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ARTICLES

Toward "Maturing in Christian Faith" Today
JOSEPH L. ROCHE, S.J.

The Christian Passover
VICTORIA B. PARCO

Inculturation and Second Vatican Council
PATRICIA G. PANGANIBAN

Doctrine and Worship as the Formative Ground of Christian Morality
MA. CHRISTINA A. ASTORGA

DOCUMENTATION

The Meaning and Significance of Jesus' Death in the Prefaces and Through the Historical Approach: Two Sides of the Same Coin
MERCEDES B. ABAYA

Living God's Dream of Communion: Community in Seminary Formation
DANIEL PATRICK HUANG, S.J.

FILM REVIEW

The Flawed Passion Film of Mel Gibson: Problematical Esthetic, A Problematic Christology
LLOYD BAUGH, S.J.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

Theological reflection is ultimately concerned with the life of the community of believers. In order to live in a way that is evermore human and evermore Christian, believers need to enter into a continual deepening of their relationship with Jesus the Christ and to mature in a personal appropriation of Christian values.

Joseph Roche goes back to the basics. He addresses the urgent need for basic catechesis and religious education among Catholic Filipinos. Focusing on the catechetical ministry and its message, he provides an overview of some basic problems concerning the content and sources of the catechetical message as well as the methods and goals of a renewed catechesis. He identifies some general principles which could provide the basis for developing and implementing an effective, well-planned catechetical program which is responsive to the needs of the Philippine Church. From another perspective, Christina Astorga addresses the need to mature in Christian faith by way of Christian morality. She argues that making moral decisions and forming moral character need to go hand in hand. Since moral judgment arises out of moral vision, and moral vision is our acquisition of the lived expression of beliefs, values, and loyalties of the communities to which we belong, it is crucial that we draw from the wellsprings of worship and doctrine, both of which provide the formative ground of Christian morality.

Patricia Panganiban looks back to Vatican II in order to better understand the problems we now face in inculturation. She goes

back to the conceptual roots of inculturation in select Vatican II documents and offers some leads in addressing the challenges faced by a world-Church.

As through a prism, the articles of Victoria Parco, Lloyd Baugh, and Mercedes Abaya address the figure of Jesus the Christ from different angles. Parco, using the typological sense of Scripture, indicates the links between the Jewish Passover and Jesus the Christ, the Passover of the Christian community. With, through and in the Passover of Jesus, the Church, the mystical Body of Christ, partakes of and announces this mysterious passage. The life of the believing community has a paschal character; through the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist, the community participates in the divine life which flows from the risen Jesus' redemptive work. Abaya compares and contrasts how the prefaces and the historical approach communicate the meaning and significance of Jesus' death. She considers the two as sides of a coin, both necessary to bring out the depth and richness of meaning of the death of Jesus. She emphasizes the need for believers to get a more complete understanding, in order to avoid re-enforcing the culture of victimization and spiritualization of suffering that abound in Philippine religiosity. Turning to the art of the cinema, Baugh evaluates the recent and highly popular *The Passion of the Christ* in the context of the Jesus-film tradition. He compares and contrasts *The Passion* with other Jesus films, particularly Pasolini's *Gospel*, and also with Ignatius of Loyola's contemplation in the *Spiritual Exercises*. Baugh's article helps us how to critically appraise cinematic esthetics and Christological depictions.

May the articles in this volume stimulate our reflection, but more importantly, lead us to a more personal encounter with the risen Jesus who meets us in the community of believers.

Miguel B. Lambino, S.J.
Editor

Landas 18:1 (2004) 3-29

TOWARD "MATURING IN CHRISTIAN FAITH" TODAY

Joseph L. Roche, S.J.

I. Introduction

In recent years there has arisen from any number of sources a heightened awareness of the urgent need today for basic catechesis and religious education among Catholic Filipinos. The ever growing percentage of Filipino children and youth who are being educated in public schools without adequate Catholic catechetical formation is one firm basis for this pressing concern. Moreover a number of recent surveys among Filipino youth and young adults have confirmed the startling lack of religious and spiritual literacy among many students and graduates of even Catholic schools. PCP II had already proclaimed more than a decade ago that catechesis is "the most basic area of renewal, the first priority."[1] The "National Pastoral Consultation on Church Renewal" (2001) confirmed this ten years later by placing "Integral Faith Formation" as the first of nine pastoral priorities.[2]

The Church in the Philippines is not unique in recognizing catechesis/religious education as a (if not *the*) top priority. Many Catholic bishops' conferences in Europe, the United States, Latin America, Asia, and Africa have similar pronouncements on the same

urgent catechetical need.[3] The Vatican has led the way in publishing the *Catechism for the Catholic Church* (1994), and the *General Directory for Catechesis* (1997), which the Philippine Catholic Church has emulated by creating its own national catechism *The Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (1997), its translation into Filipino, *Katesismo para sa mga Pilipinong Katoliko* (2000), and by revising its own National Catechetical Directory, *Maturing in Christian Faith* (1985).[4] Yet despite these laudable and undeniably fruitful efforts in recent years, the urgency for renewed catechesis—and, in fact, for a "new evangelization"—seems to have increased rather than diminished.

It is not possible to cover even in cursory fashion all dimensions of the catechetical ministry at once. Hence this study focuses on the understanding of the nature, goal and methods of both the catechetical ministry itself, and of its message—the Gospel message—to be communicated. It does not enter into important areas such as the socio-religious and cultural contexts of our local catechesis, nor the needed adaptation to the level of those being catechized, nor questions of organization, personnel, and institutions involved in the catechetical ministry. Within its more limited focus on the catechetical ministry and its message, it begins by investigating some major obstacles that are met in any serious effort to respond to the complex catechetical need. It involves the initial problem of recognizing the real depth and extent of the catechetical problems and of the validity of catechetical-evangelization itself. This is followed by an overview of some basic problems that arise in striving for an adequate grasp of the content and sources of the message, and of the methods and goals of a renewed catechesis. This overview offers the needed background for all critical attempts at developing, from the side of the nature, goal and methodology of the Good News itself, an effective, well-planned catechetical program. Finally, this study concludes with some general principles which could provide the basis for developing and "carrying out" such an effective catechesis that responds to our national catechetical need.

Throughout this study, an initial bibliography of available sources is offered in the endnotes for the purpose of providing references to selected articles and books that are representative of the better works in the various topics treated. These references also confirm the extent and depth of what is involved in the present catechetical ministry. Actually, the catechetical ministry itself is in the process of a rather radical alteration in its configuration which can be viewed in terms of three basic shifts: from "school/student-centered" to the life-long process of Faith formation; from an "informational, overly doctrinal" to a more experiential, contextualized catechesis; and from individual/sectarian catechesis to a community of inter-religious dialogue.[5]

In viewing the nation-wide catechetical needs of our local Church, and the many generous attempts to respond to these urgent needs, one cannot but be impressed by the spontaneous goodwill and spirit of self-sacrifice offered by so many. Yet this impressive positive witness may obscure a basic weakness. Highly motivated, good-willed efforts to respond to the catechetical needs are not always based on sufficient critical planning or accurate assessment of the many actual complexities and depths of the problem. A not uncommon "mind set" among those who volunteer for catechetical work, or those newly appointed to some catechetical leadership post, is that whatever was being done needs to be radically transformed. Therefore any new initiatives on their part will certainly be an advance and cannot fail to create some improvement. School and parish administrators are often tempted by complaints and charges from various sources to precipitous change from the *actual* admittedly imperfect parish or school catechetical efforts to some highly touted "new" plan that promises a much more fruitful catechesis. Such changes have often proved to be counterproductive in the longer view.

What is frequently missed in this approach is that the very motives animating the "reformers" are the very same sentiments that inspired the originators of the present on-going catechetical program

—often begun only three years or so before. So what is actually happening is a series of "new beginnings" every three or four years, none of which seems to have profited from the mistakes or inadequacies of the past. The unfortunate result is that most five year catechetical plans barely last two or three years before some change in leadership inaugurates new plans.

Briefly, the sheer number and variety of new catechetical initiatives that have been tried over the past few decades and have either failed or simply faded into oblivion should be a clear enough warning that creating an effective catechetical/religious educational program is not a simple matter—neither in terms of the message itself, nor the means of communicating, nor the goal to be achieved. This is the case even before facing the further formidable problems of attracting a sufficient number of qualified catechists and religion teachers, supplying them with adequately inculturated religious educational materials that are needed to communicate the Gospel message and yet are "student friendly," etc.

This caution is not aimed at discouraging those who wish to volunteer to improve the catechetical ministry—but rather to stress the need for sufficient understanding of the realities of the catechetical enterprise. Just being aware of the sheer number of those needing catechetical instruction compared to the very limited number of formed catechists is a first step. Any adequate understanding of the problem would include the recognition of the paramount importance of the professional formation of catechists/religion teachers, and of the long range planning needed in order to ensure some continuity and follow-up of the projects initiated. It should also prompt a persevering, realistic effort at *collaboration* among active catechetical groups and institutions. At present, much of the truly excellent work being done by individuals, specific groups and Catholic institutions is focused on responding to an immediate felt-need, without, however, averting sufficiently to how this work can be sustained, or how it fits in with other on-going catechetical programs.

No initiative can hope to address the much wider and deeper dimensions, and manifold complexities, of the Church's catechetical need in its totality. But what is needed from the start is a basic grasp of the extent and depth of the whole picture, while recognizing the significant difference between an abstract ideal (perhaps as sketched in official Church documents), and the ever present limitations of actual catechetical programs and efforts. The correct presupposition is not that "nothing of value has been done before," but that "what we have is the best that previous efforts have been able to achieve." This lays down a challenge, then, to generate new creativity, new hope for a better, more effective catechesis, by directly facing and wrestling to overcome—not ignoring or avoiding—the real obstacles that have impeded former efforts.

This extended introduction can be summarized and sharpened by a brief series of propositions outlining the objectives of this study. There **is an urgent need for**:

1. **much greater catechetical effort**, at all levels, throughout our country;
2. **more effective, higher quality catechesis** that is possible only through qualified catechists/religion teachers in sufficient numbers;
3. **critical planning and active collaboration** in sustained efforts among the major groups and institutions engaged in the catechetical ministry—a willingness to work together toward a consensus regarding what has to be done, how, and by whom;
4. **a catechetical position** that intentionally aims to go beyond both the notion that anyone can create the renewed catechesis simply by common sense and goodwill, and the opposite tendency to slavishly follow, without any critical, creative effort at adaptation, Church guidelines interpreted in a basically fundamentalist manner.

This study aims to make a modest contribution toward more effective planning and execution of the means designed to deepen and improve the quality of our catechesis and religious education.

We now turn to a general overview of some major elements in the catechetical/religious education ministry and message in the Philippines today.[6] We begin by sketching the general background of today's catechetical ministry, and then proceed to some key factors indicative of its complex problematic, grouped in terms of the content, sources, methods, and goals of catechesis/religious education.

II. Elements of the Catechetical Challenge

General Background

The most obvious and over-reaching characteristic of the contemporary catechetical challenge must surely be the world-wide secularist background, with its materialism, consumerism and globalization, creating a post-modern world that defies any simplistic definition The impact of 20th century science and technology, of the philosophic and social sciences' "turn to the subject" characterized by historicity and individualism, and especially of the mass communications media creating a new "one world"—this cannot be overemphasized. The powerful influence of these factors touches every dimension of the cultural, social and religious life of individual Filipinos and families today, especially the children and the youth. These forces combine to generate attitudes, values, priorities and a whole new language that at least initially seem to have little continuity with the Catholic tradition—its religious language, ceremonies and practices.[7] Of course these new influences are not felt with equal depth and intensity in every area of our country—there are very significant differences between Filipinos in the provinces and those in the major urban centers. But these differences are slowly eroding through the pervasive influence of the mass media.[8]

Since Vatican II, among the many popular catechetical approaches perhaps the most widespread has been the so-called "experiential method" which concentrates on daily life experience, using much of the methodology and terminology common to the social sciences and communications. While marking a clear step forward beyond the question-and-memorized-answer method of the *Baltimore Catechisms,* this experiential approach gave rise to certain opposing reactions which stressed return to the "traditional teaching" of the Church.[9] This tension between focusing primarily on doctrinal content or on experiential and communication methods, sometimes oversimplified in terms of "orthodoxy" versus "orthopraxis," remains with us today in the tension between stressing the "Gospel message" or the "situated communication of the Faith."[10]

Yet within this secularist background there exists paradoxically a spiritual yearning that is manifested in too many ways to be denied. This increased interest in religion is a powerful worldwide phenomenon, the source of many positive movements such as the post-Vatican II proliferation of lay ministries, the Charismatic movement and the resurgence of many Christian Fundamentalist groups—and arguably of even some religiously inspired terrorist groups. Some have interpreted this phenomenon as an indication that the Catholic Church has not responded adequately to these spiritual yearnings. In any case, this openness to the spiritual should constitute a real clarion call for our strongest possible efforts in renewing catechesis and religious education.[11]

Specific Factors within the Catechesis: Content and Sources

Beyond this new general background, embracing paradoxically both secularist and spiritual yearnings, there are many specific factors proper to studying and communicating the Faith that need to be recognized and considered in any adequate, critically grounded effort toward a renewed, effective and fruitful catechetical ministry. These problematic factors can be grouped together in terms of catechesis'

content (the Gospel message itself), including the influence of current theology, the basic catechetical *sources* of Scripture, Tradition and human experience, and current catechetical *methods* and *goals.* The following sections take up a brief exposition of these factors.

Catechetical Content The first problematic factor pertaining to the *content* of catechesis focuses on the very legitimacy of its communication in today's catechetical evangelization. Preaching the "Good News," or evangelizing, has been brought into question in part by the new focus on interreligious dialogue. In the Church's preparation for the new millennium, inter-religious dialogue suddenly became a major focus of theological discussion, with direct impact on the Church's mission of evangelization,[12] and on the traditional Catholic teaching on the universality of Christ's salvific role. Since Vatican II there has already been a noticeable decline in the Church's *missio ad extra,*[13] and a number of conflicting Catholic theological positions have arisen regarding Christ as universal mediator of salvation.[14] Both these current objective factors influence the "intellectual climate" or "mind set" of Catholics today—both the catechists and those being catechized, whether they are consciously aware of them or not. Simply put, the traditional common understanding of Christ's missionary mandate (Mt. 28:19-20) and of Catholic missionaries sent to foreign lands, has come under serious criticism, with proposals for radical modification.

Beyond this open debate on the very validity and content of missionary evangelization and Christ's universal mediation, new studies in the central truths of the Faith have brought into question much traditional content of catechesis. For example, in current **Christological research,** the identity and mission of Jesus Christ have become the center of a major theological debate carried on for the past decades by experts.[15] Besides putting in doubt the traditional Catholic Creedal teaching on Jesus' unique identity as the God-man, the salvific value of Christ's Passion and crucifixion is seriously questioned,[16] as well as the traditional understanding of Christ's resurrection.[17]

Now the need for serious creative and critical theological research in Christology is certainly beyond doubt. But it is nonetheless true that prolonged, contradictory, and unresolved questioning of traditional Catholic teaching does cause confusion and uncertainty among ordinary Catholics and catechists who are not professionally trained theologians. The practical problem raised here for catechesis is twofold:

1) the "new learning," the latest theories and theological trends acquired by graduate students and seminarians are "passed on" to catechists and religion teachers who are ill-prepared to adequately evaluate the new positions, and even less capable of integrating the new with the traditional;

2) catechetical and educational administrators, often under pressure from parents, alumni/ae and local Church leaders, are led to either completely ignore such new ventures, or do just the opposite and adopt them even though they have not been tried nor tested, and often lack the needed critical grounding and experiential know-how to make them truly fruitful for the catechetical ministry.

One lesson that can and should be learned from this situation is that the basic goals, priorities and methodologies of religious educators are not the same as those of professional academic theologians, scriptural exegetes or liturgical experts.

Besides current Christology, much of the traditional stand on the interrelation of faith and reason, the traditional apologetic bases for the *preambula fidei,* and on the question of truth itself, has undergone radical changes.[18] A metaphysically grounded systematic theology has been largely abandoned by many "experts" without any clear consensus about an adequate substitute, or even of the validity of such a basis.[19] In brief, much of Catholic "doctrine," both as traditionally accepted and as proclaimed even in Vatican II,[20] has come under serious question by the "experts," most of whom seem

little concerned over the practical impact such questioning might have on catechesis and religious education.

