pagkain,"* she humbly adds. But Ate Cora strongly points out that even with the surge of Ateneo students, the LST people are still the canteen's top priority.

"Sana patuloy n'yo kaming tangkilikin at ipagdasal," was the canteen management's request to LST students whom they pray will persevere in their vocation. So, the next time you order your choice cuisine, be generous enough to say thank you to these dedicated people in the canteen who nourish us for the next class and for our future ministry.

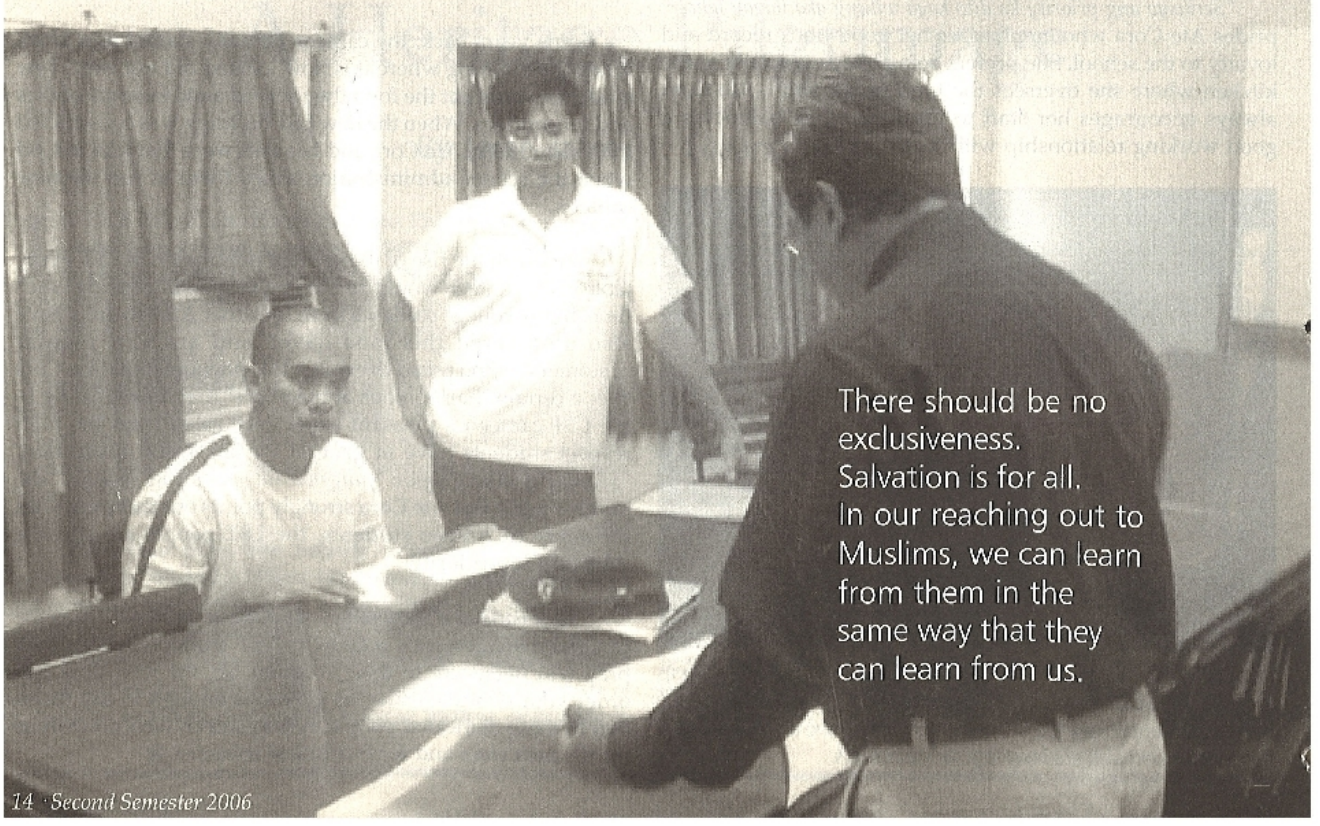
Convergence | Divergence

Inshallah. This Islamic term for "God-willing" or the will of Allah connotes the future that you lay in the hands of God. This term may apply with my interview and sharing with a "Muslim priest;" this being my first time to write on Islam and interreligious dialogue, I hope in God that I have done justice to this delicate subject!

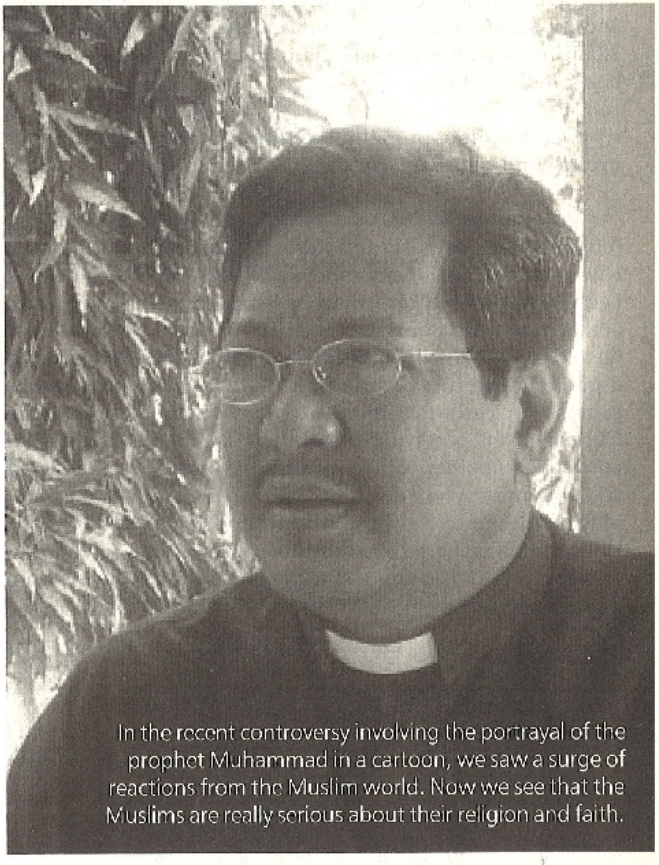
No, Fr. Renato Taib Oliveros, SJ, Rene to his fellow Jesuits, is not an *imam*, the religious leader in a Muslim community. Actually he is only a *mestizo* or part Muslim. He has a Muslim Tausug mother, Rachma Rasul Taib and a Christian Pangasinense father, Pedro Oliveros, now deceased. His family moved to various places in Mindanao and his mother now resides in Cagayan de Oro. He graduated College at the University of the Philippines in Los Baños with a degree in Agricultural Business. He worked for a year or two after graduation then entered the Society of Jesus in 1984. He studied his two Masteral Degrees in Christian Communications and Theology at the Ateneo and Loyola School of Theology respectively. After his ordination, he was assigned in Mabuhay, Olutanga, Zamboanga Sibugay wherein he experienced direct contact with Muslim communities. He then studied abroad for his Masteral and Doctoral degrees in Islamic Studies at Hartford Seminary and Temple University in the U.S.A. Newly returned from his studies abroad, he is currently teaching an elective course on Islam in LST. In this interview, he shares about his experience as a teacher, on his plans for the course, and his passion for furthering the dialogue of life and faith between Christians and Muslims. ***Inshallah.***

EC: You are teaching a subject that is not familiar to many. Can you tell us how a subject like this is now being taught at LST?

RO: This is the first time in a long time that a subject like this is being offered here in LST. The course is offered to raise interest in and consciousness of another religion. We cannot ignore the fact that religions like Islam influence our way of



Interview with Fr. Rene Oliveros, SJ



In the recent controversy involving the portrayal of the prophet Muhammad in a cartoon, we saw a surge of reactions from the Muslim world. Now we see that the Muslims are really serious about their religion and faith.

thinking in the world today. Not only that, there is also the issue of globalization in terms of faith relations. Islam is one of the most misunderstood religions; that is why we need to raise interest regarding this subject matter. In Southeast Asia we Christians are the minority and the Muslims are the majority. Here in the Philippines we can say that we are the majority. We have been so insulated from the Moro world through the years. We are based in Luzon and we are not so aware of what is happening in Mindanao. If we have to live with our Muslim brothers and sisters then we have to study about them and their religion.

EC: How many students do you have now; can you comment about them?

RO: I have four students right now. There are two conclusions I can derive from this. First, the subject was scheduled at an odd hour at two o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesdays. I have to believe that students are not available during this time and have activities in their seminaries. Second, very few people have interest in studying Islam. Of these four students, one is a diocesan priest, the others are a Benedictine priest, an Oblate scholastic, and a Jesuit Vietnamese scholastic. What we do not realize sometimes is that there are many vocations coming from Mindanao. We therefore, really have to shape a generation of seminarians who will be working in Mindanao with a better awareness of the "other" and not only on a superficial level. They must consider their theology, politics, as well as their economic situation because three of the four regions in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao belong to the poorest economic status in the country.

EC: Can you tell us more about the subject, your approach, and your goal?

RO: The first part of the course is tracing the religion through history, from Abraham and Ishmael, and the prophet Muhammad. The second part is about the issue of violence in the religion and studying the essence of the religion and its true meaning. There are some terms like *jihad* for example which are always misinterpreted. We also tackle neo-fundamentalism in Islam. The course is still developing based on how I relate with my students. There are discussions and I highly encourage them to share their views and opinions. I have to stress that this is not only a lecture course. I encourage my students to participate from where they are coming. Right now, the more I listen to them, the more I realize that for next year, this course will be much better if it is offered as a "catechism." Why? It's because I found out that many students have really no knowledge about Islam and this is really their first exposure. I have to be patient and the students have to be patient with me also. I do not know if it can be done in one course. But a basic knowledge would not hurt in order to equip our missionaries for a future work in Mindanao.

EC: How about the area of dialogue with our Muslim brothers and sisters?

RO: In the spirit of dialogue we need to have conversations at the level of theology with the Muslims. We have to see where there are convergences and divergences between Christianity and Islam. It is a dialogue of life and faith, which we have to participate in to be in real solidarity with them. But we can only do this if we at least study their religion, philosophy, and theology. Just like in the recent controversy involving the portrayal of the prophet Muhammad in a cartoon. We saw the surge of reactions from the Muslim world. Now we see that the Muslims are really serious about their religion and faith. Our training in the seminaries teaches us to be critical

but in this case, how do we do that? We need to see these reactions from their perspective without making judgments and by suspending our prejudices. We have to understand Islam from within the Islamic community. We have to try being in their shoes.

EC: Are there proper guidelines in reaching out to our brother and sister Muslims?