Following the *NCDP*'s guideline for viewing Faith's content in terms of doctrine, morals and worship, similar problematic issues are common in both Catholic morality and current sacramental theology. In morals, the contemporary stress on virtue ethics and character is surely a major advance from the former overly legalistic approach to morality through the Commandments. On the other hand, relegating the Ten Commandments to a series of disconnected footnotes does not help the catechist or religion teacher. There must be some "inclusive ground" that combines both virtue and commandment—for the simple reason that such corresponds more accurately to the moral reality of society from Gospel times till today.[21] Moreover the sheer amount of published speculation on freedom, conscience and moral law in the social sciences, philosophic and theological studies—often contradictory in orientation and specific content—tends to create confusion and poses a major obstacle impeding the catechetical process of fostering mature Catholic moral formation.[22]

The admirable progress that has been made since Vatican II in liturgical worship and sacramental theology cannot cover over the fact that PCP II's call for a "renewed worship"—focused on implementing Vatican II's ideal of "full, conscious, and active participation of all the faithful in the liturgy" (SC 14)—still needs to be sounded throughout the land.[23] Sacramental practice for many Catholic Filipinos still suffers from being separated from their daily life, still too "formal" to respond naturally and spontaneously to their deepest spiritual yearnings—perhaps still not "inculturated" enough to be experienced as "truly Filipino."[24]

Sources of Catechesis: Scripture Although most catechists and even catechetical leaders are probably unaware of it, there is a quiet growing transformation going on regarding the study and use of Scripture, particularly for catechesis and religious education. It

consists in a call for a broader, more holistic and Catholic "new approach" that has arisen from the experienced inadequacy of the historical-critical approach alone to effectively communicate the "Good News" as inspiring, uplifting, saving.[25] By its very nature, the historical-critical approach has tended to become overly technical, abstract and impersonal, separated from the living faith of the ordinary Catholic, and focused more on information rather than on any transformative formation called for by Scripture. This unbalanced stress on the secular historical-literary methodology of studying Scripture over Scripture's **religious** content and purpose has resulted in the glaring neglect of two basic functions of Scripture: its critical role (truth vs. idolatry, superstition) and formative function (to foster transforming life in the Spirit).[26]

This "new approach" to Scripture study and use draws on the Patristic tradition as well as many new insights from current hermeneutical studies. Grounded in an explicit Faith-view of the nature, purpose and methodology of Scripture itself, this "hybrid discipline-in-the-making" draws on the long history of the Augustine-Anselm theological tradition—"Faith seeking understanding" and "understanding seeking Faith"—which John Paul II recalled in his *Fides et Ratio.*[27] It opens up the "literal sense" of Scriptural texts to include both their origin and their meaning for today, with a renewed "critical" use of the Patristic allegorical approach and the traditional triple "spiritual senses."[28]

What is at stake here is not just one more new hermeneutical approach, but rather a much more fundamental reappraisal of what has dominated Scripture study for the past half century. The historical-critical method is still a vital part of any adequate Scripture study—what is being changed is its dominance as the *sole* method. For catechesis and religious education, the practical question: "how does this modify/impinge upon the Faith-life of the believer?" becomes a key norm for evaluating all Scriptural work. This is based on the very *nature* of Scripture as "ecclesial"—the book of the Church arising from the Faith of its inspired authors, narrating the paradigmatic

Faith events of the people of God, and calling the readers/hearers to such Faith. It assumes that the *purpose* of Scripture is for "teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in holiness" (2 Tm 3:16; cf. Col.1:28; 3:16), in a word, for "conversion."[29]

From this basis, the new approach fosters **study methods** that relate to Scripture as a work of *art*, as *"sacramental,"* something that naturally needs to be "performed" in order to be properly understood and evaluated.[30] To achieve this involves one's imagination through which the deeper meaning of Scripture's symbolic language is grasped.[31] That this "new approach" is not just one more novel Scriptural hermeneutic among many others is shown by the fact that it can and needs to be applied in an analogous way to the study of Catholic doctrine, morals and worship. Basically it consists in a more adequate holistic study of the realities of Christian Faith that gets beneath what can be objectively represented, by the exercise of a fuller, more adequate epistemology.[32]

Church teaching is the second essential catechetical source and a lively discussion has been carried on during the past decade or more on Tradition in general, and on the value of the Creeds in particular.[33] For those engaged in catechesis and religious education, the key factor is not so much the theory of Tradition but rather the more practical question of how to make Church teaching "alive" and inspirational for daily living out the Faith. Making good use of Church teaching is a real challenge today—regarding both its practical relation to Scripture, and especially its "meaning for today." Even "formed" catechists seem particularly weak in the needed skill of communicating to students, parishioners, etc. Church teaching as "**saving truths**." It is more than likely that doctrinal teaching comes across in great part in an "imposed, authoritarian manner," most often quite unrelated to daily life.

Human experience is a basic source of all catechesis, especially in its inculturated dimension,[34] but the adequacy of human experience alone as the unique basis for catechesis is seriously questioned.

Personal experience alone is inadequate to ground the central Christian truths of the Incarnation and the Blessed Trinity. The traditional position of God's revelation as the basic source of Christian Faith seems inescapable. Nevertheless, the practical challenge of how to communicate this revelation to people today in concrete relevant ways without losing the religious transcendence of God and his message, remains a central problem for all catechesis. This is the perennial basis for the tension between a catechesis based primarily on theology, and one drawing heavily on the social sciences/ communication media. Perhaps the best hope for some resolution comes from the new thrust for a truly "pastoral" and "practical" theology that by its very nature embraces the "Good News" itself and its impact on Christian living.[35]

In brief, then, the catechetical problems raised by study and use of its sources may be summarized as follows:

1. sheer historical critical investigation alone into the sources of Faith is not adequate because it fails to grasp their full Faith reality;

2. the academic goals of biblical and theological research are not identical with those of catechesis/religious education; these disciplines have different priorities;

3. an understanding and use of the sources that concentrate on a primarily "notional" as distinct from a "real assent," are not adequate for authentic catechesis. This is true of all three essential dimensions of the Faith: doctrine, morals, and worship.

III. Catechetical Methods and Goals

Methods in Catechesis Tracing the history of various catechetical methodologies through the ages is a study in itself. Even when limited to the post-Vatican II scene, one cannot but be impressed by the sheer amount and intensity of studies on catechetical methodology.

Much of this focus on method has undoubtedly produced significant progress—exemplified, for example, in the current insistence on inculturation, and on developing the existential, experiential, subjective dimensions of daily living the Faith. Current catechetical methodologies are drawn from numerous contemporary sources. The social sciences and various educational and communication theories are exercising direct influence on religious educators such as James Michael Lee. Likewise the developmental theories of the human person as popularized by Kohlberg, Piaget, Erikson, Loder and Fowler, have had a significant impact on current catechetical methodology. Other new catechetical methods have been developed from the foundational work of certain philosophers and theologians such as Buber, Lonergan, Polanyi, Rahner, von Balthasar, Hauerwas and Tracy.[36]

But perhaps the most important new development in catechetical methodology has been the acute concern regarding the most fruitful ways of studying and using sacred Scripture in catechesis.[37] The publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and its many critiques elicited a new critical discussion in this area. It is this renewed concern for a more holistic, more "Catholic" study of Scripture—as described above—that has more than anything else inspired new research into methodology in catechesis and religious education.[38] This new thrust is only just beginning to effect any change in the formation of catechists/religion teachers and in the composition of religion textbooks. But there are high hopes that this fuller understanding of Scripture, which is characteristic of the traditional Catholic approach, will gradually bring about a more fruitful and effective catechetical methodology.

One reason supporting this hope is the fact that the same fundamental principle is operative in renewing doctrinal, moral and liturgical catechesis. Like Scripture itself, all three essential dimensions of the Faith are immediately and directly related to the actual living out, day-to-day, of the life of Faith. Therefore one major criterion for testing the validity of any study of these dimensions is: "how does it modify/affect/touch the daily life of faith of the faithful?"

This norm constitutes the first rule of thumb for religious educators, and distinguishes them from academic experts who are focused exclusively on the scientific research in Scripture, Tradition, doctrines, morals or worship.[39]

Finally, it might be helpful to take a step backward from the current scene in order to get a more general view, a wider, more encompassing perspective from which to view catechetical methodology for our new millennium. As briefly indicated at the start of this essay, a number of significant changes are evolving within our basic catechetical orientation. These changes will radically affect catechetical methodology. One example is the movement **from** a basic a-historical, Church doctrines (Creed) catechetical approach **to** one focused more on its Scriptural sources, in an historically sensitive methodological approach. Another example is the change from the traditional question-answer method, stressing memorization of objective doctrines of the Faith, to more problematic, experiential methods that put great stress on the modern means of communication. Both these movements involve significant changes in how to go about catechizing, how to prepare catechists for their actual catechetical work, and how to design effective, inculturated catechetical materials, especially religion textbooks for children and youth levels.

These changes in actual catechetical methodology are direct consequences of more fundamental changes in catechetical perspective. Three basic shifts in catechetical orientation are already in process: 1) from child-youth school based catechesis to the life-long process of faith formation, whose prime analogue is adult catechesis; 2) from a primarily objective, informational, doctrinal orientation to a more contextualized, inculturated, experiential approach, sensitive to the subjective dimension of the life of faith; and finally, 3) from the traditional individual/sectarian catechesis to a more communitarian religious openness that extends even to inter-religious dialogue.[40]

In summary, current catechetical methodology has profited greatly from a creative critical use of significant advances in our knowledge of how human persons grow up, mature, form their ideals and values, overcome obstacles, etc. Perhaps the most outstanding feature is the new stress on the **imagination** in the life of Faith and personal grasp of basic human **symbols**, key to understanding sacramental life and Faith itself.[41] Regarding any attempt at integrating the many diverse methodologies, perhaps the key to any practical resolution is to recognize the **different levels** of methodologies. In the area of catechesis, the *NCDP* proposed a methodology drawn directly from the nature of the "Good News," coming to us through Scripture and Tradition. From a philosophical perspective, deduction and induction dominate the general classification of method, while from a more pedagogical view, a method of "see, judge, act, celebrate, evaluate" has been adopted by many in diverse forms.[42]

Goals of Catechesis The preceding sections have already covered any significant changes in viewing the basic apostolic goals of catechesis. Whatever advances that have been made usually originate from one or two sources. First, there is the ongoing research into current catechetical initiatives and trends with the view towards improving the quality and effectivity of catechesis.[43] Second, renewed interest in all aspects of being human in today's world has given new impetus to a specifically "Christian anthropology" that provides new and different support for catechesis.[44]

A more hands-on, concrete way of coming to a renewed understanding of the goals of catechesis and religious education would be to focus on how current catechetical work develops the three essential dimensions of Christian Faith. Is there any particular new emphasis in doctrinal exposition, or the developing basic notions in Christian morality or worship. For example, regarding doctrine, one significant advance has been the recognition of the urgent need to explain the importance of doctrinal truths and the manner of interpreting them, for living the Faith. The time of simply memorizing "formulas" has definitely passed.[45] Significant shifts have occurred

in moral catechesis, both before and after John Paul II's *Veritatis Splendor* (1993). One fruitful advance is the new awareness that Christian morals and Christian spirituality have to be integrated far more intrinsically than has been the case heretofore. The academic debate among moralists on whether or not there is a specific Christian morality has been transcended by ordinary Christians who testify to the impact of Jesus Christ in their moral lives.[46] Finally, regarding liturgical renewal with its many ups and downs, current research has made distinct advances in exploiting new dimensions of Catholic worship by relating liturgy to beauty and art, as well as justice and holiness.

IV. Concluding Summary: Some Practical Principles

From the overview presented of our present catechetical situation, and the exposition of the nature, goals and sources of our catechesis, together with a selection of available representative published works in these areas, a certain number of general practical principles regarding the renewal of our catechetical ministry can be formulated. They are not presented as anything definitive in any way, but simply as a modest effort drawn from years of experience that might hopefully contribute in some way towards a better planned, more effective, more deeply inculturated Philippine catechetical ministry.

Practical Principle 1. The core of all authentic catechesis must be the inspired Word of God and the Tradition of the Church, the people of God – in brief, the **content** of Catholic Faith drawn from divine Revelation. This content is not a dead letter handed on through the ages, but a **loving dynamic force of Christ's saving Truth, NOW,** always providing new meanings and priorities within the constantly evolving human condition.

Practical Principle 2. Absolutely essential are the **means** of communicating this Faith, including the advances in the human sciences and communications. But these "secular" means can never

take priority over the **religious** content of the Faith which remains the ultimate norm for judging their authenticity. At no time does pastoral theology—understanding the message in terms of actual living out the Faith—become less relevant or practical. No social science data nor communications' theory can substitute for the living Word of God.

Practical Principle 3. Effective catechesis depends in great part on fully formed catechists/religion teachers who can make the Word of God "come alive" in the Catholic community by instructing, correcting, celebrating, and most of all, witnessing to Christ. The perfect catechetical plan "works" only insofar as the graced work of catechists and teachers, animated by the Spirit, can inspire and elicit spiritual conversion to Christ.

Practical Principle 4. Both the reality of Faith—its content—and the catechetical means of communicating this reality, have **two essential dimensions**: one is the objective, ideal, ontological reality in itself; the second is the existential, experiential, subjective dimension of this reality as lived by the faithful. Both are absolutely essential; neither can substitute for, or take the place of, the other. The Eucharist is both an objective, ontological sacramental reality in itself and an existential, experiential, subjective ritual celebrated by the Catholic faithful.

NOTES

[1] *Acts and Decrees of the 2nd Plenary Council of the Philippines* (Manila, 1992), no. 183. The CBCP had a dozen years earlier, when introducing the "Catechetical Year" of 1990, published a Pastoral Letter entitled "To Form Filipino Christians Mature in Their Faith."

[2] *Boletin Eclesiastico de Filipinas [BEF]* 77, no. 823 (March-April 2001): 167-70, no. 7.

[3] See FABC, *"Asia: A Call for Renewed Catechesis," BEF* 72 (May-June 1996): 258-68. The US Bishops are producing a new revised National Catechetical Directory and have embarked on creating a national catechism. Cf. also US Bishops, "Encuentro and Mission: A Renewed Pastoral Framework for Hispanic Ministry," *Origins* 32 (Dec 5, 2002): 425-39.

[4] *Catechism of the Catholic Church* [*CCC*] (Manila: ECCCE 1994); *General Directory for Catechesis* [*GDC*] (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997); *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* [*CFC*] (ECCCE, 1997); *Maturing in Christian Faith* [*NCDP*] (Pasay: St. Paul Publications, 1985).

[5] See Archbishop Leonardo Z. Legaspi, "Religious Education in the Year 2000: Challenges, Issues, and Prospects," *Docete* 23, Nos.102-103 (July-December 2000): 15-27; also, Thomas H. Groome, "Total Catechetical Education," in *Religious Education of Boys and Girls, Concilium* 2002, no. 4, ed. Lisa S. Cahill and W. Jeanrond, pp. 79-87; and Idem, "Conversion, Nurture, or Both: Towards Lifelong Catechetical Education—A Cautious Reading of the *GDC*," *Living Light* 37 (2001): 16-29.

[6] The ongoing effort (1999-2003) to revise the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (created in 1979-1982, final edition 1985) has exemplified both the manifold complexities of the problem and the different, even contrasting, approaches in responding to them creatively and efficiently.

[7] The gap between traditional faith-language and contemporary new idioms was already noted by John Paul II in *Catechesi Tradendae* [*CT*] (Vatican, 1979) no. 59. For a Lonergan approach, see Stephen Happel, "Religious Rhetoric and the Language of Theological Foundations," in *Religion and Culture: Essays in Honor of B. Lonergan*, ed. Timothy Fallon and Philip Reiley (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), 191-203.

[8] Cf. the commentary on the CBCP's Pastoral Exhortation on Philippine Culture by Daniel P. Huang, "Emerging Global, Postmodern Culture," *Landas* 13 (1999): 48-58. More recently the very term "globalization" has been challenged, but with no adequate substitute. Cf. Karen Lowery Miller, "The New Buzz Word: Globaloney," *Newsweek* Special Edition, "Issues 2003" (December 2002-February 2003): 52-58.

[9] This reaction to return to more traditional catechesis was clearly exemplified in the plan to create a "universal catechism." Briefly mentioned in Vatican II, this plan was explicitly implemented only after the Synod of 1985. The

"Universal Catechism" draft appeared in 1990, and finally the *CCC*, translated in the major languages, in 1992-94. But as early as the mid '70s, the Synod of 1977 and John Paul II had confronted this problem. Cf. his *CT* no. 22.

[10] Cf. the efforts of the new *GDC* to balance "The Gospel Message" with the "Pedagogy of the Faith" in Parts II (nos.92-138) and III (nos.139-62).

[11] The study on the "Pastoral Framework for Hispanic Ministry" quoted above (note 3) gives, as one of the "signs of the times" which call for a refocusing in ministry, "the Church's concern with the growing number of Hispanics who are joining other Christian denominations or religious traditions." Ibid., no. 23. Much the same could be said of our Philippine catechetical situation. For a broader Asian picture, see Peter C. Phan, "Reception of Vatican II in Asia: Historical and Theological Analysis," *Gregorianum* 83 (2002): 269-85.

[12] Positive aspects of interreligious dialogue were brought out in the CBCP sponsored seminar held in Tagaytay, Jan. 25-26, 1999, especially in "The Spirituality of Interreligious Dialogue" by Bishop Michael Fitzgerald, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. Cf. *Origins* 28 (Feb. 25, 1999): 630-34. A different effect has since surfaced in the debate about the legitimacy of evangelizing the Jews. Cf. Avery Dulles, "Covenant and Mission," and the rejoinder of Mary C. Boys, Philip A. Cunningham and John T. Pawlikowski, "Theology's Sacred Obligation: A Reply to Avery Dulles on Evangelization," *America* 187 (October 21, 2002): 8-16. See also Cardinal Walter Kasper, "Christians, Jews, and the Thorny Question of Mission," *Origins* 32 (Dec. 19, 2002): 459-66.