RO: Let me tell you an anecdote. When I first took my religion rather seriously and started going back to the Church, I was worried about my mother. Will my mother be saved because she is not a Christian? So I approached a Jesuit priest at that time who later became Bishop Antonio Ledesma. What he told me was that it was the will of God for my mother to be a good Muslim. Let's leave her at that. *Nostra Aetate* has expressed clearly that there are many "paths" to salvation. Christianity is one path to salvation. Islam, the Church has affirmed, is another path to salvation. We cannot contain God and the mystery of salvation inside Christianity. We cannot make a design of salvation to be found within the Catholic Church alone. There should be no exclusiveness. Salvation is for all. In our reaching out to Muslims, we can learn from them in the same way that they can learn from us.

A great part of the future of the Church in the Philippines is in Mindanao. Mindanao will eventually help shape our theology. Our experience will shape the mind of the Church. We know that even Luzon depends a lot on the resources of Mindanao. It is rich in natural resources and in terms of culture; there you already see the meeting of east and west.

EC: The first encyclical of the Holy Father Pope Benedict is very timely. It speaks about God's love for us and our love for our neighbors. Can you apply this concretely to Christian-Muslim dialogue?

RO: In the Five Pillars of Islam, *Jakat*–the fourth pillar reflects charity. If there is a parallel between our Christian charity and Islam's five pillars it is this fourth pillar. You cannot claim to be a good Muslim if you do not help the poor and share yourselves with them. You have to do the *Salat* – pray five times a day, and that *salat* has to overflow to the daily lives of people and finally reach out to those who are needy, the poorest of the poor. The Holy Father admonished us in his encyclical to go back to the basics, to the core of Christianity which is Charity. In the Letter of James it is also expressed that faith without good works is a faith that is dead. I am glad that this encyclical brings up something that is common between Christians and Muslims.

By Maricris Licup, FMM

WHAT'S WRONG WITH BEING SECOND?

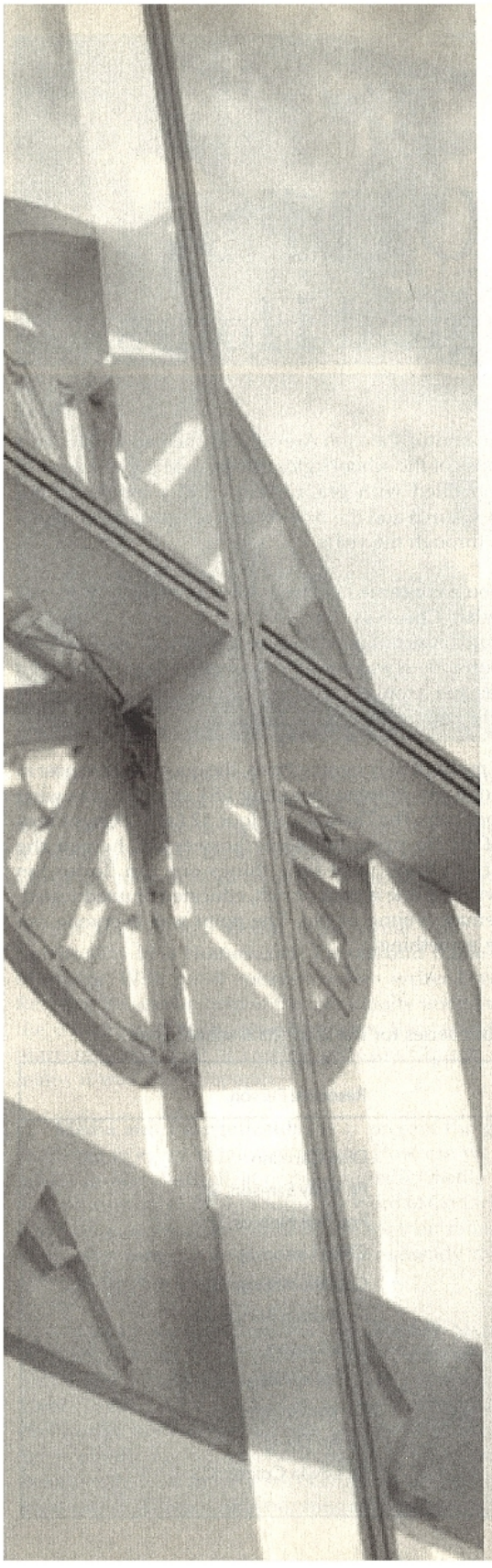
A Commentary on the LST Awards

A very striking scene in the movie, *Tuesdays with Morrie* was when the students were cheering for their school, chanting "We're number one! We're number one!" Then came Morrie, walking to an empty seat and butting in, "What's wrong with being number two?"

In our world today, being number one has become the norm of success. Every one wants to reach the top. Just look at ABS-CBN Channel 2 and GMA 7, outdoing each other in the ratings game even at the expense of destroying each other's reputation. How many politicians do not dream of some day becoming President? Our Church is not also spared from this mad rush. How many priests would gladly volunteer for a poor parish and forego a plum post in the cathedral? Bishop Chito Tagle once asked in one of his talks, "whose parents would call for a party when a child comes home with a failing grade in hand?"

How about us at LST? In what way does this attitude influence our lives, our behavior and activities? Let us take a look at the annual search for the "Professor of the Year," "Student of the Year," "Best Committee Head," etc. Are the criteria for all this solid enough to reflect excellence in a holistic manner or is this event only a popularity contest? Does it promote unity or simply competition? In this kind of search, do we make the life of Jesus our norm or do we allow the current of today's world to sweep us off our feet?