[13] This despite the efforts of John Paul II, especially in his encyclical "*Redemptoris Missio*, on the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate," *Catholic International* 2 (March 15-31 1991): 252-92.

[14] See Joseph H. Wong, "Anonymous Christians: Karl Rahner's Pneuma-Christocentism and an East-West Dialogue," *Theological Studies* 55 (1994): 609-34; and its development in James T. Farmer's "Four Christological Themes of the Theology of Karl Rahner," in *The Myriad Christ,* ed. T. Merrigan (Leuven University Press, 2000), 433-62; and the still valuable article of J. Peter Schineller, "Christ and Church: A Spectrum of Views," *Theological Studies* 37 (1977): 545-66.

[15] See Peter C. Phan, "Jesus Christ with an Asian Face," *Theological Studies* 57 (1996): 399-430; *The Myriad Christ: Plurality and the Quest for Unity,* ed. Terrence Merrigan (Leuven University Press, 2000); and Clive Marsh and Steve Moyise, "How Christology Works: The Gospel in Practice," in their *Jesus and The Gospels,* 108-14. A specific example of how a theological discussion can cause confusion and uncertainty among catechists/religion teachers is the contradictory evaluations among the periti—from extremely high praise to sharp criticisms —of the work of Roger Haight, *Jesus: Symbol of God* (Orbis, 1999): 505 pp. The point here is in no way to disparage the author's work itself, but simply to point out the negative effects on catechesis/religious education caused by such discordant wrangling among the theological "experts," most of whom seem completely unaware of, or unconcerned with, such consequences.

[16] See Robert P. Imbelli, "The New Adam and Life Giving Spirit: The Paschal Pattern of Spirit Christology," *Communio* 25 (Summer 1998): 233-52, esp. 242-46; William B. Frazier, M.M., "The Incredible Christian Capacity for Missing the Christian Point," *America* 167 (Nov.21, 1992): 398-400. For a positive pastoral drawing directly on Scriptural texts, see Joseph A. Grassi, *Rediscovering the Impact of Jesus' Death: Clues from the Gospel Audiences* (Sheed & Ward, 1987).

[17] For an up-to-date positive approach to the resurrection, see Gerard Loughlin, "Living in Christ: Story, Resurrection and Salvation," in *Resurrection Revisited,* ed. Gavin D'Costa (Oxford: One Word, 1996), 118-34. Dennis J. Billy offers an insightful summary in "The Resurrection Kernel," *Review for Religious* 51 (1992): 206-16.

[18] See Archbishop William Levada, "Toward a New Apologetics," *Origins* 31 (March 21, 2002): 661-67. John Paul II's thirteenth encyclical, *Fides et Ratio* (Manila: Paulines, 1999) focused on the current challenge to an adequate understanding of human reason and the interrelation between philosophy and theology. See Avery Dulles, "Reason, Philosophy, and the Grounding of Faith," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 40 (December 2000): 479-90; Kurt Pritzl, O.P., "Truth in *Fides Et Ratio*: Aristotelian Reflections and Recommendations," *Communio* 29 (Sprint 2002): 89-106; Cardinal Ratzinger, "Culture and Truth: Reflections on the Encyclical," *Origins* 28 (Feb 26, 1999): 626-30; and Catherine Pickstock, "Imitating God: The Truth of Things According to Thomas Aquinas," *New Blackfriars* 81 (July-August 2000): 308-26.

[19] For the broader question of truth in today's culture, see Cardinal Walter Kasper, "The Challenge of Truth in a New Cultural Context," *Origins* 31 (Jan.3, 2002): 489-92; James W. Fowler, *Faithful Change: The Personal and Public Challenges of Postmodern Life* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), Jack A. Bonsor, "History, Dogma, and Nature: Further Reflections on Postmodernism and Theology," *Theological Studies* 55 (1994): 295-313; Idem, *Athens and Jerusalem: the Role of Philosophy in Theology* (Paulist, 1993); and Roman T. Ciapalo, ed. *Postmodernism and Christian Philosophy* (Catholic University Press, 1997).

[20]In a series recounting "How Vatican II Changed the Church," Michael Walsh explains how "the doctrine of religious liberty, as conceived by John Courtney Murray and others, and as defined in Vatican II's *Dignitatis Humanae,* has been stood upon its head." Cf. Idem,"U-turn on Human Rights," *The Tablet* (14 December 2002): 7-9.

[21]The CFC, following the NCDP, chose a triple level view of Catholic morality, embracing: 1) a vision of the transcendent moral values, 2) moral norms, commandments, beatitudes, and 3) individual moral acts judged by conscience. It promotes the union of both commandments and virtue by developing the Ten Commandments as flowing from the two great Love Commandments and the Grace grounding the Theological virtues.

[22] One example is the prolonged polemic among moral experts on "proportionate reasoning," which Richard McCormick admitted as early as 1982 had become stagnant, offering no progress, no new insight, or even faint hopes that some sort of consensus could eventually be achieved. For a more recent overview, see Andrew Beards, "Moral Conversion and Problems in Proportionalism," *Gregorianum* 78 (1997): 329-57.

[23] PCP II, nos. 167-72. See Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk, "Liturgy, Law and Life," *Origins* 31 (March 14, 2002): 645-650. Bishop Rodimer, in his "Beatitudes for Those Leading the Liturgy," Ibid., 32 (November 7, 2002): 364-66, describes how the greatest challenge to the pastor as liturgist is to be a peacemaker between the organist and the guitar players!

[24] Need for a more deeply inculturated liturgy is the constant refrain of liturgists and PCP II.

[25] Cardinal Ratzinger called for the development of a new "C Method," described as "taking advantage of the strengths of both the patristic-medieval exegetical method [A] and the historical-critical method [B], but cognizant of the

shortcomings of both." Quoted from a roundtable discussion summarized in Paul T. Stallsworth, "The Story of an Encounter," in Richard J. Neuhaus, ed. *Biblical Interpretation in Crisis: The Ratzinger Conference on Bible and Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 107-8. This discussion is quoted in the beginning of the valuable article of Gregory Vall, "Ps. 22: Vox Christi Or Israelite Temple Liturgy?," *Thomist* 676 (2002): 175-200.

[26] Cf. Luke Timothy Johnson, "Renewing Catholic Biblical Scholarship," *Priests & People* 16 (Aug.-Sept. 2002): 297-301; Sean P. Kelly, "Interpreting the Gospel of Matthew," *Scripture in the Church* 32 (July-Aug. 2002): 373-84; William M. Thompson, "Spirituality's Challenge to Today's Theology," *Josephinum Journal of Theology* 8 (2001): 54-73.

[27] See Kasper, "The Challenge of Truth in a New Cultural Context," 490, commenting on chaps. 2 and 3 of John Paul II's *Fides et Ratio,* entitled *"Credo Ut Intelligam,"* (nos.16-23) and *"Intelligo Ut Credam"* (nos. 24-35) respectively.

[28] On the more inclusive literal sense and use of allegorical hermeneutics, see Mark S. Burrows, "To Taste with the Heart: Allegory, Poetics and the Deep Reading of Scripture," *Interpretation* 56 (2002): 168-80; Michael Cahill, "Reader-Response Criticism and the Allegorizing Reader," *Theological Studies* 57 (1996): 98-96; Brian Daley, "Is Patristic Exegesis Still Useable," *Communio* 29 (September 2002): 185-216; John O'Keefe, "The Peril and the Promise of Patristic Exegesis," in *Practical Theology,* ed. Michael Lawler & Gail Risch (Creighton University Press, 2000), 144-61.

[29] On the nature & purpose of Scripture, see Paul J. Achtemeier, *Inspiration and Authority: Nature and Function of Christian Scripture* (Hendrikson, 1999); Michael Leary, *Christ and the Catechist* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987); Joel B. Green, "Modernity, History and the Theological Interpretation of the Bible," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 54 (2001): 308-29; Robert M. Jensen, "The Religious Power of Scripture," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 52 (1999): 89-105.

[30] On Scripture as sacramental and a work of art, see: Daniel Shin, "Some Light from Origen: Scripture as Sacrament," *Worship* 73 (1999): 399-428; Paul Avis, "The Gospel as a Work of Art," *Theology* 104 (March-April 2001): 94-101; Richard Viladesau, *Theology and the Arts: Encountering God Through Music, Art and Rhetoric* (Paulist, 2000).

On Scriptural interpretation as performance see: Stephen Barton, "New Testament Interpretation as Performance," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 52 (1999): 179-208; Nicholas Lash, "Performing the Scriptures: Interpretation Through Living," *Furrow* 33 (August 1982): 467-74; Martin Stringer, "Text, Context and Performance: Hermeneutics and the Study of Worship," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 53 (2000): 365-79; Frances Young, *The Art of Performance: Towards a Theology of Holy Scripture* (London: Darton, 1990).

[31] On the key role of imagination in Scripture interpretation, see: Paul Avis, *God and the Creative Imagination Metaphor, Symbol and Myth in Religion and Theology* (New York: Routledge 1999); Brendan Byrne, "To See With the Eyes of the Imagination: Scripture in the Exercises and Recent Interpretation," *The Way Supplement* 72 (1991): 3-19; Luke Timothy Johnson, "Imaging the World Scripture Imagines," *Modern Theology* 14, 2 (1998): 165-80; Nicholas Lash, "Interpretation and Imagination," in *Incarnation and Myth: The Debate Contained*, ed. M.D. Goulden (London, 1979).

[32]In a ground breaking work years ago, Herbert Richardson clarified five types of belief and unbelief as a prelude to an insightful exposition of "Feeling and Religious Experience" in a chapter on "The Myth Is the Message." See his *Toward an American Theology* (New York: Harpers, 1967), 30-70. More recently, see Romanus Cessario, *Christian Faith and the Theological Life* (Catholic University Press, 1996), and Luke Timothy Johnson, *Religious Experience in Earliest Christianity: A Missing Dimension in NT Studies* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998).

[33] See for example Terrence W. Tilley, *Inventing Catholic Tradition* (Orbis Books, 2000), and its Review Symposium "Four Perspectives" by Ann Riggs, William Portier, Elizabeth Johnson and Roberto Goizueta, with Author's Response, *Horizons* 28 (2001): 105-19. For some recent studies on the Creed, see David Burton Bryan, *From Bible to Creed* (Glazier, 1998); Bruno Forte, *A Short Introduction to the Apostles' Creed* (St. Paul's, 1994); Hans Küng, *Credo: The Apostles' Creed for Today (SCM, 1993);* Nicholas Lash, *Believing Three Ways in One God: A Reading of the Apostles' Creed* ((University of Notre Dame, 1993); Berard Marthaler, *The Creed*, 2nd ed (1994); Gerald O'Collins and Mary Venturini, *Believing: Understanding the Creed* (Paulist 1991).

[34] On **human experience**, see: George P. Schner, "The Appeal to Experience," *Theological Studies* 53 (1992): 40-59; and Robert K. Martin, "Theological Education in Epistemological Perspective: The Significance of Polanyi's 'Personal Knowledge' for a Theological Orientation of Theological Education," *Teaching Theology and Religion* 1, no. 3 (1998): 139-53.

[35]See for example, Ray Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering Ministry with Theological Praxis* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001); Reinhard Hutter, *Suffering Divine Things: Theology as Church Practice* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000); Robert Kinast, *Let Ministry Teach: A Guide to Theological Reflection* (Liturgical Press, 1996); Idem, *Making Faith-Sense: Theological Reflection in Everyday Life* (Liturgical Press, 1999).

[36] For sources in catechetical methods, see Susan Shaw, *Storytelling in Religious Education* (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1999); Craig Dykstra, *Growing in the Life of Faith: Education and Christian Practices* (Louisville: Geneva Press, 1999); Idem, "Faith Development and Religious Education," in *Faith Development and Fowler,* ed. Craig Dykstra and Sharon Parks (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1986), 251-71, with Fowler's own high praise, 290-91; Barbara J. Fleischer, "Theological Method for Adult Catechesis—Rooted in Tracy and Lonergan," *Religious Education* 95 (Winter 2000): 23-37; and Idem, "Practical Theology and Transformative Learning: Partnership for Christian Religious Education," in *Forging a Better RE in the Third Millennium,* ed. James M. Lee (Religious Education Press, 2000), 202-25; Robert W. Pazmino, "Surviving or Thriving in the Third Millennium," in Ibid., 69-88; Thomas Groome, "Conversion, Nurture, or Both: Towards a Lifelong Catechetical Education—a Cautious Reading of the GDC," *Living Light* 37 (2001): 16-29.

[37] On the **use of Scripture** in catechetical methodology see: Mary C. Boys, *Biblical Interpretation in Religious Education* (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1980) and the balanced critical review by Michael Warren in *Horizons* 9 (1982): 192-93; Marcel Dumais, "L'Actualisation de L'Ecriture: Fondements et Procedures," *Science et Esprit* 60 (1999): 27-47; Andre Fassion, "Catechese et Exegese Critique," *Rev. de Sc. Relig.* 88, 4 (2000): 599-613; Ernest Hess, "Practical Biblical Interpretation," *Religious Education* 83, 2 (1993): 190-210; William Kurtz and Kevin Miller, "The Use of Scripture in the Catechism of the Catholic Church," *Communio* 23 (Fall 1996): 480-507; Peter Williamson, "Actualization: A New Emphasis in Catholic Scripture Study," *America* 172 (May 20, 1995): 17-19.

[38] For published works on this new stress on a more holistic, Catholic exegetical approach see footnotes nos. 25 to 30 above. An interesting work which links theological reflection with the Gospel is Robert L. Kinast, *If Only You Recognized God's Gift: John's Gospel as an Illustration of Theological Reflection* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).

[39] The difference between religious educators and professional exegetes, systematic theologians, moral experts, etc. was sharply brought out in the many, often contradictory, evaluations of the *CCC.* A critical study of representative critiques of the *CCC,* both positive and negative, led to one initial unexpected conclusion: the majority of critics had no firm grasp, or reasonably accurate notion, of what a universal catechism is all about.

[40]As noted above, the detailed presentation of these elements are Archbishop Leonardo Z. Legaspi's "Religious Education in the Year 2000: Challenges, Issues and Prospects," *Docete* 23, nos. 102-103 (July-Dec. 2000): 15-27.

[41] On imagination, see Gerald J. Bednar, *Faith as Imagination: The Contribution of Wm. F. Lynch, S.J.* (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1996); Catherine Dooley, "Give Imagination a Chance!," *Living Light* 38 (2001): 17-27; Maria Harris, *Teaching and Religious Imagination: An Essay in the Theology of Teaching* (Harper & Row, 1987); Sharon Parks, "Imagination and Spirit in Faith Development: A Way Past the Structure-Content Dichotomy," in *Faith Development and Fowler,* ed. Craig Dykstra and Sharon Parks (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1986), 137-56.

[42]See the US Bishops, "Encuentro & Mission: Pastoral Framework for Hispanic Ministry," *Origins* 32 (Dec 5 2002): 27-39, and *GDC* 150-55.

[43]For some recent work in catechesis/religious education, see: *The Echo Within: Emerging Issues in Religious Education,* ed. Catherine Dooley and Mary Collins (Allen: Thomas More, 1997); *Empowering Catechetical Leaders*, ed. Thomas Groome and Michael Corso (Washington DC: National Catholic Educational Association, 1999); Thomas H. Groome, *Educating for Life: A Spiritual Vision for Every Teacher and Parent* (Allen: Thomas More, 1998); Peter Phan, "Catechesis as an Instrument of Evangelization: Reflections from the Perspective of Asia," *East Asian Pastoral Review* 39 (2001): 165-86; Idem, "Now That I Know How to Teach, What Do I Teach? In Search of the Unity of Faith in Religious Education," Ibid., 187-209.

[44] For examples of current studies in theological anthropology, see Robert Barron, *And Now I See. . . A Theology of Transformation* (Crossroad, 1998); John R. Sachs, *The Christian Vision of Humanity: Basic Christian Anthropology* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991); Sharon Parks, *The Critical Years: The Young Adult Search for a Faith to Live By* (Harper & Row, 1986).

[45] For example, see the International Theological Commission, "On the Interpretation of Dogmas," *Origins* 20 (May 187, 1990): 1-14.

[46] Examples of recent publications in Christian Morality are: James Keating, "A Mystical Moral Theology," *New Blackfriars* 83 (June 2002): 264-74; *Spirituality and Moral Theology*, ed. James Keating (Paulist, 2000); Timothy E. O'Connell, *Making Disciples: A Handbook of Christian Moral Formation* (New York: Crossroad, 1998); William Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise, Jesus and Ethics* (New York: Continuum, 1999).

[47] Regarding **worship**, see: John Saward, *The Beauty of Holiness and the Holiness of Beauty: Art, Sanctity and the Truth of Catholicism* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997); Don E. Saliers, *The Soul in Paraphrase: Prayer and the Religious Affections* (New York: Seabury Press, 1980); and Idem, *Worship as Theology: Foretaste of Glory Divine* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994); Dwight W. Vogel, "The Depth Dimension of Christian Worship: A Trinitarian Perspective," *Worship* 76 (July 2002): 313-24.