In asking these questions, do I advocate mediocrity? No. But it is a call for a deeper discernment so that we, students in a theological school, may truly be the light and salt of the earth, men and women in the world but not of the world.



LST AWARDS FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2005-2006

Class Beadle of the Year -
Eric Sevencruz, OMI
(second year Theology)

Employee of the Year -
Elvira Bolos
(Registrar's Office)

Professor of the Year -
Dr. Joaquin Yap
(Trinity, Scripture)

Committee Head of the Year -
Nono Alfonso, SJ
(Tinig Loyola)

Outstanding Seminarian of the Year -

Richard Escoto, OCD
(first year theology)

Irvin Morasti, OMI
(second year theology)

Religious Sister of the Year -
Lourdes Ramara, FSP
(second year theology)

Outstanding Lay Student of the Year -
Marilou Borge

By John Ryan Cordova, CMF

Holy Hours:
2005-2006 Theological Hours

Last school year, a survey was conducted by the Student Council at the end of both semesters. Among the various LST student organizations, the Theological Hour got a 4.12 rating (first semester) and 3.89 (second semester), which are considerably high on the scale. For this year, what grade will the students give the Theological Hour?

What follows is a quick review of these Theological Hour sessions this year.

The first theological hour was the documentary ***Bunso*** which showed the harsh reality of life behind bars especially, yes, of the minors who are not supposed to be there. It was a very moving documentary film, another feather in the hat of the multi-awarded director Ditsi Carolino who graced the affair.

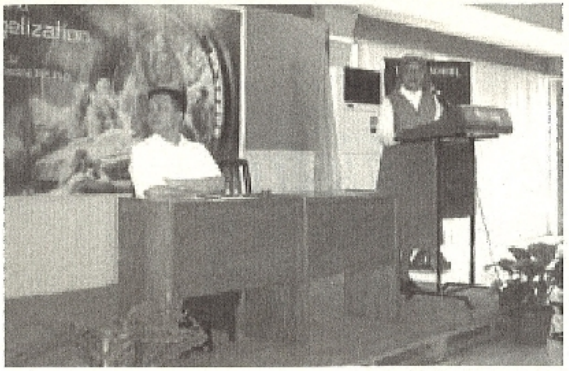
LST at 40 was a trip down memory lane, back to the roots of our beloved school, the Loyola School of Theology. Three famous alumni—Frs. Ben Nebres, SJ, Chito Unson, SJ, and professor emeritus Catalino Arévalo, SJ—helped the students get a glimpse of the school's glorious past. Many came out of the session filled with gratitude for LST's service to the Philippine Church and the priestly and religious formation it has given through the years.

Are you a concerned citizen? Are you politically astute? **Bernas with Con-Ass** was easily one of the "hottest" Theological Hours not only because it was well attended but more importantly it was a topic everybody was talking about at that time and a topic that led the LST community to reflect more on the country's political situation.

In the midst of the ongoing crisis, the question foremost in the mind of every Filipino including LST students was what one can do to help. The Theological Hour, ***12 Little Things Every Filipino Can Do*** provided some answers. It helped the community to think what little things one can do for the country, whether one is poor or rich, educated or uneducated, male or female, young or old. The point was everyone can contribute something!

These are the schedule, topics, and resource persons of the Theological Hour series for the 2005-2006 school year.

Date	Topic	Resource Person
Aug 24, 2005	*Bunso*	Ditsi Carolino
Sept. 14	LST at 40	Fr. Willy Samson, SJ Frs. Ben Nebres, SJ Chito Unson, SJ Catalino Arévalo, SJ
Sept. 21	"Bernas with Con-Ass"	Fr. Joaquin Bernas, SJ
Nov. 23	*12 Little Things Every Filipino Can Do*	Alex Lacson
Jan. 11, 2006	Roger Haight and his book: *Jesus: Symbol of God*	Fr. Lode Wostyn, CICM
Jan. 25	The Spirituality of a Homosexual Person and Same-Sex Marriage	Danton Remoto
Feb. 8	Media and Evangelization	Fr. Ari Dy, SJ
Feb. 22	Migrant Workers	Fr. Edwin Corros, CS





The next topic was a controversial one – **Roger Haight and his book:** ***Jesus: Symbol of God.*** The session was like a course in Apologetics, with the students reviewing in their minds their dogma courses. Isn't Christ the summit of all creation? What do you think?

Another controversial topic came next: **The Spirituality of a Homosexual Person and Same-Sex Marriage.** With guest speaker known writer Danton Remoto, the session helped the community understand the dynamics of homosexual persons, their stand on marriage, and their struggles with the Church. For many, it was an eye-opener.

Media and Evangelization is at present the great challenge to every religious institute. How can we use media in our evangelization? Admittedly, media is a very powerful tool for spreading the Word of God which many religious institutes already use for their ministry. Well, even some professors at LST are already media savvy in the conduct of their classes.

Do you have a relative working abroad? **Migrant Workers,** the "heroes" of our time, were the focus of the final Theological Hour this year. Fr. Edwin Corros, CS, guest speaker, went past the platitudes and helped the community understand the real situation and the real needs of Filipinos who work abroad. He ended with a reminder that just as we were once exiles ourselves, we must now as Church help our migrant workers.