Landas 18:1 (2004) 30-58

THE CHRISTIAN PASSOVER

By Victoria B. Parco

During the lifetime of Jesus, the Jewish Passover gathered the followers of Moses at Jerusalem for the purpose of offering and partaking of the paschal lamb. They commemorated the Exodus which set the Hebrews free from bondage in Egypt. Today, the Christian Passover gathers the disciples of Jesus Christ in communion with their Lord, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. It unites them with his life, death and resurrection which have freed them from sin and death. There is a continuity from one festival to another, but there is also discontinuity in passing from the old to the new covenant through the mediation of Jesus, our Passover.[1]

The *Poem of the Four Nights,* contained in the *Targum*, the Aramaic Version of the Hebrew Bible used in the liturgy of the synagogue, aptly conveys the meaning of the Passover during the lifetime of Jesus Christ. In this work, the Passover is at one and at the same time a memorial of creation, of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, of the deliverance from Egypt and finally a prophecy of the last day when God's glory will fill the earth for eternity.[2]

The last of the four nights evokes the Passover in eschatological terms. Because of God's divine intervention on behalf of Israel in times past, Israel developed the hope for God's decisive intervention in the future. The mission to realize this final intervention was attributed to the Messiah. This idea was so deeply impressed on the consciousness of the Jews that they awaited the Messiah on each Passover night.[3] At the appointed time, the divine intervention of God through Jesus, the Messiah, came to pass. Jesus is the New Pasch. As a faithful Jew, he participated in the celebrations of the feast of the Passover. His mission was to perfect the Passover and to bring it to its final and definitive fulfillment.

This article is a presentation of the Christian understanding and experience of the Passover. It consists of a discussion of the following sub-topics: first, the typological sense of Scripture or Spiritual Exegesis; second, the New Testament witness to Jesus, our Passover; third, the Passover traditions of the early Church; and last, the Passover character of Christian life.

The Typological Sense of Scripture

Today, promise and fulfillment are considered decisive elements in the understanding of NT texts, and in fact, of the whole plan of salvation.[4] In this plan of salvation, the OT prepares, prophetically proclaims and prefigures the Christ-Event. When situated in the context of the Old Testament writings, the NT becomes more understandable. Without the interpretative key of the OT, many NT passages such as the Passover meal, the paschal lamb and the cup of the new and everlasting covenant would remain esoteric and obscure.[5] The books of the Old Testament acquire their full meaning in the New Testament and in turn shed light on it and explain it.[6] Through history, the Old Testament brings out what cannot be seen in the New Testament and perfects one's understanding of it. God still reveals today through Old Testament texts and the promises

contained in them are not exhausted by the fulfillment in the New Testament. Hence, the Old Testament is needed to understand the New Testament. Readers can understand and grasp the thought of the New Testament writers more fully and authentically if they try to enter with sympathy into those writers' approach to the ancient Scriptures.

The science of the similitudes between the two Testaments is called typology.[7] Its foundation is in the Old Testament itself[8] and the New Testament simply shows that it was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.[9] Thus, the NT writers, as well as Christian commentators from the earliest times, treated the Old Testament as a book about Christ in which every part contributed harmoniously to the pattern of typology and prophecy.[10]

"God, the inspirer and author of both testaments, wisely arranged that the New Testament be hidden in the Old and the Old be made manifest in the New."[11] Thus, the science of typology is founded on the unity and continuity of Scripture as a whole.[12] It is based on the possibility of a secondary sense of Scripture which goes beyond the literal sense, i.e., a sense that by definition, transcends what the human author intended, arising from the fact that the Bible is a unique book, having God as its principal author. Thus, God progressively manifests in the Bible the mystery of salvation, whose culmination is Christ. The typical sense is that deeper meaning which the divine author has given to the things (person, places or events) of Scripture in view of the more perfect realities which they foreshadow. It is used in the strict sense when the more perfect realities which are prefigured are limited to the mystery of Christ and the Church on earth. It is used in the broad sense to indicate any meaning which God intends to express, through the realities of biblical history in as much as they prefigure other things not limited to the mystery of Christ and the Church on earth.[13]

There are some clues which indicate that typology, so necessary for the Christian understanding of the Gospel, was a process initiated by Christ himself. He evidently interpreted His life and work through the medium of that pattern. Behind his statement that "the Son of Man must suffer many things" was his Jewish understanding that the modes of God's self-revelation in the history of his people defined his own mission as the culmination and definitive fulfillment of that self-revelation. His saving deeds were seen as the moment which brought complete and final significance to the whole course of the covenant history which preceded it.[14] Finally, the typology of the Old Testament is accomplished not only in the person of Christ, but also in the Church. Besides Christological typology, there exists a sacramental typology. This means that the *mirabilia dei* of the Old and New Testament take place in our midst through the whole reality of the Church, but in an especially intense way through the peak moments of sacramental celebrations.[15]

The value of typology is evident even if the patristic pattern of typology must be used with much caution.[16] Nevertheless, the indispensable place of typology as such cannot be denied, for without knowing and accepting it,

> . . . how, without an understanding of spiritual exegesis, is one to take a real part in the liturgy of the Church, which abounds with it?. . . . To meditate on Scripture is to practice such an exegesis. No doubt the bare literal sense of the OT is itself of value; but if one sees in it no foreshadowing of Christ, then one reads it as a Jew, not as a Christian. Again, how can one meditate on the life of Jesus as on events that have no meaning for us in our heart of hearts? Of course we cannot take liberties as the ancients did and we must keep spiritual exegesis pruned down to its essentials. But no one can preach as a Christian on the two Testaments without making use of spiritual exegesis.[17]

The method of typology enables Christians to discover the links between the Jewish Passover and Jesus Christ, our Passover, in the New Testament.[18]

The NT Witness to Jesus, Our Passover

In reading the texts of the New Testament, from the Gospels to the Apocalypse, one encounters again the essential themes of the Passover expressed in a new way. The mysteries of Jesus Christ are proclaimed through them. "To these realities, the writings of the New Testament stand as a perpetual and divine witness."[19] What do they proclaim concerning Jesus, our Passover? According to the Gospels, the whole life of Jesus was a journey towards the Passover which took place in Jerusalem. Jesus moved consciously towards the holy city. The Synoptics bring out the connection among Jesus' farewell meal, an OT Passover meal of the Jews and the Eucharistic meal. Finally, Jesus died as our Paschal Lamb, our Passover.[20]

The Paschal Journey of Jesus

At the age of twelve, Jesus traveled to Jerusalem with his parents in order to take part in the Passover celebrations (Lk. 2:41-50). Jesus remained in Jerusalem while his parents returned to Nazareth. Mary and Joseph found Jesus in the Temple, in the midst of the doctors of the law, "listening to them and asking them questions." Jesus asked questions.[21] It is possible to presume the kind of questions he might have asked, considering the context of the Passover feast just celebrated. The Passover meal began with a question posed by the youngest member of the family: "What is the meaning of this feast?" Jesus listened to the answer of the doctors of the law, a profound and rich teaching. Thus, Jesus will receive an education completely Jewish. He will choose to live in solidarity with the chosen people especially during the great national solemn feasts. Each year, he will participate in the joy of the paschal

celebration.[22] In this Lucan Christological scene, the glorious destiny of Jesus, that of bringing the Passover to its definitive fulfillment, already seems to be projected upon him. This very first Passover journey of Jesus mysteriously announces his final one.[23]

Luke 4:16-21 presents Jesus at the beginning of his public ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth, reading a text from Isaiah 61:1: "He has sent me . . . to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoner." This text concerns him personally for he who announces the good news is the Good News. It also concerns his listeners to whom the good news of freedom promised by the prophets is addressed. Its full realization will take place in the final Passover of Jesus.[24]

This final Passover took place in Jerusalem. In the predictions on his coming passion, death and resurrection, Jesus made a special reference to Jerusalem on at least one occasion.

> We must now go up to Jerusalem so that all that was written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man may be accomplished (Lk. 18:31; cf. Mk. 10:33; Mt. 20: 18-19).

He was making this journey to celebrate the Passover in the holy city to which every Jew was expected to go at least until everything stopped with the destruction of the Temple and the termination of the Temple sacrifices in 70 A.D.[25]

In the Lucan Transfiguration scene, Moses and Elijah appear in glory and speak to Jesus "of his passage, which he was about to fulfill in Jerusalem" (Lk 9:31). The Greek word translated as "passage" is in fact *exodos*.[26] Now, from the Transfiguration onwards, the final Passover begins. Jesus set his face towards Jerusalem, leading an uncomprehending and reluctant company of followers who were to be the New Israel through the waters of death, baptized with his baptism.[27]

The Paschal Context of the Last Supper

The triple synoptic tradition (Mt. 26:17-19; Mk. 14:2-16; Lk. 22:7-13) prefaces the last supper with an account of the preparations for the paschal meal: "On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, his disciples said to him, 'Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?'" (Mk. 14:12). In the mind of the evangelists, therefore, the Last Supper was celebrated in the context of the Jewish Passover.[28] John on the other hand, places the meal "before the feast of the Passover" (Jn. 13:1). Jesus' death the following day coincides with the sacrifice of the lambs in the temple before the Passover meal. Finally, Paul's account of the Lord's Supper in 1 Cor. 11:23-26 contains no reference to the Passover meal. However in 1 Cor. 5:7, Paul asserts that God's action in Jesus is a Passover sacrifice in which a new journey is involved, the one that goes from death to life.[29]

It may not be possible to determine the exact relationship between the Jewish Passover meal and the Last Supper. But, perhaps, becoming aware of the major discrepancy concerning the date of the Supper may prove illuminating.[30] For the Synoptics, the Supper is a Passover meal, taking place on the first evening of Passover, while the lambs are being slaughtered in the temple. In John's account, the death of Jesus takes place at the hour of the sacrifice of the Passover lambs, and the Supper is held the previous night, a day earlier than in the Synoptics. Though Jesus' death is related to the Passover in John, the Last Supper is not a Passover meal. Paul is non-committal on the dating of the Supper except to say that it took place "on the night he was betrayed."[31]

Whether or not the Last Supper was a paschal meal, one is on firm ground in recognizing, at least, the paschal context and character of the Last Supper.[32] The Last Supper narratives bring out how the "Pasch is fulfilled" (Lk. 22:15) through the institution of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is Jesus. The manna, the quails and the

water from the rock are now realized in him, the Bread of Life, for his flesh given as food and drink opens up eternal life for those who believe. The body "given for you" and the blood "poured out for you" (Lk.) or "for a multitude" (Mk./Mt.) are an announcement of the redemptive death of Jesus, who presented himself as a sacrifice in the light of the sacrificial victims whose blood sealed the first covenant, and of the paschal lamb of Exodus 12. In order that they may do it "in memory of me," Jesus enclosed within food the riches of this sacrifice. Like the Passover meal, the sacrifice is a memorial of Jesus, who, at the beginning of the Supper, stated: "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer," thus setting the Passover atmosphere of the Supper. Finally, just as the Paschal rite effected a transition from captivity to freedom and from death to life, the transition effected from the bread to the body and the wine to the blood, reproduces sacramentally the transition from the old world to the new world to which Jesus passed over, in going from this world to the Father through his Paschal Mystery. In his Passover, the messianic age has truly arrived.[33]

Although there are conflicting interpretations of the timing of the Last Supper, its occurrence in proximity to the Passover feast, and the references of Jesus to Passover and covenant themes, surround the farewell meal of Jesus with Paschal overtones which are permanently embedded in the memory of the Church. The theological interpretation rooted in the memory of the Last Supper grounds and confirms our understanding of Jesus, our Passover.

Jesus, the True Paschal Lamb

Exodus 12 recounts that after God decided to deliver his captive people from Egyptian slavery, he ordered each family to immolate a lamb "without blemish, male and one year old" to eat at night and to use its blood to mark the lintels over the door. Thanks to this "sign," the Hebrew slaves were spared by the angel of death who exterminated all the first-born of the Egyptians. The blood of the

lamb had a redemptive power, providing protection, assuring freedom and enabling the Israelites to become a people sacred to Yahweh.

Christian Tradition has seen in Christ "the true Lamb" of the Passover. His redemptive mission, fully described in the baptismal catechesis which underlies 1 Peter, is echoed in the Johannine writings and the Epistle to the Hebrews.[34] Although it is necessary to recognize that there is a wealth of Old Testament background to this image of the lamb, with the paschal lamb as only one element among many, St. Paul makes an explicit and unambiguous reference to its relation to Christ when he writes:[35]

> "Get rid of the old yeast to make of yourselves fresh dough, unleavened loaves, as it were; Christ our Passover has been sacrificed (1 Cor. 5:6-8). Thus, in the Exultet of the Easter Vigil Liturgy, the deacon can proclaim, "This is our Passover feast, when Christ, the true Lamb is slain, whose blood consecrates the homes of believers."[36]

How do the Johannine texts ground and develop the image of Jesus as the true Paschal Lamb? Three texts in the Gospel present Jesus under the image of the Paschal Lamb (Jn. 1:29; 1:35-36 and 19:33-36). Several texts indicate the paschs that occurred during the public life of Jesus (Jn. 2:13, 23; 6:4; 11:5; 12:1 and 13:1). A final set of texts in the Gospel elaborates details of the last Passover of Jesus (Jn. 18:28; 19:14; and 19:31).[37] The above texts, the wider paschal background of the fourth Gospel[38] and, more importantly, the way the whole narrative of the Fourth Gospel is inserted between two proclamations of Jesus as the Lamb of God, justify the identification of the Gospel as a "Paschal Gospel."[39]

At the very beginning of the Gospel, John the Baptist introduces Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29). It is known through 1 Cor. 5:7, that at an early date in the history of the Church, the Lord's sacrificial death commemorated at the Christian Eucharist was compared to that of

the lambs slain for the paschal feast. John may have been strongly influenced by this Christian application of the Jewish Passover. He has added to the comparison of the Lord with the paschal lamb a reference to his work in removing the world's sin. The Baptist's reference to the Lamb of God taking away the collective sin of the world expresses the contrast between the universal redemptive work of the true paschal lamb and that of the Passover lambs, whose death benefited only the children of Israel.[40] In addition, Jesus, the Sinless One, fulfilled the requirement of being the Lamb "without blemish" who delivered sinful humanity at the price of his blood, forming them into the new "royal priesthood," the new "consecrated nation" prefigured in Exodus 19.6. At the climax of the account of Jesus' exaltation, the final clear reference to the Lamb of God is found. Johannine chronology sets the death of Jesus the night before the feast of Unleavened Bread (Jn. 18:28), thus on the day of the Passover, in the afternoon (Jn. 19:14), at the very hour when, according to the prescriptions of the Law, the lambs were being immolated in the temple. After his death, they did not break his legs. The evangelist sees in this fact the realization of a ritual prescription concerning the paschal lamb (Jn. 19:36; cf Ex. 12:46). The paschal lamb had to be a perfect specimen. This, Jesus was. From his pierced side blood and water flowed, symbols of the salvation that Jesus fully brings and of which the paschal lamb of Exodus 12 is an imperfect image.[41]

In the Book of Revelation, the weakness of the immolated Lamb is transformed and invested with the divine majesty and power of the Victorious Lamb. In John's vision of the eschatological Passover, the Lamb who is slain has purchased all humankind for God through his blood and made them a king of priests. The slain Lamb is therefore worthy to receive the scroll and to break open its seals (Rev. 5:5-10).

Jesus, the Lamb leads the eschatological war against the united powers of evil, and is eventually consecrated King of kings and Lord

of lords at his victory.[42] At the end, the marriage of the Lamb and the Bride takes place in a festive atmosphere, which conjures images of the many Passover celebrations that have marked Israel's history. Those who have been invited to the wedding feast will live in the new heavens and new earth, nourished by life-giving waters, illumined by the Light who is the Lamb Himself.[43]

The New Testament witness to Jesus expressed in the Last Supper accounts and in the Johannine Paschal symbolisms will be further developed by the Fathers of the early Church.[44] Melito of Sardis gives us an excellent example of reflections on Jesus, our Passover.

> He is the Passover of our salvation; he was present in many so as to endure many things. In Abel he was slain; in Isaac bound; in Jacob a stranger; in Joseph sold; in Moses exposed; in David persecuted; in the prophets dishonored. He became incarnate of the Virgin. Not a bone of his was broken on the tree. He was buried in the earth, but rose from the dead and was lifted up to the heights of heaven. He is the silent lamb, the slain lamb, who was born of Mary, the fair ewe. He was seized from the flock and dragged away to slaughter. Towards evening he was sacrificed, and at night he was buried. But he who had no bone broken upon the cross, was not corrupted in the earth, for he rose from the dead and raised up man from

The Passover Traditions of the Early Church

The Christian Passover began to be celebrated after the death and resurrection of Jesus, when the primitive Christian community no longer celebrated the Passover in expectation of the coming of the Messiah, but as a memorial of the Paschal Mystery of Jesus while awaiting his return in glory. A change of meaning took place in the understanding of the Passover. Because Jesus suffered, died and

rose in Jerusalem on the occasion of a Hebrew Pasch and at the very hour of the sacrifice of the Paschal lambs at the Temple, the immolation of Christ was eventually seen as the realization of all the figures and expectations contained in the Ancient Pasch. In the light of the Incarnation, the NT authors re-interpreted all the events of Jesus' life as the definitive realization of the Ancient Pasch. The early Church gradually formulated its understanding of the Christian Passover.

The Christological Response

At the beginning of the Hebrew Paschal Supper, the question is asked: "What is the meaning of this rite?" The early Christians gave two kinds of responses from which the two principal Passover traditions of the early Church developed: the Christological and the Anthropological.[46] The Christological response is based on the interpretation of the Pasch in terms of *pathein/paschein:* to celebrate the passion of Christ or to make a liturgical commemoration of the passion of Christ. The Christological tradition is best represented by Melito of Sardis who writes:

> The word "Passover" *(pascha)* has its origin in an event, and the expression "celebrate the Passover *(paschein)*, derives from the word meaning "to suffer" *(pathein)*. Let us consider, then, who it is who suffers, and who it is who sympathizes with the sufferer, realizing that the Lord is present on earth to unite himself to him who suffers, and thus to lead him to the heights of heaven.[47]

The Anthropological Response

The Anthropological tradition was born in Alexandria at the beginning of the third century through Clement and Origen. Both situate the human person at the center of the Pasch as its subject and main protagonist. In this new perspective, the whole Christian life of the Church is seen as a passage, which starts with the acceptance of faith and ends with the departure from this world. All the people of God follow Christ who, by his death and resurrection, passed

beyond the limits of death and opened heaven to all His faithful followers.

The *pascha/passio* accentuates the realization of the salvific plan of God, fully and definitively realized through the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, with whom Christians are in solidarity through the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist. The *pascha/transitus* underlines what Christians still have to accomplish.[48]

These two traditions flourished at the beginning of the Church. To the question "what is the significance of the rite?," the first replied: "The passion of Christ"; the second: "The passage of man." The christological Pasch is based on immolation; the anthropological one is based on passage. The two traditions identify the two protagonists: Christ and man. They also manifest the two poles of salvation: Grace, or the initiative of God, and freedom, or the human cooperation to grace.

The Augustinian Synthesis

It became the work of Augustine to forge a true theological synthesis between these two perspectives.[49] Facing the problem of the significance of the Christian Passover, he reconciled the two perspectives by a profound reading of two texts of the Gospel according to St. John:

> Before the feast of Passover, Jesus realized that the hour had come for him to pass from this world to the Father (Jn. 13:1). . . . [T]he man. . . who hears my word and has faith in him who sent me has passed from death to life. (Jn. 5:4)

In the above texts, the synthesis between passion and passage, between the Pasch of God and the Pasch of man, between grace and freedom and between the passion and the resurrection, are finally achieved. After Augustine, the Christian Passover will be understood

as the passage of Jesus from this world to the Father through the way of the passion and resurrection. The Pasch is a *transitus per passionem.* It is through his passion and death that Jesus passes over into the glory of the Resurrection. The Messiah had "to undergo all this so as to enter into His glory" (Lk. 24:26). These words express the very quintessence of Johannine theology. More important, the unity between the Pasch of God and the Pasch of man is achieved. In Jesus, the two Paschal protagonists, God and man become one, because in Jesus, humanity and divinity are united in one Person. The cause and object of salvation meet each other. Grace and freedom are integrated fully in Jesus Christ. The new and eternal covenant is born in him. Now, nothing can ever separate God and man because the two contracting parties of the covenant become one sole Person in Jesus Christ. This insight of Augustine brought the process of Christianizing the ancient Passover to a close.[50]

A final question must be addressed. Is the Passover unique to Jesus Christ? Is He the only one who passes from this world to the Father? How about the people of God? In confronting this question, Augustine creates another synthesis between the Passover of the Head and the Passover of the Body. With, through and in Jesus, the Head, the members of his Body also realize the Passover. The Passover of Jesus becomes that of his Body, the Church. The Church announces and participates in the Passover of Jesus. Constantly, the Church lovingly seeks to understand the passage of Jesus which is her very own mystery.[51] The Pasch of Jesus is not a solitary passage but a collective passage of all humanity, for at the cross, the Church is born.[52] The grain of wheat that falls into the ground and dies, bears the fruits of freedom for the members of his Body, the Church. The fourth and final part of this article brings out the implications of the Augustinian synthesis for Christian life.

The Passover Character of Christian Life

The wonders wrought by God among the people of the Old Testament were but a prelude to the work of Christ the Lord in redeeming humankind and giving perfect glory to God. He achieved his task principally through the paschal mystery. From the side of Christ as he slept the sleep of death upon the cross, there came forth the wondrous sacrament which is the whole Church, the Body of Christ.[53] By Baptism, Christians are plunged into the paschal mystery of Christ: they die with him, are buried with him and rise with him (cf. Rom. 6:4; Eph. 2: 6; Col. 3:1; 2 Tim. 2:11). In like manner, as often as they eat the Lord's supper, they proclaim the death of the Lord, until He comes (cf. 1 Cor. 11:26), celebrating the Eucharist in which the victory and triumph of his death are again made present.[54]

Christian life has a paschal character.[55] It is the sacramentally existential participation in the Passover mystery of Jesus Christ, in whose life Christians share through Baptism and the Eucharist.[56] The sacraments offer the real possibility for the participation in the Passover of Jesus Christ the High Priest, whose saving deeds occurred in history, but who now bestows on believers the grace-filled participation in the divine life that flows from his redemptive work.[57] The Risen Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, becomes present to believers with the full reality of the saving work he accomplished in history.[58]

Baptism

The Passover of a Christian originates from and participates in Christ's Passover. St. Paul brings out the identification of the Christian with Christ precisely in the act of the Christian's Passover—his *transitus per passionem*—through Baptism.

> Are you not aware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Through baptism into his death

> we were buried with him, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life. If we have been united with him through likeness to his death, so shall we be through a like resurrection (Rom. 6:3-5).

The Passover of Christ is prefigured in the Jewish Passover events. The whole narrative of the deliverance from Egypt is a figure of the Redemption. The New Testament, in particular the Gospel according to St. Matthew, shows us that these works of God are accomplished in Christ for in him, the true "deliverance" is accomplished. This "deliverance" is effectively applied to human persons through baptism.[59]

The relationship among these three levels of history—figure, reality and sacrament—becomes strikingly clear in terms of the following observation. It was during the time of the Pasch, which for the Jews was the commemoration of their deliverance from Egypt, that Christ accomplished our redemption through his death. It is during the same time of the Pasch, Easter night, that Baptism is ordinarily received. The one and the same redeeming action of God is accomplished on three levels of history—the Jewish Passover, the Paschal Mystery of Jesus and Christian baptism.[60] A discussion of the typological significance of the crossing of the sea in relation to Jesus and Christian Baptism can confirm and illumine these relationships.

Baptism has been described as a "birth by drowning," recalling the Passover of the Jews through the crossing of the sea and the Passover of Jesus in Jerusalem which he called "his baptism" (Lk. 12:50).[61] At the blessing of the font during the Rite of Baptism, the celebrant prays: "Through the waters of the Red Sea you led Israel out of slavery to be an image of God's holy people, set free from sin by baptism." This setting free became a reality because of the "baptism" of the Son who "willed that water and blood should flow

from his side as he hung upon the Cross." Thus, "all who are buried with Christ in the death of baptism rise also with him in newness of life."[62] The same ritual prayer states how baptism is prefigured in the crossing of the Jordan River by which the people of God receive the gift of the land promised to Abraham's descendants, an image of eternal life. At the beginning of the Rite of Adult Baptism, when the celebrant asks: "What will faith give you?," the recipient responds: "Eternal life." The promise of this blessed inheritance is fulfilled in the New Pasch.[63]

The thoughts of the patristic writers converge in the way they link the three levels of history through typology.[64] These writers begin with a Pauline scriptural basis, ". . .our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; by the cloud and the sea all of them were baptized into Moses" (1 Cor. 10:2-3). Starting from this Pauline scriptural text, the patristic writers made more precise the comparison between the chosen people during the Jewish Passover and the catechumen at the threshold of baptism. Their writings reveal how the series of episodes in Christian initiation is related to the series of events in the crossing of the Red Sea. St. Cyril of Jerusalem writes:

> You must know that the symbol of Baptism is found in ancient history. In fact, when Pharaoh, the harsh and cruel tyrant, oppressed the free and noble Hebrew people, God sent Moses to deliver them from slavery to the Egyptians. The posts of doors were anointed with the blood of the lamb, so that the Destroyer would pass over the houses which had the sign of the blood. Let us now go from the old to the new, from the type to the reality. There we have Moses sent by God into Egypt; here we have Christ sent by the Father into the world; there is need to free the oppressed people from Egypt; here to rescue men tyrannized over by sin in this world; there the blood of the lamb turns aside the Destroyer; here the Blood of the true Lamb, Jesus Christ, puts the demons to flight; there the tyrant pursues the people even into the sea; here the shameless and bold demon

follows them even to the holy fountains; one tyrant is drowned in the sea, the other is destroyed in the water of salvation.[65]

The themes of life and death reflected in the crossing of the sea episode assume their true significance in the death and resurrection of Jesus. The link between these two and baptism is made explicit specially in the way the Early Church celebrated baptism, surrounded with rich symbols whose immediacy is not easy to recapture today. All these took place on the night of Easter while the whole Church celebrated the memorial of Christ's death and resurrection.[66]

In what way can Baptism, which celebrates the Paschal Mystery of Jesus in its death-resurrection reality, become a lived experience for Christian believers? Baptismal life is the new life according to the Spirit of Christ and through the theological virtues of faith, hope and love. Under the divine influence of the Holy Spirit, Giver of the gifts, Christians bear fruits of the Spirit in the personal, interpersonal, societal and ecclesial dimensions of their life.[67] Baptismal life is a life whose interior, indwelling source of grace is the Holy Spirit promised and handed on by Jesus at the Cross. Allowing the Spirit to move and transform personal beings is a life-long process for the baptized, demanding a persevering resistance and dying to sin in a faithful cooperation with grace.[68] The liturgical text for baptism brings out the struggle at the heart of baptismal life: a constant dying and rising with Christ who crossed the sea of death and rose from the darkness of the tomb.

Eucharist

In the Old Testament, the unleavened bread that Israel eats every year at the Passover commemorates the haste of the departure that set them free from Egypt. The manna in the desert, the water from the rock will always remind the Jews that they live by the bread of the Word of God; their daily bread is the fruit of the promised land, the pledge of God's fidelity to his promises. The "cup of

blessing" at the end of the Jewish Passover meal adds to the festive joy of wine an eschatological dimension—the reconstruction of Jerusalem after the exile.[69]

Through typology, "the events of the old" are perceived to be "figures of the new." Hence, the manna, the quails, the water from the rock which express God's communication of life to his people, prepare for the revelation of the living bread and wine of which they were the promise and the type. Just as God had nourished His people with a miraculous food and drink during the wilderness wandering, so, in Jesus first, and then through his sacramental presence in the Eucharist, God eases the hunger of His people today. The superiority of the Eucharist over the manna, however, needs to be highlighted. Jesus himself taught: "Your ancestors ate manna in the desert but they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven for a man to eat and never die" (Jn. 6:49-50). St. Ambrose explains: ". . . the Bread descended from heaven communicates to you the substance of eternal life. It is the Body of Christ. As the light is greater than the shadow, the truth than the figure, so the Body of the Creator is greater than the manna from heaven."[70] The same superiority is attributed to the water from the rock, which is considered a Eucharistic figure.

> The water flowed from the Rock for the Jews, the Blood of Christ for you; the water slaked their thirst for an hour, the Blood quenches your thirst forever. The Jews drank and thirsted once more; when you have drunk, you need never thirst again. That was a figure, this is the truth. If the figure seems wonderful to you, how much more the reality, the figure of which you admire.[71]

It was in the framework of a sacred Jewish meal that Christ instituted the meal of the New Covenant, as it was in the framework of the Jewish memorial of the Passover that he died on the Cross. By celebrating the Last Supper with his apostles in the context of the

Passover feast, Jesus gave the Jewish Passover its definitive meaning. Jesus' passing over to his Father by his death and resurrection, is anticipated in the Last Supper. The Eucharist, celebrated today, fulfills the Jewish Passover and anticipates the final Passover of the Church in glory.[72]

The participation in the reality of Jesus, our Passover, begins with Baptism, but Baptism is but a part, though the first and most important part, of a unified movement of Christian Initiation which achieves fullness in the Eucharist. The baptismal aspects of passage from darkness to light, slavery to freedom, sin to grace, death to life must be seen in the context of this unified movement which causes the baptized to be so completely identified with Christ as to be incorporated into the body of his risen and glorified humanity, participating in his own Passover.[73]

Both Baptism and the Eucharist are paschal sacraments, uniting the Christians to the mystery of the Cross and Resurrection.[74] United once and for all in Christ's death and resurrection by being grafted through Baptism into his Body the Church, believers are sustained, nourished and strengthened by the Eucharist. Through this new Passover banquet and sacrament of unity, the Church, the Body of Christ, becomes truly one with the Risen and Ascended Head. In the Spirit, the Crucified and Risen Lord becomes truly present in the eucharistic meal. It is the Spirit, too, who makes the historical words and deeds of Jesus profoundly understood and alive in the baptized.

"Do this in memory of me" (Lk. 22:19). The command of Jesus to celebrate his actions and words "until he comes" is premised upon a faith-understanding of the Eucharist and what it is a memorial of. Instituted in the context of the Jewish Passover, if not actually a Passover meal, the Eucharist means thanksgiving. In the narrative of the Last Supper, the Matthew-Mark tradition uses the verb *eulogize*

(give praise) for the bread and the verb *eucharistize* (give thanks) for the wine, whereas the Paul-Luke tradition uses only *eucharistize*. Both cases deal with the blessing as well as the thanksgiving Jesus addressed to his Father on taking the bread and wine.[75] To celebrate the Eucharist in memory of Christ is, above all, to offer up this thanksgiving and praise anew.[76] The Eucharist is a thanksgiving worship offered to the Father, centered on the mightiest act of God, Jesus Christ in his Paschal Mystery, and realized through him [Christ], with him, and in him in the unity of the Holy Spirit.[77] The Eucharist, as thanksgiving worship, is not confined to the duration of the celebration. As sacrifice, communion, presence and pledge of future glory, the Eucharist is an encounter with Jesus Christ, our Passover, in the midst of ordinary day-to-day life. He liberates those who believe in him from despair and meaninglessness, fulfills their deepest human hungers and promises his coming in glory through sacramental signs.[78]

The Eucharist is thus the supreme link between the Passover of Jesus and the present life of the Church—between his *transitus per passionem* and that of the members of his Body, the Church. A paschal character is given not only to Baptism but to Eucharistic worship, and through them to the whole Christian life. As sacraments of the Church, they reveal, though in the obscurity of faith, the Christian's point of departure, present journey and final goal. Such is the Passover character of Christian life.

Conclusion

This article begins with the conviction that the Passover developed from a Jewish reality to a Christian one. A presentation of the method of typology, intrinsic to the nature of patristic exegesis as a form of biblical interpretation follows. Next, it asserts that the Jewish Passover prefigured and prophetically announced Jesus Christ, the True and New Passover. By focusing on the Last Supper accounts in the Synoptics, the Gospel according to John and the insights of the patristic writers, the article succeeds in framing

an image of Jesus as the definitive fulfillment of what have been foreshadowed in the Old Testament texts. The final section of the article delineates how Christians participate in the Passover of Jesus Christ through a life indelibly marked by the sacrament of Baptism and nourished by the sacrament of the Eucharist.

NOTES

[1] *Dictionary of Biblical Theology* [DBT], 1973 ed., s.v. "Passover," by Pierre-Emile Bonnard.

[2] Lucien Deiss, C.S.Sp., *It's the Lord's Supper: The Eucharist of Christians* (New York: Paulist Press, 1975), p. 35.

[3] *DBT*, Bonnard, "Passover."

[4] *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, 1994 ed., s.v. "Testaments, Old and New," by Pierre-Marie Beaude.

[5] *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, 1994 ed., s.v. "Revelation," by René Latourelle.

[6] Dogmatic Constitution on Revelation, no. 16, *Documents of Vatican II*, ed. Walter Abbott, S.J. (New York: Guild Press, 1966), p. 122.

[7] *Sacramentum Mundi* 1, 1973 ed., "Biblical Exegesis," by Henri Crouzel.

[8] The OT paves the way by frequently using symbolic language, by attributing bodily members or human passions to God, and especially by its constant rethinking and further spiritualization, in the prophetic and sapiential books, of the great events in Israel's history, above all the Exodus. Ibid.

That the great events of Israel's past exhibited a certain pattern of God's acts had already been appreciated by some of the Old Testament writers themselves. The prophets from time to time, looked forward to the future for a repetition or recapitulation of the rhythm of divine action evident in the history of the past, e.g., Hosea and the wilderness wanderings, Second Isaiah and the exodus, according to Lampe, "The Reasonableness of Typology," in *Essays in Typology*, ed. G. W. H. Lampe and K. J. Woolcombe (Napeville: Alec R. Allenson, 1957), pp. 26-27.

[9]Jean Danielou, S.J., *The Bible and Liturgy* (Ann Arbor: Servant Books, 1956), pp. 4-5.

[10]G. W. H. Lampe, *The Reasonableness of Typology*, p. 18.

[11]Dogmatic Constitution on Revelation, no. 16, p. 122.