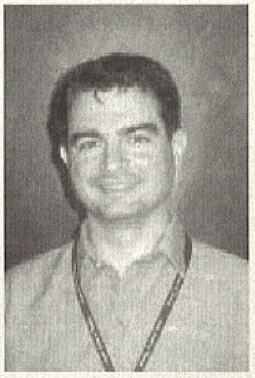
By Mars Taruk, SX

The Theologian as Missiologist:

Fr. Rocco Viviano, SX

"My spirit of adventure and curiosity pushes me to explore and discover new possibilities. However, I try to balance creativity with practical sense and a good capacity for analysis in grasping the gist of the situation and in understanding people" (Fr. Rocco).

Charm, cheerfulness, simplicity, experience, vision. These attributes overflow in the person of Fr. Rocco Viviano and he needs every ounce of them for his work as a missionary. An Italian priest, Fr. Rocco, 34, is a member of the Congregation of Xaverian Missionaries. After finishing his theological study at the *Institulo Teologico Interdiocesano* in Reggio Emila, Italy in 2000 and after his ordination, Fr. Rocco moved to Great Britain. From 2001 to 2003, he continued his study in two different fields, obtaining a master of arts degree in Mission Studies from the Missionary Institute of London and a master of arts degree in Christianity and Interreligious Dialogue at Heythrop College, University of London. For the latter, he wrote his postgraduate thesis on the response of the Catholic Church to Islam in the Philippines in the post-Vatican II era; it was published in 2004.



When he arrived in the Philippines in February 2004, Fr. Rocco spent his first year learning Tagalog and immersing himself in the culture of the Filipinos. The following year, he got a new assignment as vice-rector of the Theologate of the Xaverian Missionaries. At present, Fr. Rocco teaches various courses on Interreligious Dialogue at the Loyola School of Theology and the Maryhill School of Theology. He is also a member of the Philippine Association of Catholic Missiologists (PACM). He has kept his correspondence with the Heythrop Center for Interreligious Dialogue in the UK and with the Silsilah Dialogue Movement in Zamboanga, Philippines in order to nurture his passion for dialogue at both the theological and experiential levels.

Reflecting on the past six years of his life after ordination, he singles out his studies in London. He points out the friendship and goodwill that he formed with people of various Christian churches. These relationships, both on the academic level and in pastoral ministry, have strengthened his ecumenical sensitivity. The key to the success of any dialogue, then, is friendship.

By Mark Anthony P. Canios

Theology and the Ministry: A REFLECTION

More than an academic discipline, theology ought to be practised and lived out in daily life. This "applied" aspect of theology makes it very much practical and relevant in various ministries. Hence, theology and ministry need each other.

For this piece, the author has asked some people regarding their reasons for studying theology here in the Loyola School of Theology and how theology serves them in the ministry. Bro. André Semeni, SX, of the Xavierian Missionaries came to LST for theological studies with the intention of becoming a priest and a missionary. For him, theology is "an attempt to make sense of our lives and an attempt to deal with the way things are." Through theology, he is able "to help people clarify their image of God and shift from an old paradigm to a new paradigm in their life of faith." In his stay in LST, he has realized that in a world of globalization, any "option for the poor is *ipso facto* an option against a political or economic system that continues to create more and more victims out of the poor." Lastly, he sees a great importance in the collaboration with lay men and women that is happening in LST.

In the same way, Bro. Richard Anthonysamy, SJ, was sent by his superiors to LST to study theology in view of the priesthood. For him, the study of theology is helping him in two ways: (1) to re-visit more thoroughly the foundations of the Catholic faith and to reflect on their premises and promises in light of the current context; (2) to ask once again the questions both Catholics and non-Catholics have about Christianity and to seek for their answers.

On the other hand, Sr. Luchie Bagalay, FSP, reasons that her study of theology helps her in the apostolate. As a Daughter of St. Paul, whose apostolate is to evangelize through the use of the media of social communications, she comes into direct contact with people from all walks of life in her regular apostolic activities, like media displays on Sundays in parishes and in home-to-home evangelization work every summer. As she reaches out to people, she meets individuals who seek enlightenment about Scripture, the Catholic faith and moral issues. Through her theological training in LST, she is able to respond to their queries with conviction. Furthermore, her spirituality and counselling subjects aid her in her present assignment as a junior vocation promoter especially in accompanying young women in their vocation discernment.

Ms. Gail Gines, a lay person active in the ministry of retreat giving, came to LST by accident. An important lady in her life invited her to attend a class of Fr. Thomas Green, SJ. For her, theology not only formed her mind, it also brought her toward conversion and a deeper relationship with the Lord. The experience with the Lord in a profound way has not only borne fruit in her personal life but also in her ministry of giving retreats, which she refers to as a "business of interior growth." In her involvement in the ministry and in LST, she yearns more and more to become an *instrumentum conjunctum cum Deo*, i.e., an instrument shaped in the hands of God.

Reflecting upon the stories of these persons as to how theology has helped them in the ministry, I came to reflect upon my story of coming to LST. Several persons have asked me why I study theology in LST. They have even mistaken me for a seminarian. Yet, I have my own reasons. I came here to LST searching for healing and integration. And looking back now, I can say I found it at LST. In my own desire to reach out to others in the ministry, I found healing. More so, I found the God of Healing and Compassion. He is indeed the reason why I am able to go beyond myself and reach out to others in ministry.


Bro. André Semeni, SX

Many times, I have been awed and moved by hearing the background stories of people in coming to study theology at LST. While I can resonate with some stories, there are other stories that amaze me and leave me awe-inspired. I realize how mysterious and profound God's ways are. He has gathered different persons from all walks of life and backgrounds here in LST and yet in this divergence there is a common pattern: searching and "finding God in all things"—in the study of theology, amidst various involvements and preparation for the ministry, and, most of all, in one's life. This brings to mind the words of Mitch Albom in the epilogue of *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*. He writes: "the world is full of stories, but the stories are all one."

By Ngoc Lan, FMM



You are your words

Building peace through interreligious dialogue

Last year, I had the pleasant experience of taking part in the annual gathering of the Young Ambassadors for Peace (YAP). The meeting was held in Mindanao and was participated in by young people from seven countries and belonging to different religions. For me, the experience was a lesson in interreligious dialogue. It was a proof that people of various faiths can work together and work for peace.

During the meeting, there was much sharing especially about interreligious conflicts in the participants' countries of origin. Filipino participants, for example, shared about the Muslim and Christian conflict that started in the 70s and escalated over the years. Some participants shared that family members were killed by people from other religions. These were bitter experiences. Everyone listened without any judgment; they knew about the events and the reasons behind the conflicts. Yet, they also realized that the past could no longer be changed. What seemed important in all this, however, is that if people can all sit together and talk, they become equals and from this, possi-bilities happen.

As the meeting progressed, for instance, while playing together or talking to one another, participants discovered that more than the differences, they, in fact, share many things in common: difficulties in life, misunderstanding from their parents, lack of job opportunities, struggles with study. And, from these sharings and interactions, all realized that if they can understand and collaborate with others, they can do many good things around them.

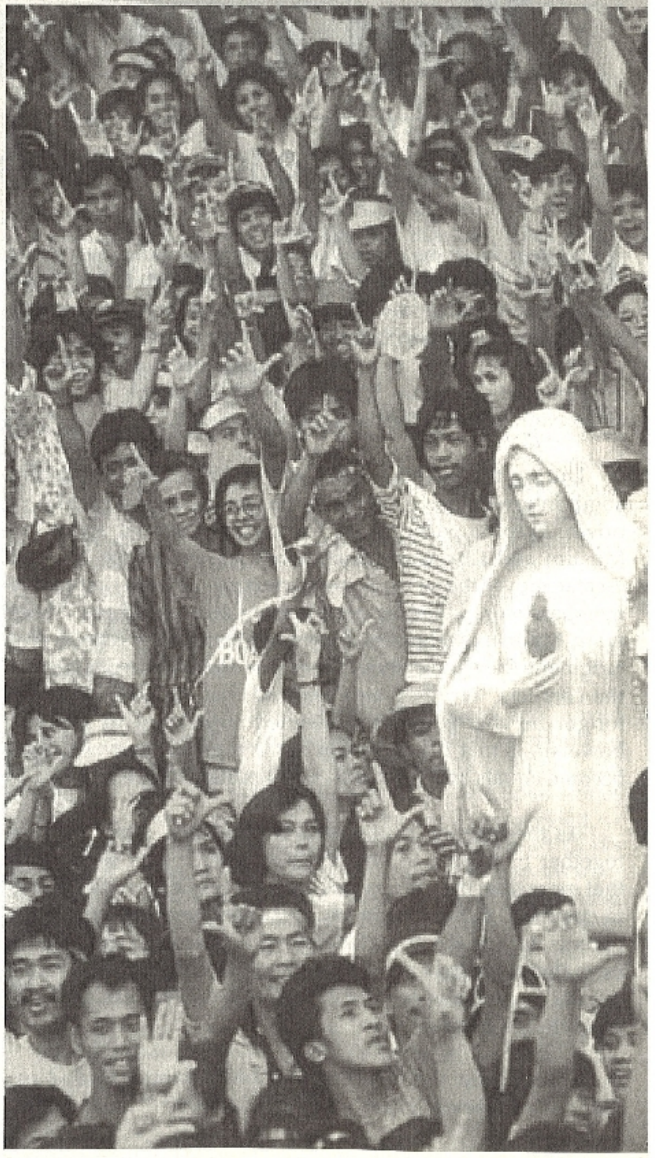
Throughout the meeting, the YAP's motto guided us: "Think Peace, Speak Peace, and Work for Peace." **Think peace.** When you don't think positively about others and put them on another level, you cannot accept them and work together with them. The positive thought is the seed of peace that you have to nourish every day. **Speak peace.** We need to remember: "You are your words." You cannot say beautiful words but, in practice, do bad deeds. **Work for peace.** This was captured by another slogan: "Small, Measurable, Achievable Steps." War and all kinds of conflicts cannot solve age-old problems. But when you do something for peace, the future will be different. You have to change yourself first; if not, you cannot change others. Peace has to start from the relationship with others right around you. Do not talk about how to end war in the world, but begin to love and offer a smile to the people around you, always showing positive behavior.

YAP now has a network all over the world. There are local youth groups in communities. These have successfully organized workshops for the youth of different religions in conflict-ridden countries. They have programs to help youths in trouble (ex-combatants, products of broken homes, school drop-outs, child laborers, drug addicts, war-traumatized children). There are also many beautiful on-going Action Plans in different places that promote solid relationships and teach values.

The workshop has now ended; participants have gone back to their countries. However, I believe that what was started in Mindanao will continue to grow, firstly within small groups, and hopefully, it can spread out to the whole community, helping implement the culture of peace, love, and happiness everywhere.