[12]Lampe, in *The Reasonableness of Typology*, pp. 14-18 contends that the rise of modern critical study broke the chain of continuity that had hitherto existed between the modern biblical readers and those who preceded them during the patristic and medieval ages. Until the onset of modern biblical criticism, the unity of the Bible was the fundamental premise upon which all were agreed. However, the recent years have witnessed the recovery of this unity and continuity of the Scriptures as a whole.

[13]Joseph J. Smith, S.J., "Lecture Notes in Revelation," Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University.

[14]Lampe, *The Reasonableness of Typology*, pp. 26-27.

[15]Danielou, *The Bible and Liturgy*, p. 5.

[16]*New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 1993 ed., s.v. "Hermeneutics," by Raymond E. Brown and Sandra M. Schneiders, I.H.M. A more recent article brings out both the defects and the advantages of patristic exegesis. John J. O"Keefe, "The Peril and Promise of Patristic Exegesis," in *Practical Theology*, ed. Michael Lawler and Gail Risch (Creighton, 2000): 145-161.

[17]The application of typology to the Scriptures is called spiritual exegesis, whereas its application to liturgy is called mystagogy. Thus one can speak of a biblical typology as well as a liturgical one. Both are based on the objective correspondence that exists between the several phases of salvation history. See Enrico Mazza, *Mystagogy*, (New York: Pueblo Publishing Co, 1989), pp. 9-11.

[18]Brian Daley, S.J. says that "Patristic exegesis has become fashionable again. After centuries of neglect, even hostile dismissal, on the part of Christian preachers and scholars of virtually every theological hue and stripe, the efforts of early Christian writers to interpret the Bible have recently been watered into life again by a small but swelling stream of conferences, scholarly books, and doctoral dissertations." Whatever the reasons [he speaks of the loss of energy in the post-Enlightenment approach to identifying the meaning of Biblical texts]. A significant number of Christian theologians and Biblical scholar are turning with interest and respect to the exegetical efforts of the Patristic era, in the hope of finding ways of reading the Bible that are both

scholarly sophisticated and imbued with reverent, active, orthodox faith. Brian Daley, S.J., "Is Patristic Exegesis Still Usable: Reflections on Early Christian Interpretation of the Psalms," in *Communio* 29 (Spring 2002): 185-216. Footnotes 1 and 3 of the article provide a list of a outstanding recent titles and collections.

[19]Dogmatic Constitution on Revelation, no. 17, p. 123.

[20]*Sacramentum Mundi*, 4, Fuglister, "Passover."

[21]There is no intention here to presuppose that this is an actual historical event. Rather, one shares the thought of Raymond Brown who identifies this "short story" as a biographical apophthegm which articulates a revelation apprehended by post-resurrection faith, namely, the divine sonship. "To be precise, we are dealing with a biographical apophthegm: the illustration of a saying (in this case, a Christological saying: Lk. 1:49) shaped out of a life setting. The present setting and saying are no less and no more historical than the divine voice and its historical setting at the baptism of Jesus. Jesus was baptized. Jesus had a boyhood—those are historical facts. but in Luke, those historical reminiscences serve as the occasion for the articulation of a revelation apprehended by post-resurrectional faith, namely, the divine sonship. See Raymond Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, p. 483.

[22]The exact historicity of these statements in the sense of technical history is not the issue here. What is asserted is their theological implications. Jesus was the Word made flesh, the Incarnate Son of God. As such, he truly assumed a historical existence, was a member of the Jewish race and lived in Palestine during the first century. Belonging to the Jewish religion, it can be presumed that he took part in its customs, traditions and celebrations, the most important of which was the Passover.

[23]Grelot and Pierron, *La nuit et les fêtes de pâques*, pp. 60-61.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Roger Greenacre and Jeremy Haselock, *The Sacrament of Easter* (Herefordshire: Fowler Wright Books, 1989), pp. 35-36.

[26]Ibid., pp. 38-39.

[27]S.H. Hooke, *Alpha and Omega* (Nisbet: Welwyn, 1961), p. 181.

[28]Deiss, *It's the Lord's Supper*, p. 33.

[29]*The New Dictionary of Theology*, 1987 ed., s.v. "Paschal Mystery," by John F. Craghan.

[30]This is not the place to sum up the arguments on either side and we do not consider ourselves qualified to attempt to judge between them. The Latin Church, in using unleavened bread for the Eucharist, sided with the Synoptic interpretation. The Greek Church, in using leavened bread, sided with the Johannine one. Pertinent studies include: Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (New York: Scribner's 1966); Annie Jaubert, *The Date of the Last Supper*, trans. Isaac Rafferty (New York: Alba House, 1965); L. Johnston, "The Date of the Last Supper," *Sacraments in Scripture*, ed., Thomas Worden, (London: Chapman, 1966).

[31]Jerome Kodell, O.S.B., *The Eucharist in the New Testament* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1988), p. 19.

[32]Kodell, *The Eucharist in the New Testament*, pp. 54-56 summarizes the arguments of J. Jeremias favoring a Passover interpretation of the Last Supper, as well as the counter arguments of Xavier Léon-Dufour, S.J. opposing that interpretation.

[33]*DBT*, 1973 ed., s.v. "Eucharist," by Pierre Benoit.

[34]*DBT*, 1973 ed., s.v. "Lamb of God," by Marie-Emile Boismard.

[35]Greenacre and Haselock, *The Sacrament of Easter*, p. 45.

[36]Roman ICEL Text.

[37]Lightfoot remarks that in the earlier Gospels, the Lord's single visit to Jerusalem ends with the Passover, that at which he died. In John's Gospel, not only are three Passovers mentioned, but some of the events that are associated with the sole visit to Jerusalem in the earlier Gospels, are, in John, ascribed to previous visits. Above all, reference in one way or another is continually made, throughout this gospel to the death and resurrection of Jesus, a reference which, in the earlier Gospels, is not explicitly made until the departure from Galilee has taken place. Robert H. Lightfoot, *St. John's Gospel*, ed. C. F. Evans (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 176.

[38]Durrwell highlights the wider paschal horizon of the Gospel of John. The Word "has set up his tabernacle amongst us" (Jn. 1:14). Christ must be lifted up like the serpent (Jn. 3:14). He has come down from heaven and will become our food, like manna (Jn. 6:48 ff). His followers will be refreshed by him as by the rock in the desert (Jn. 7:37). They will follow him as the Israelites followed the pillar of fire (Jn. 8:12). See F. X. Durrwell, C.S.S.R, *The Resurrection* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1960), p. 37.

[39]Ibid., p. 33.

[40] Lightfoot, *St. John's Gospel*, pp. 96-97.

[41] *DBT*, "Lamb of God," by Boismard.

[42] The Book of Revelation describes the different phases of this combat in exalted images. It exhibits the same characteristics as the holy war between Yahweh and Pharaoh's armies. While the angels of God blew their trumpets, the wrath of God poured upon the earth, unleashing catastrophes modeled after the plagues of Egypt. Grelot and Pierron, *La nuit et les fêtes de pâques*, p. 78.

[43] Ibid., p. 79.

[44] Jean Danielou, one of the foremost patristics scholars of our century, has written on how the Fathers of the Church used the themes of the Passover in order to bring out the identity and mission of Jesus Christ. See Danielou, *The Bible and the Liturgy and From Shadows to Reality* (Westminster: Newman Press, 1960).

[45] Melito of Sardis, "The Paschal Mystery," *The Way 2* (1962): 145-54.

[46] Raniero Cantalamessa, O.F.M., *Il mistero pasquale* (Padova: Edizione Messagero, 1981), pp. 15-22.

[47] Melito of Sardis, "The Paschal Mystery," p. 149.

[48] *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* 12, 1937 ed., s.v. "Pâques," by Ireneé-Henri Dalmais.

[49] Cantalamessa, *Il mistero pasquale*, p. 22-30.

[50] *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* 12, "Pâques," by Dalmais.

[51] Philip Ferlay, "Jesus, notre pâque: théologie du mystère pascal" (Paris: Le Centurion, 1977), p. 6.

[52] See Colman E. O' Neill, O.P., *Sacramental Realism* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1983), pp. 80-98. The author summarizes St. Augustine's use of the symbol "body" as the theme which unites the spiritual sacrifice of Christians to that of Christ. Behind the symbolism, there is a real personal unity brought about by the Spirit. It is a dynamic unity because it was initiated in the sacrifice on Calvary and is being developed now as Christians are in the process of being re-formed by their obedience to the will of God. The "whole" sacrifice was offered by Christ—but "we ourselves are that whole sacrifice" because we are the living body of Christ.

[53] Constitution on Sacred Liturgy, no. 5, pp. 139-40.

[54] Ibid., no. 6, p. 140.

[55]Christians live out the Paschal Mystery of Christ on the sacramental, moral and eschatological levels. The substructure of each level is faith, love and hope respectively. Sacramental encounter becomes fruitful through the living faith of the recipient. On the moral level, the Paschal Mystery touches our lives to the extent that we are prepared to live the demands of the great commandment of love. When we love in the Christian sense of *agape*, we must die to something within us if we are truly to serve the other. On the eschatological level, we live out the Paschal Mystery in terms of Christian hope. We experience the pull of the future upon the present, challenging us to build a better world, effecting change from within. Dermott A. Lane, "The Paschal Mystery," *Furrow* 30 (May 1979): 286-96.

[56]*Sacramentum Mundi* 4, Fuglister, "Passover."

[57]The whole exposition on the Passover character of Christian life focuses only on Baptism and Eucharist, the two sacraments referred to in Jn. 19:34, although the Sacraments of Initiation includes Confirmation. Because of the patristic exegesis connects Baptism and the Eucharist more directly with Jn 19:34, these two sacraments are more strictly defined as paschal as distinguished from Confirmation which is more pentecostal. It must be remembered though, that the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection is inseparably linked with the pentecostal gift of the Holy Spirit. Similarly the participation in Christ's death and resurrection is inseparably linked with the reception of the Spirit. Baptism in its full meaning, signifies and effects both. It may be helpful also to remember that what St. Luke sees as the two moments of Easter and Pentecost are brought together as the single event of Easter in the Fourth Gospel. Pascha/ Pentecost form a single unity. Greenacre and Haselock, *The Sacrament of Easter*, p. 57.

[58]*The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, 1993 ed., s.v. "Mystery," by Thomas D. McGonigle, O.P..

[59] Danielou, *The Bible and the Liturgy*, p. 86.

[60]Ibid., pp. 86-87.

[61]*Birth by Drowning* is the title of a verse play by Norman Nicholson (London: Faber & Faber, 1960), telling the story of Elisha and Naaman the leper. "As you deduce," writes Mr. Nicholson in a private letter, "the phrase refers, by implication, to baptism, though this is not specifically the subject of the play." Cited in Greenacre and Haselock, *The Sacrament of Easter*, p. 54.

[62] Ralph A. Keifer, ed., *The Catholic Liturgy Book* (Baltimore: Helicon, 1975), p. 59.

[63] *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Manila: Word and Life Publications, 1994), no. 1222, p. 295.

[64] Danielou quotes Tertullian, Didymus the Blind, Sts. Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, Origen, Sts. Ambrose, Cyril and Cyprian, Zeno and Aphraates. Danielou, *The Bible and the Liturgy*, pp. 89-98.

[65] Cited in Danielou, *The Bible and Liturgy*, p. 96.

[66] The candidates descended to the font in semi-darkness, stripped off all their clothes and were anointed all over with oil to prepare them, like athletes, for their struggle with the Devil. Facing west to renounce the Devil and all his works, they were immersed three times in the waters. They then ascended from the font towards the east, were anointed on the forehead (sealed with the Holy Spirit), clothed in white robes and given lighted candles. Thus dressed and carrying their candles they entered the Church to participate for the first time in the whole of the Eucharist and to receive Communion. When receiving Communion they partook of three chalices; the chalice of wine—of course, but also a chalice of water to signify the washing of the inner man and a chalice of milk mixed with honey to celebrate their entry into the "Promised Land." Refer to Greenacre and Haselock, *The Sacrament of Easter*, pp. 54-55.

[67] E.C.C.C.E. *The Catholic Faith Catechism* (Metro Manila: Word and Life Center, 1992), no. 1278, p. 352.

[68] Ibid.

[69] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1334, p. 316.

[70] Cited in Danielou, *The Bible and Liturgy*, p. 148.

[71] De Myst. 48; Botte, 123, cited in Ibid., p. 151.

[72] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1340, p. 317.

[73] Greenacre and Haselock, *The Sacrament of Easter*, p. 56.

[74] The patristic exegesis of Jn. 19:34 points out this truth. John's Gospel records that while the dead Christ hung on the Cross on Calvary, "one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; immediately there came out blood and water." Patristic exegetes from Tertullian on developed a strong tradition of

seeing the wound in Christ's side as the birthplace of the Church and the source of the efficacy of the sacraments. Ibid. p. 58.

[75]Deiss, *It's the Lord's Supper*, p. 45.

[76]Deiss spells out in more detail the themes of praise at the Last Supper which are also the themes of the paschal feast. Now these themes are found in the *Poem of the Nights*, those nights that the Jewish Passover commemorated. Ibid., pp. 48-67.

[77] *Catholic Faith Catechism*, no. 1324, p. 368.

[78]This understanding of the Eucharist is a synthesis of Chapter 26 of the *Catholic Faith Catechism*, pp. 363-82.

Landas 18:1 (2004) 59-93

INCULTURATION AND THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

Patricia G. Panganiban

I. Introduction

A. Main Problem and Objectives

The overwhelming amount of recent literature on inculturation, contextual and local theologies, the local church, and similar topics is evidence that serious rethinking is underway in the areas of missiology, ecclesiology and theological method on the relationships between the Christian faith on the one hand, and culture on the other.[1] The crucial issues often identified in the literature belong to two inseparable levels—the theoretical level, involving how to conceive of the two aforementioned "poles," and the practical level, involving how to go about "inculturating the faith." Many theories and models have emerged in the last few decades, and presumably much more will surface until a satisfactory amount of consensus and clarity is reached in the language of inculturation.

One way to contribute to this on-going search is by looking at how this new direction took shape in the first place. It is widely acknowledged that the Second Vatican Council—in its organization

and manner of proceeding, its worldwide scope, and most of all, in the theological thrusts of its documents—is the decisive event in according inculturation the priority it now enjoys. The documents *Lumen Gentium*, *Ad Gentes,* and *Gaudium et Spes* are particularly seen as expressive of a renewed ecclesiology that implicitly recognizes the need for inculturation. Rahner's interpretation of the Council as "the beginning of a tentative approach by the Church to the discovery and official recognition of itself as world-church"[2] is a widely accepted and often-quoted statement that pinpoints the connection between the Council on the one hand, and inculturation on the other.

Granted that this post-conciliar period is "marked largely by a continuation of the tensions experienced at the Council,"[3] could we find connections between the present questions in inculturation and issues uncovered, perhaps left unresolved at the Council? And are some current difficulties not traceable to the Council at all? In simpler terms, this paper attempts to answer the question, "How can looking back at Vatican II help us better understand the problems we now face in inculturation?" The immediate aim of this work is thus to arrive at greater clarity as to what issues are involved in inculturation by going back to its conceptual roots in Vatican II. It is hoped that this attempt will offer some leads in addressing the challenges faced by this world-Church.

B. Limits and Method

Some methodological concerns need to be identified and addressed in any attempt at giving an evaluation and interpretation of Vatican II. One of the first considerations must be to clarify what is meant by the term "Vatican II." Komonchak cites three uses of the term Vatican II—as *event, experience,* and *final documents.*[4] The terms *experience* and *final documents* are relatively straightforward terms. The notion of *event* on the other hand needs further unpacking.

Sewell defines an event as "a sequence of occurrences that result in the transformation of structures,"[5] which—according to Veyne—"has meaning only within a series. . . (whose) number is indefinite."[6] If Vatican II is an event in these senses, then those who study and write on the Council must consider what place they give to the Council in the series of episodes in the plot of their histories and interpretations.

In this paper, select aspects of the *experience* and *final documents* will be examined in view of how Vatican II as an event is construed. Unlike many studies that consider the Council as climactic, and thus consider new thrusts such as inculturation as the *denoument;* in this work, the Council will be viewed more as an opening event—the beginning of the story. As such, the current problems and developments in inculturation appear to constitute a rising action—a series of conflicts in search of some future resolution. These aspects of the Council that promise to shed most light on the concern of this study lie in the documents *Lumen Gentium, Ad Gentes, and Gaudium et Spes,* as well as in the reconstruction and analysis of the experiences out of which these texts were born. By this I refer to key debates, reactions to drafts and the like throughout the preparatory and conciliar periods.