EDSA

Former President Fidel Ramos and Bishop Soc Villegas have castigated the government for its lack of enthusiasm in preparing for the 20th anniversary of the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution. But this behavior of the Arroyo administration is very understandable. From the viewpoint of the Church, the EDSA revolution was a moral revolution. People fought for their long cherished values such as truth, freedom, and justice. In contrast, the Arroyo administration, as it now stands, seems to be the anti-thesis of all that. How then can it celebrate EDSA?



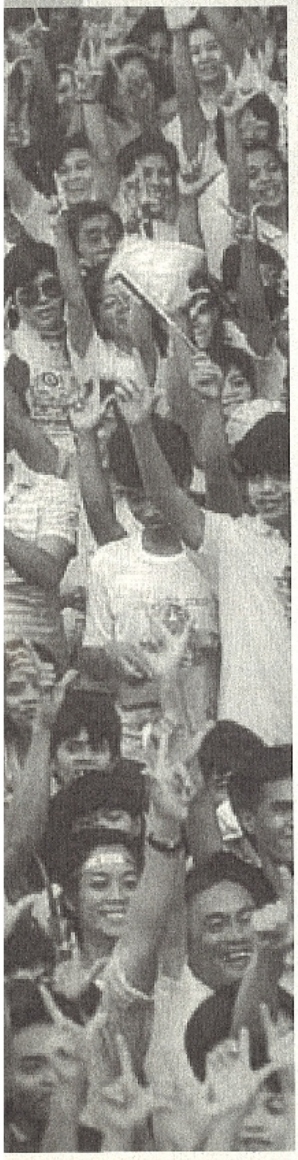
In 1986, in a searing pastoral letter, the Bishops of the Philippines condemned the cheating that transpired during the snap elections of 7 February. In particular, they said, "According to moral principles, a government that assumes or retains power through fraudulent means has no moral basis. For such an access to power is tantamount to a forcible seizure and cannot command the allegiance of the citizenry." That strong statement read in Cory Aquino's "*Tagumpay ng Bayan*" rally in Luneta and in parishes nationwide further galvanized the clamor against the Marcos dictatorship and lent the protest against it moral basis.

Ironically, the Arroyo administration finds itself in the same situation as the Marcos government before EDSA. The allegation of cheating in the 2004 elections continues to hang over its head, putting into question its legitimacy, much less its moral basis for its continuous stay in power. The recent pastoral letter of the Bishops this year is reminiscent of their watershed 1986 pastoral statement. It is a strong condemnation of the machinations of government to suppress the genuine search for truth as regards the 2004 elections—something recently validated by the House Committee on the "Hello, Garci" hearings. With this *déjà vu* situation, can anyone blame the Arroyo government's lackluster celebration of EDSA?

Yet, beyond these similarities, the Arroyo administration cannot celebrate EDSA for it has failed to stand by the values and principles that EDSA stood for. In the 1986 Constitution which is the by-product of the EDSA Revolution, the Preamble states that the Filipino people desire "a government that shall embody our ideals and aspirations." But what kind of values has this government promoted whether directly or indirectly?

By Nono Alfonso, SJ

THE FORGOTTEN MORAL REVOLUTION



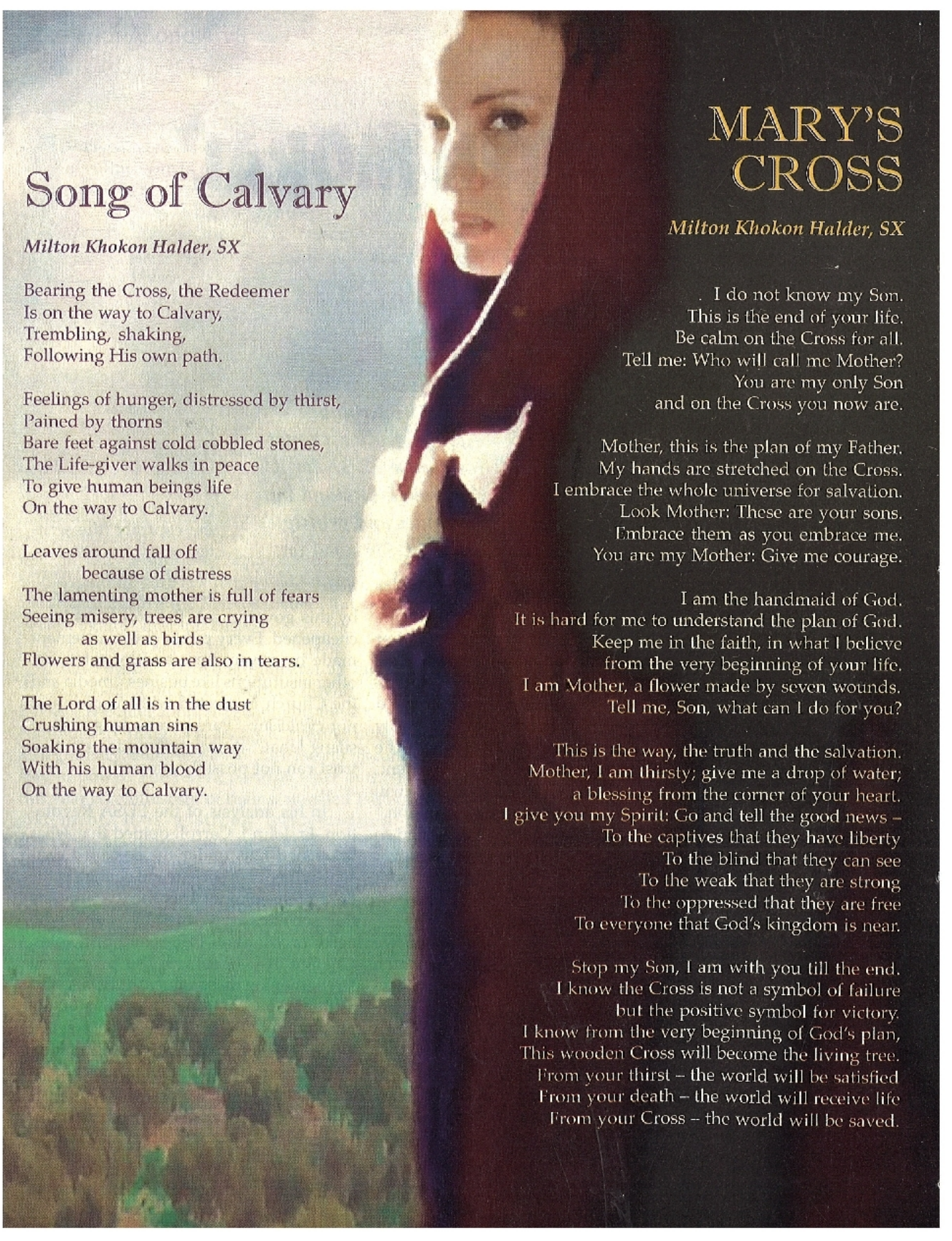
The matter of truth as a value for this government does not need more attention here as it is obviously not this government's priority, choosing to obfuscate its search rather than facilitate it. What is more disturbing however is how it has survived by capitalizing on the negative traits of the populace. Rather than face the problems that besiege it, this government has counted on the Filipino's inclination for apathy, *ningas kugon*, and tendency for factionalism. One can easily imagine its PR managers telling the President: "don't worry, Mrs. President, this will all blow over; the Filipinos will want to forget all these and just move on." Worse, this government has appealed to materialistic instincts of Filipinos. Never mind about the truth, what is paramount is the economy. Let us just move on.

The Arroyo Administration cannot celebrate EDSA for it has failed to stand by the values and principles that EDSA stood for.

As a consequence, not only do we have an underdeveloped economy and a factious politic, we have a demoralized public, its sense of morality visibly emasculated. The joke that anyone can turn back on his word if the president can change her mind about not running, or that one can always apologize after cheating, may no longer be a joke but a serious ethical problem that is slowly eating away the very moral fiber of Philippine society.

Fr. Albert Alejo in his anti-corruption seminars, stresses that corruption stems from our turning back on the word we give, the promises we make or the contract (the written word) we attest to. In the current dispensation, led no thanks by this government, the word has been cheapened. Every public pronouncement made by government and by extension other institutions like business, media and the Church is greeted with suspicion, if not cynicism. "Pare-pareho lang naman silang lahat." A society founded on mistrust can not possibly succeed.

In his analysis of the EDSA Revolution, Fr. John J. Carroll opined that what happened falls under the so-called consensus theory of society and change in the field of sociology. This theory suggests that societies are formed by people who agree on common values and principles. Change also occurs in the process of strengthening these values. At EDSA, and as the 1986 Constitution documents, the Filipino people have agreed on a set of values and principles as the foundation of their society and the cornerstone of their government. These values are now being eroded. Will the people wake up before it is too late?



Song of Calvary

Milton Khokon Halder, SX

Bearing the Cross, the Redeemer
Is on the way to Calvary,
Trembling, shaking,
Following His own path.

Feelings of hunger, distressed by thirst,
Pained by thorns
Bare feet against cold cobbled stones,
The Life-giver walks in peace
To give human beings life
On the way to Calvary.

Leaves around fall off
because of distress
The lamenting mother is full of fears
Seeing misery, trees are crying
as well as birds
Flowers and grass are also in tears.

The Lord of all is in the dust
Crushing human sins
Soaking the mountain way
With his human blood
On the way to Calvary.

MARY'S CROSS

Milton Khokon Halder, SX

I do not know my Son.
This is the end of your life.
Be calm on the Cross for all.
Tell me: Who will call me Mother?
You are my only Son
and on the Cross you now are.

Mother, this is the plan of my Father.
My hands are stretched on the Cross.
I embrace the whole universe for salvation.
Look Mother: These are your sons.
Embrace them as you embrace me.
You are my Mother: Give me courage.

I am the handmaid of God.
It is hard for me to understand the plan of God.
Keep me in the faith, in what I believe
from the very beginning of your life.
I am Mother, a flower made by seven wounds.
Tell me, Son, what can I do for you?

This is the way, the truth and the salvation.
Mother, I am thirsty; give me a drop of water;
a blessing from the corner of your heart.
I give you my Spirit: Go and tell the good news –
To the captives that they have liberty
To the blind that they can see
To the weak that they are strong
To the oppressed that they are free
To everyone that God's kingdom is near.

Stop my Son, I am with you till the end.
I know the Cross is not a symbol of failure
but the positive symbol for victory.
I know from the very beginning of God's plan,
This wooden Cross will become the living tree.
From your thirst – the world will be satisfied
From your death – the world will receive life
From your Cross – the world will be saved.