II. Problems in Inculturation

A. Inculturation Defined

1. Origins of the term

The term *en*culturation is supposed to have crossed over from the field of cultural anthropology to missiology through the work of Pierre Charles, but *in*culturation appeared for the first time in the work of Joseph Masson, S.J. in 1962, when he coined the phrase *Catholicisme Inculturé*, or "inculturated Catholicism."[7] As of 1974, the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) spoke of "a church indigenous and inculturated."[8] On the tenth anniversary of *Ad Gentes'* promulgation, Paul VI already expressed the idea of inculturation,

but without still using the term.[9] In 1977, Father General Pedro Arrupe, S.J. is said to have introduced the term to the Synod on catechesis in Rome, but another source attributes the use of the term at the same synod to Cardinal Sin of Manila.[10] Contrary to both, Congar states that the term was coined in Japan as a variant of the term *acculturation.*[11] Yet another account of the term's origin is that of Chupungco, who says the word was coined in 1973 by G.L. Barney, a Protestant missionary.[12]

In any case, John Paul's *Catechesi Tradendae* (1979) which followed the synod in Rome, marked the first appearance of the term in a papal document.[13] On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the promulgation of *Ad Gentes,* the same Pope promulgated *Redemptoris Missio* (1990), the document that is considered the *magnum opus* on inculturation.[14]

In this encyclical, inculturation is defined as "the intimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their insertion in Christianity and the insertion of Christianity in the various human cultures."[15] It is very similar to Fr. Arrupe's definition which is also widely quoted in the literature:

> the incarnation of Christian life and of the Christian mes sage in a particular cultural context, in such a way that this experience not only finds expression through elements proper to the culture in question (this alone would be no more than a superficial adaptation) but becomes a principle that ani mates, directs, and unifies the culture, transforming it and remaking it so as to bring about a 'new creation.'[16]

2. Related terms

Enculturation in cultural anthropology refers to an individual's insertion into his or her own culture. Crollius states that the idea has been analogously applied in missiology in the sense of the Church's "insertion" into a given culture—this is the process that the term inculturation refers to. The main difference between the two terms is that in enculturation, the individual is assumed to not yet have a culture and only by means of this process does one acquire it. With regard to the Church however, "though it (Church) is not bound to any particular culture, (it) does not enter into a given culture unless already linked with elements of another culture."[17]

Acculturation, a term also borrowed from cultural anthropology, refers to "the encounter between cultures."[18] This term's close relative, *interculturation,* was coined to highlight the two-way process involved when the Christian message, which is already embedded within a culture, interacts with another culture. The idea is that the gospel and culture mutually transform of each other.

That inculturation has emerged as the widely-used term in the Roman Catholic Church could partly be explained by the fact that alternative terms have been found to be inadequate. For example, Schineller finds the terms *imposition, translation,* and *adaptation* to lack the proper nuances in describing the relationships between faith and culture. [19] He considers other terms more suitable such as *indigenization, contextualization, incarnation,* and *inculturation.*[20] Still, the term indigenization has a negative connotation in some languages which was basis for its rejection in Catholic circles.[21]

In a more comprehensive work, Bevans classifies current approaches to relating faith and culture into the following models, (a) translation, (b) anthropological, (c) praxis, (d) synthetic, (e) semiotic, (f) transcendental, (g) counter-cultural.[22] One of the main

strengths of this attempt at schematizing existing approaches is that it clarifies for us what methodological issues are at stake in the process of developing an approach to inculturation.

The debates on terminology are far from over, and as of today, different terms are preferred by different groups and scholars. For example, *indigenization* and *contextualization* which appear in the texts of the World Council of Churches seem to be the preferred Protestant term, whereas *adaptation* and *incarnation,* terms found in the texts of the Second Vatican Council are variably defined, sometimes viewed negatively, and at other times, considered synonymous with inculturation.[23] While emphasizing different aspects of the inculturation process, these terms all describe ways of understanding the relationships between faith and culture.[24] This brings up a second question in understanding inculturation, the question of *what* are being related in the first place.

3. Faith, gospel, or Church? Culture, cultures, context, or world?

Papal documents often use *gospel* more than *faith* to emphasize the content or message of Christianity. However, others argue that *faith* connotes both the message (objective) and the subjective assent dimensions of Christianity as well. When we speak of *Church,* or *church,* for that matter, the emphasis is usually on distinguishing a particular group of people from the rest. But with the idea of the Church as People of God, more ambiguities arise. In any case, Schreiter states that "no one has been able to make a totally compelling case for the use of one term or the other. The nuance one is seeking...has generally been the most determinative feature."[25]

On the other hand, the use of *Culture* brings to mind what Lonergan calls a classicist notion of culture which considered a particular culture to be normative universal hence, was "the one and

only culture for all time."[26] This idea of culture eventually gave way to the modern concept of culture which he considers to be empirical, dynamic, and pluralist—though he does not use this last term. Hence *cultures* in the plural is more reflective of the latter concept. But once the term "world" is used, ambiguities once more arise. The term *context* is usually understood to be broader than culture, but again, the various ways of using either term often obscure their distinctions.

This brief sketch of the problem of terminology is the mere tip of the iceberg, so to speak. Other difficulties involved in inculturation come to light more readily after a consideration of this first obstacle. The subsequent section thus exposes a few more key issues in inculturation's theory and practice.

B. Difficulties in Inculturation

In 1978, Crollius considered inculturation a neologism, whose definition had not yet been standardized by repeated use.[27] Today, twenty-five years since his landmark article was published, the term can hardly be called new anymore. However, that the language and terminology are still fluid and changing can be attributed in part to the relative novelty of the area of study, and to the divergences among scholars and their contexts.

To a great extent, these divergences lie in the understanding of culture on the one hand, and of faith on the other. Like any other interdisciplinary field, the study of inculturation suffers from the ambiguities in the disciplines it involves—anthropology on the one hand, and theology and its subfields on the other. In the area of missiology in particular, Schreiter repeatedly asserts the need for a theology of culture and cultures. He identifies the following points as the main issues in the development of such a theology, hence in the understanding and practice of inculturation today:

> Where does one start—culture or gospel? To what extent is the gospel supra-cultural, and to what extent embedded in a culture? What is an appropriate model for the analysis of culture? To what extent should it emphasize cultural identity and to what extent social change? Is there a dialogical model that can hold all the elements in tensions? Is there a privileged model? (Semiotic?) Is there some philosophical high ground from which this can all be adjudicated? Or are we caught up in a welter of pluralism that erodes into relativism?[28]

He then pinpoints some obstacles to inculturation of the faith in many cultures; (1) a lack of methodologies and tools; (2) reluctance of church officials to permit legitimate experiments in inculturation; (3) the association, even identification of cultural embeddedness with contingency, and related to this; (4) the general issue of how conceptually deal with pluralism.[29]

Contrary to Schreiter's assessment, missiologist Richard Cote states that there is no need to assume that either faith or culture has to play a dominant role in the process.[30] Having to choose to emphasize faith or culture is itself a roadblock, and so is the whole "models" approach. Instead, he proposes using the metaphor of marriage in understanding inculturation to get beyond what he thinks is too much dichotomy.

More specific questions that fall under one or two of Schreiter's questions deal with how to understand the subjects of inculturation. While it is affirmed that it is the local church which "does" the inculturating, in reality, are experts dominating the scene? Further questions arise from this statement—what understanding of the local church is operative in our efforts at inculturation? How are we to understand the roles and relationships of the laity, of the church leaders, and of experts in inculturation? Certainly not to be neglected is the question of the role of the Holy Spirit in the process.

Furthermore, there is also the question of how to determine what we mean by an adequate level of inculturation. What criteria do we have for judging the inculturation of the faith in any given place and culture?

In other words, the problems are both theological and practical, and it is one of the challenges facing us to distinguish the two, and to understand their inter-relatedness. What light does a discussion of some aspects of Vatican II shed on both kinds of problems? In order to answer this question, we must first see in general, how inculturation as a new direction in ecclesiology and missiology is related to the Second Vatican Council.

III. The Second Vatican Council and the Emerging Notion of Inculturation

A. Introduction

First, there is a need to reassert the fact that inculturation has been occurring since the beginning of Christianity, prior to the creation of the term. Culture as a locus of revelation has always been a latent idea in the Church's life. Second, it can however be argued that the Council is largely responsible for bringing this notion more clearly to the fore, in spite or the term's absence in the Council documents. One of the first theologians to articulate an argument along these lines was Karl Rahner in an essay entitled, "A Basic Theological Interpretation of the Council."[31] His basic claim is that the Council was "the beginning of a tentative approach by the Church to the discovery and official recognition of itself as world-church."[32] In light of this, the emergence of the idea of inculturation can be understood as one of the manifestations of the Church's formal acceptance of its character as world-church.[33]

Rahner nuances his claim by first stating that the Church has always been, *in potentia,* a world-church; and that many precedents have manifested the Church's recognition of this identity. However, he argues that "the Council was for the first time in a formal way a Council of the world-Church as such."[34] The great theologian cites the following bases for this thesis: first, this was the first time that loc ' bishops attended an ecumenical council and the first time that native episcopates were represented. Second, with regard to the final documents produced by the Council, the following texts represent an articulation of this emerging self-identity: the triumph of the use of the vernacular in liturgy in *Sacrosanctum Concilium,* the awareness of the responsibility of the Church for the history of mankind in *Gaudium et Spes,* the avoidance of the linguistic style of neoscholastic theology in *Lumen Gentium* and *Dei Verbum,* the positive appraisal of the great world religions in *Nostra Aetate,* the strong belief in the effectiveness of the universal salvific will of God in *Lumen Gentium, Ad Gentes,* and *Gaudium et Spes,* and finally, the renunciation of "the use of any powers in proclaiming its message that are not implied in the power of the gospel itself" in *Dignitatis Humanae.*[35]

Other theologians have given similar interpretations. Bernard Lonergan uses Vatican II as a reference point in his explanation of the breakdown of a classicist notion of culture ("Culture" with a capital C) to the emergence of a modern notion of culture.[36] Scherer and Bevans have considered the positive view of culture expressed in *Gaudium et Spes* to be a crucial turning point in the shaping of the thrust toward inculturation.[37] Komonchak attributes the development of this positive attitude toward culture to the entire council itself, which he interprets to be "the acceptance of the Church of historical consciousness, its need for critical history, cultural and historical diversity, and a greater sense of individual and collective responsibility for the future of humanity."[38] The Council was, in this sense, "a long-overdue effort by the Catholic Church to deal seriously and discriminatingly with the culture created in the West by the Enlight-

enment, the economic and political revolutions of the last two centuries, the development of the natural and human sciences and the secularization and pluralization of society."[39]

In this light, the holding of the Council was itself a moment of inculturation, one in which the Church positively engaged in the prevailing culture by shifting away from a negative, combative attitude toward anything and anyone that seemed to put its authority to question. From this point of view, the Council thus represented a turning away from a particular "incarnation" of the Church—that is, its sociological form that developed in reaction to modernity, which was largely patterned after an idealized medieval Christendom.[40]

If the Church turned away from this, what exactly did it turn to? My contention is that one concrete direction pursued was inculturation, notions of which can be gleaned from the documents of the Council on the Church and its mission, various redactions of these documents, and sources that recount the Council's history.[41]

B. Tentative Notions of Inculturation in the Documents on the Church and Its Mission:

Lumen Gentium, Gaudium et Spes, Ad Gentes

The notions of Church and its mission will serve as the backdrop for uncovering notions of inculturation in these documents. Each section in this part will therefore be structured in the following manner: first, some background will be given about the document; second, key assertions directly related to the relationship between faith/Church and culture will be exposed; and third, broader themes that relate to issues in inculturation will be studied.

1. *Lumen Gentium*

a) Background

The draft *De Ecclesia* was debated during the Council's first and second sessions, and was approved at the third session. In its earliest form, it followed a structure not unlike those present in neoscholastic manuals,[42] and was criticized by the Council Fathers primarily for "its general approach and spirit,"[43] which according to Philips, was among other things, not pastoral enough for them, and did not seem to correspond to what Pope John XXIII had in mind. As the suggestions and criticisms came pouring in, what became evident was a desire to move farther away from the emphases of the ecclesiologies of Bellarmine, Vatican I and *Mystici Corporis.* For example, there was a suggestion of emphasizing the nature of the church as community more than as a society, the criticism of a too-close identification of the Roman church with the mystical body of Christ, too little biblical and patristic influence, the absence of the Church Fathers of the East in the list of authorities, the warning to avoid triumphalism, clericalism, and juridicalism, and remember the role of suffering, the goals of solidarity and unity.[44] Bouyer considers the draft deficient from an ecumenical perspective, for defining a Church "member" too rigidly; and from the missiological perspective, for having too little on the mission of the Church.[45]

The rejection of the preparatory schema thus allowed for a more radical shift in emphasis. At the first session, the new schema involved the following four-fold division, (1) the mystery of the Church, (2) the hierarchical constitution of the Church and the episcopate, (3) the people of God and the laity, (4) the call to holiness in the Church. More changes were made to this draft, and what emerged as the "hot potato" in the discussions was the notion of the college of bishops, and the fear that its adoption would lead to a diminishment of the primacy of the papacy. The chapter on the people of God was moved earlier on in the document, a decisive turning point, according to Bouyer, and reflective of perhaps the most important change in emphasis. Thus, by the second session, the structure of the schema

was very close to the final one approved at the third session (1) the mystery of the Church, (2) the People of God, (3) the Church hierarchical, (4) the Laity, (5) the call to holiness, (6) the religious, (7) the pilgrim church, (8) Our Lady. Finally, an explanatory note on the issue of collegiality was added on to the end of this document.

The relationship between faith/Church and culture did not emerge as a major issue; however, by implication one could say that the ambiguities in the discussions on how to understand authority, specially that of the local bishops already hint at later questions and issues.

b) Texts pertaining to inculturation

It is in the second and third chapters that glimmers of the notion of inculturation, and its ecclesiological foundations begin to appear in the document.

> The one People of God is accordingly present in all the na tions of the earth. . . . All the faithful are in communion with the Holy Spirit so that 'he who dwells in Rome knows those in most distant parts to be his members'. . . .[S]he fosters and takes to herself in so far as they are good, the abilities, resources and customs of peoples. In so taking them to herself she purifies, strengthens, and elevates them. . . .
>
> In virtue of this catholicity, each part contributes its own gifts to other parts and to the whole Church, so that the whole and each of the parts are strengthened. . . . Holding a rightful place in the communion of the Church there are also particular Churches that retain their own traditions, without preju dice to the Chair of Peter. . . .[46]

This text takes up the theme of the catholicity of the Church and emphasizes the following points—first, that the Holy Spirit is the principle for unity amidst diversity; second, that the communion of particular/local churches make up the universal Church and that local churches with their traditions, customs, etc. enrich each other and the universal Church.[47] This theme of reciprocity is likewise mentioned by Rahner in conceiving the relationship between local and universal Church. According to the FABC, Article 13 "sees the relationship of the Church to cultures and traditions in the horizon of the unity of the whole of the human race (of which the Church is a sacrament), and of the universality of the Church in which each individual part with its different culture, heritage and riches is in communion with one another."[48]

Another text, while focused on the bishops' relationship with their particular churches and the universal Church, mentions "it is in these (particular Churches) and formed out of them that the one and unique Catholic Church exists."[49] Three paragraphs later, the Council recognizes that "the Church of Christ is really present in all legitimately organized local groups of the faithful, which in so far as they are united to their pastors, are also quite appropriately called Churches in the New Testament."[50]

These texts directly indicate the move toward decentralization by emphasizing the mutual relationship between local churches on the one hand and the universal Church on the other. It is made clear by the text that local churches make up the universal Church, at the same time, the universal Church is realized in local churches. The problem arises when leadership is discussed, specifically with regard to the understanding of collegiality of the bishops and how in turn to keep from diminishing the primacy of the Pope.

c. *Lumen Gentium* and issues in inculturation

First, the whole thrust of the document, specially the place it gives to the idea of the Church as the People of God, and the local church, provided official impetus to do more reflection on the local church and by implication, the processes of inculturation. It is primarily in this document as a whole that we can find the foundations for understanding the Church as present only in local situations. Second, the way that *Lumen Gentium* is structured—i.e., understanding the Church primarily as mystery, then as People of God, after which chapters are devoted to the hierarchy and laity—has direct bearing on our understanding of who does the inculturating, and how it takes place. Third, the more central place given to mission, and grounding the Church's mission in the divine *Missio*, provides a Trinitarian basis for understanding inculturation as an aspect of mission.[51]

Fourth, the broad problem of keeping the balance and tension between the universal and particular churches, specially when it comes to leadership, manifests itself in two concrete extremes. On the one hand, Schreiter considers a major problem the hesitance of church authorities to allow legitimate experimentation in inculturation; on the other hand, there also abound real aberrations in inculturation experiments, whether in catechesis, liturgy, and other fields. I suppose that when it comes to practical problems involving unpredictable outcomes, the motivation of fear of failure ought to be balanced with a healthy boldness and optimism.

After this discussion on the basis for the emphasis on the local church, more specific statements on the necessity of looking into local cultures will be seen in the next document on the mission of the Church.

2. Ad Gentes Divinitus

a) Background

The Preparatory Commission for the Missions was headed by Cardinal Agagianian, and comprised of twenty-two members and thirty-two consultors. Of this entire group, forty-one were from Europe—an unsatisfactory selection, but at least all continents were represented.[52] The draft prepared by this commission had the following seven sections: *(1) De regimine Missionum, (2) De disciplina cleri, (3) De religiosis, (4) De sacramentis et de S. Liturgia, (5) De disciplina populi christiani, (6) De studiis clericorum, (7) De cooperatione missionali.* [53] Since some of these sections overlapped with the other drafts, only the first and last sections were kept for the next meeting. At this early stage, some Council fathers felt that a separate missionary document could be unnecessary since the Constitution on the Church could already include the topic.

This draft was not tackled at all during the first session, and since the preparatory schemata on the Church and Revelation were both rejected, a new draft schema for mission was begun at the end of the first session. At the second session, two more outlines were drafted and disapproved, until a third schema entitled *De Missionibus* was deemed sufficient. On April 23, 1964, the announcement came that the Commission on Mission ought to compress their material into few proposals and guiding principles and they did so, under the new title *De activate missionali.*

For majority of the missionary bishops, the scant six pages of thirteen propositions comprising the document on mission increasingly brought to light their marginal position. In a key intervention, Cardinal Frings stated that the problem of missions was so essential for the Church and for these times, that a few guiding principles would not suffice.[54] Another bishop said it was nothing but the "dry bones"

in Ezekiel's prophecy.[55] A final draft was created and finally approved during the last session, but again, not without revisions.

This last text was a product that took into account the suggestions to "express more clearly the basis of the missions, the connection with *Lumen Gentium*, the missionary mandate of the Pope and the universal episcopate in corporate responsibility activity, the irnportance of local churches, and their role as agents not merely recipients of the proclamation of the gospel."[56]

Throughout the discussions, earlier and broader conflicts in the realm of missiology were played out. One of these divergences was between two schools of mission—one that put emphasis on individual conversion as the primary aim of mission, espoused by J. Schmidlin, of the University of Munster; and another that emphasized *plantatio ecclesiae*, held by P. Charles and T. Gentrup of Louvain. In the 1920s, the latter pair criticized Schmidlin's theory which had been the prevailing notion in the early 1900s. In 1943, Daniel and Godin's famous article, *La France, Pays de Mission?* came out, further putting to question the geographic view of mission.[57] Hence the major criticism of the various early schemata on mission was that they were limited to the juridical notion of mission as set forth in canon law, that is, "missions are the activities of the church in territories under the Propaganda."[58] This view had been dramatically changed by the time of the *Ad Gentes'* approval.

From this brief study of the background of the document on mission, two key issues emerge as crucial (1) the role and place of mission in the Church's life, and (2) how to understand the Church's mission. In the following section, some texts of *Ad Gentes* that bring up notions of inculturation will be discussed.

b) Texts directly pertaining to inculturation

The first chapter focuses on the theological bases of mission in the singular, then moves on to distinguishing this from specific *missions.* The latter term is defined as "particular undertakings by which heralds of the gospel are sent out by the Church and go forth into the whole world to carry out the task of preaching the gospel and planting the Church among peoples or groups who do not yet believe in Christ."[59] There was this felt need to distinguish missionary work *ad gentes,* as it were, from the pastoral care and dialogue that other contexts required. The second chapter which is divided into three sections,[60] focuses on missionary work itself. Some points of emphasis are on the primary place of Christian witness and dialogue, the necessity of solidarity, and the key missionary activities of preaching the gospel and gathering the People of God. Article 15 is worthy of note because in its tackling of the formation and building up of local Christian communities, it speaks of them as "endowed with cultural riches of their own nation."[61] Article 16 which deals with the role of priests in missionary work, stresses the need for priestly training that "faces up to the particular nation's own way of thinking and acting. . . so that they will better understand and appreciate the culture of their own people; . . . they should examine the relationship between the traditions and religion of their homeland and Christianity. . . ."[62]

The third chapter entitled Particular Churches is perhaps the most relevant section to this study on inculturation. When the document speaks of the work of building up Christian communities, there is a keen sensitivity and priority accorded to taking into account local cultures and contexts.[63] There is also new focus on the laity as missionaries who carry out Christian witness precisely within their own societies and cultures. Hence, stress is put on the need for familiarity with their own culture, and their task of guarding and purifying it.[64] In fact in his commentary, Brechter indicates that in these articles, "adaptation is emphasized to satiety."[65] Significantly, he adds

that a concern that might be more important than adaptation, is only marginally considered in the text, namely, the challenges posed by "urbanization, migration, and religious indifferentism."[66] To cite Brechter once more, this section ends "with an ideal and grandiose vision of the future when the treasures of the nations in customs and tradition...are brought into the young churches, and men's religious diversity are brought into the catholic unity of the universal Church."[67] The next chapter which is on missionaries, also lays great stress on the local culture in the process of formation of missionaries.

In the end, these sections of *Ad Gentes* testify to the fact that once cultural pluralism became accepted, a more dialectical view of "adaptation"—which I think is what inculturation refers to—came to be considered a necessary element of mission.

d) Ad Gentes and issues in inculturation

In the foregoing exposition on the Church's mission and its various aspects, the following themes are found to be pertinent to the present-day issues in inculturation. First, the Council's relative success at understanding mission more broadly, and giving it a more central place, contributed to a more dynamic and outward-looking ecclesiology that is necessary for inculturation to take place. Second, the Council's effort to harmonize the notions of mission as proclamation, and mission as *plantatio ecclesiae* sheds much light on the difficulties involved in keeping the balance between the structural/"visible" elements and the invisible elements of being a Church, as well as the journey/pilgrim notions of faith and Church. Inculturation's processual nature has likewise to be kept in mind in conception of theories or in actual experiments.

Third, the foregoing discussion can raise questions and shed light on the question of formulating the criteria for inculturation. That ongoing proclamation and building up of Christian communities were emphasized in *Ad Gentes* shows that work toward inculturation does not stop when, for instance, parishes are established, or a native episcopate begins to appear. On the other hand, we can point to concrete norms for determining the level of faith's inculturation. These could be (1) the level and vibrancy of scholarship in local theology, catechesis, and liturgy, being done in seminaries and various places of formation, (2) the quality of inculturated liturgical celebrations, of catechesis, and the like, (3) the extent of the knowledge and appreciation for local church history, just to name a few.

Finally, the fact that no directives were specified as to how to go about the programme of "adaptation" shows that this task was really left to post-conciliar generations. Hence, forty something years after the Council, a wealth of scholarship and activity pertaining to inculturation has emerged, albeit plagued by problems of methodology, application, and the like. Brechter's observation that there is very little mentioned on social change is only slowly being accounted for today. Bevans shows us, for example, that it is only the most recent models for inculturation (Schreiter's semiotic model, for example) that consider this element.

3. *Gaudium et Spes*

a) Background

The Theological Commission and the Apostolate for the Laity were the sub-commissions in charge of preparing documents pertaining to the social order. The draft on the Christian moral order and a section of the schema on the Apostolate of the Laity were the two texts that originally dealt with the "Church and world" relationship. The document *Gaudium et Spes,* which throughout the latter discus-

sions was called Schema 13, is probably the only document that originated from two separate texts.[68]

It was only after the First Session that the Council Fathers decided to create a single, separate document devoted to this topic. The "decisive impulse," as Moeller puts it, to produce such a draft can be traced back to Dom Helder Camara of Rio de Janeiro who constantly argued against strictly focusing on internal Church troubles while problems of hunger, under development, and the like were afflicting the world.[69] It was finally Cardinal Suenens who suggested dividing the various schemata into the categories of *Ecclesia ad intra* and *Ecdesia ad extra* by the end of the First Session.

Throughout the Council, a total of five sets of drafts were created before arriving at the final document.[70] It would be beyond the scope of this paper to provide a detailed narration of the genesis and transformations of the documents; but based largely on Moeller's work, some idea of recurring conflicts can be sketched. First of all, the problem of defining culture arose in the early stages of the deliberations. The Council Fathers thus resorted to expanded description of culture rather than creating a definition by the second text's preparation.[71] Second, the question of how to describe the state of the world today, that is, "without descending to platitudes" was an issue that arose at Malines in 1963, and later again during the Third Session.[72] The synthesis arrived at involved a double tension that was summed up in the following manner:

> On the one hand, Christians need not accept the world as it is. On the contrary they should build it up in the light of the principles of their faith, for example, in accordance with the command to fill the earth and subdue it (K. Rahner). On the other hand, it is not necessary to reduce the role of humanity to that of a lay brother in a monastery (Congar). A type of presence of the Church in the world must be achieved which is not one of power and domination but of service.[73]

Third, in spite of this early position, the usages of the terms Church and world would emerge as problematic, and among present-day redactors of *Gaudium et Spes,* this ambiguity is often pointed out.

Fourth, in a significant intervention at the Third Session, Cardinal Lercaro stated that the discussions on culture ought to form the core of the entire schema. He said that "culture is a 'fundamental medium' a 'form' involved in. . .the content expressed in words, symbol, ritual, or any other means."[74] Fifth, at the Fourth Session emerged the related question of keeping in tension the distinct yet inseparable poles of the document's concern, namely, "to speak of faith as applied to the problems of actual life."[75] In other words, the whole idea and possibility of being pastoral on a worldwide scale was being put into question.

What did other *periti* say about *Gaudium et Spes*? First of all, among those involved in the preparation of this text, there was a sense of it being the most difficult yet one of the most significant documents of the council. Second, the document received quite opposite reactions from "opposite" theological strands from within the majority.[76] For example, Chenu gave the document much praise for its "Christian anthropology which relates grace to a knowledge of human nature that goes beyond the psychological to include the social and the historical,"[77] whereas Rahner criticized its lack of "a sufficient theological gnoseology that would explain how it arrived at its analysis of contemporary culture, a profound theology of sin, and of eschatology."[78] Ratzinger pointed out two main concerns, those of a "dubious use of the term 'People of God' and a Teilhardian tendency of identifying Christian hope with modern confidence in progress."[79] Dossetti, spoke strongly against the document by calling them a bunch of common-sense assertions[80] marked by insipid optimism and lacking real universalism.[81]

These points probably tell us more about inculturation than a casual reading of the final texts do. Nuances such as these are not easily found without some background on the history of the document. Let us now turn to some select passages from *Gaudium et Spes*, results of the foregoing discussions and much compromise among the groups.

b) Texts directly pertaining to inculturation

The entire document is divided into an introduction followed by two main parts, and many pertinent texts can be found in both.[82] Two articles from the first half of the text echo *Lumen Gentium* in asserting the following: that the Church is universal, thereby not committed to any one culture,[83] but also that it profits from the riches hidden in various cultures. . . and must foster vital contact and exchange between the Church and different cultures.[84]

In Part Two, the chapter entitled "The Proper Development of Culture" is a crucial section or any discussion on inculturation. In Article 53, perhaps for the first time in a conciliar document, it is stated that the human person achieves "true and full humanity only by means of culture," and that culture refers to "all those things which go to the refining and developing of man's diverse mental and physical endowments." [85] The text is significant for a second reason, that is, for explicitly acknowledging cultural pluralism in a conciliar document. Moeller considers these points as deserving merit for going beyond "a purely aristocratic conception of culture, by clearly rejecting the idea of 'uncivilized' nations,"[86] a point that has been formulated in many ways, as already shown in previous sections of this paper.

The notion that culture is a human product appears, and is followed by statements that stress the positive ends to which culture must be aimed and used.[87] This is also a significant development that

brings to light the Council's emphasis on responsibility for, and solidarity with humanity in general.

c) *Gaudium et Spes* and issues in inculturation

Perhaps the most important connection that can be drawn between the text, its history and inculturation today is the persistence of the divide between approaches to understanding the relationship between the Church/faith and the world/culture. Schreiter states that the question of starting point and method is a key issue in inculturation. This is confirmed by Bevans, who in his classification of approaches to inculturation, shows precisely what is gained and lost in each approach. In his sketch can be found similar traces of theological approaches presumed by the opposing groups of redactors of *Gaudium et Spes.* For example, Bevans speaks of the *translation* model that involves "knowing the culture so as to effectively insert the gospel" and the *anthropological* model that involves "knowing the culture to pull the gospel out of it." He also speaks of a *praxis* model that focuses on approaching culture with some suspicion, since it involves emphasizing the need for social change.[88]

Two more related points are worth emphasizing here. They are Schreiter's call for (1) developing a theology of culture, which needs to be (2) more cognizant of culture as constructed by the "powerful" and hybridized by globalization—notions that were not yet explicit or emphasized in the world as described by Vatican II. The first point seems to be a continuation of the Council fathers' question on how to make assessments of culture—or as Rahner calls it, the need to develop a gnoseology. The second point brings us to a realization of the limitation of the document *Gaudium et Spes*; namely, it sought to engage primarily the challenges of modernity, and not yet those of globalization. This being said, the document is nevertheless broad enough to include different conceptions of culture, which may or may not include globalization. Schreiter, who shares Dossetti's criticism that the document did not account for many other

cultural situations, puts forth the idea that the Roman Catholic Church could have been seeing itself at the Council, as providing a kind of hybrid culture, a "third culture" as it is better known today.[89]

What Komonchak said about the post-conciliar reactions of the opposing groups of redactors is also a promising question to pursue in light of inculturation. If indeed the more "Augustinian" group had more unbalanced, and generally negative reactions to the Council, and the more "Thomistic" group had more nuanced assessments of the Council's effect, then I wonder 1) what reasons are behind this assertion, and (2) what impact the explanation has on evaluating approaches to inculturation. Also, given this dualistic vision, one may well ask if Cote is indeed right about needing to avoid the divide with the use of "marriage" as a metaphor for inculturation.

Perhaps this proposal that metaphor be used for conceiving of inculturation, or Schreiter's idea that considers the Roman Catholic Church (in *Gaudium et Spes),* as attempting to provide a mediating "third culture," are today's efforts at continuing what *Gaudium et Spes* began. Certainly, the Council's struggle to deal with pluralism, new conceptions of culture, faith, revelation, Church and liturgy is a reference point in examining problems that have arisen after the Council.

C. Participation and Processes at Vatican II: Relevance for Inculturation

First of all, roughly two-thousand five hundred bishops participated at the Council, and even more were consulted in order to come up with an initial agenda. This is itself expressive of a new way of envisioning an ecumenical council. Also, the majority of Council fathers were a heterogeneous group, even if the mainstays among them were all Central Europeans, educated before the Second World War.[90] The marked presence, albeit limited influence of

African, Latin American, and Asian bishops who acted as supporters of these mainstays is of great importance, for "the experience of these bishops at the Council was the basis for the role that they and their churches are now playing in the final decades of the twentieth century."[91] It is no wonder then that for example, the former "mission countries" of Latin America and Asia, are now doing significant work in the areas of contextual theologies and inculturation through CELAM and the FABC. This fact should remind us of the occurrence of the *coup d'Eglise* when the preparatory schemata was rejected, and the Council was later dominated by those who were at first in a marginal position. Relative to inculturation, this should remind us of the importance of the prophetic elements found both in culture and faith.

Second, the attitudes with which the Council was later viewed and understood as espousing—whether naive optimism or excessive pessimism-are also something we need to be aware of, specially in light of the risky business of practicing inculturation. It seems that today more than ever, a balanced, *Christian* realism—perhaps grounded in spirituality is very much needed among agents of inculturation.

Third, the debates surrounding the nature of the Council as pastoral, and the question of how to relate doctrine and its communication reminds us to be aware of criteria we hold in assessing the success of efforts to hand on the faith in various cultures. In principle, what we have seen in the Council's work is that we cannot be faithful to the deposit of faith without being equally faithful to the human community receiving the faith.

IV. Conclusion

This paper has attempted to find in the history and key texts of the Council, a broader and deeper understanding of the issues confronting inculturation today. We have seen that at the Council, the following elements emerged, and they prepared for, and hastened the development of the notion of inculturation: (1) the growth of interest in the local church, (2) the adoption of a more empirically-oriented concept of culture, (3) the emergence of a more dialectical notion of the relationship between faith/gospel/Church on the one hand, and culture/context/world on the other. Contributing to these three elements were the participation of bishops from all over the world, and the quite novel processes undertaken at the Council. These have been explained in order to provide a partial historical and theological understanding of the problems in inculturation.

Some new avenues of study have opened up as this reflection was carried out. For example, in the area of history and theology, a closer look at the work of the Sub-commission for the Signs of Times might yield valuable insights into how the process of inculturation could be conceived. Second, an inventory of theological approaches and their implied "theologies of culture" are also worth a look. Third, the ongoing work of episcopal bodies on building up the local church through inculturation represents a storehouse of material that have yet to be analyzed by scholars of inculturation.

With regard to other disciplines, communications theory and cultural studies—which are incidentally often considered "marginal disciplines" in universities—promise to provide useful tools in constructing theories of inculturation. Schreiter seems to be one of the foremost scholars going in this direction, as can be seen in his engaging the literature on globalization in his ongoing construction of a semiotic theory of inculturation. The new and much needed insights after all, are often discovered by those who can be comfortable in the midst of uncertainty and liminality, as the example of John XXIII and the Council's eventual majority showed.

NOTES

[1]For simplicity's sake, this paper will use the terms "faith" and "culture" to identify the two poles being inter-related in the process of inculturation. There is a whole debate as to what terms are appropriate to use—faith, gospel, Church, on the one hand, and culture, cultures, context, and world—which will be tackled briefly in pages 7-8 of this paper.

[2]Karl Rahner, "Basic Theological Interpretation of the Second Vatican Council," in *Theological Investigations* vol. 20 *Concern for the Church*,(NY: Crossroad, 1986),77-89.

[3]Giuseppe Alberigo, "The Christian Situation after Vatican II," in *The Reception of Vatican II,* eds. Giuseppe Alberigo, Jean Pierre Jossua, and Joseph A. Komonchak, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Washington, D.C.: CUA Press, 1987), 8.

[4]Joseph A. Komonchak, "Vatican II as an 'Event'," *Theology Digest* 46 no. 4 (Winter 1999): 338. According to Komonchak's text, these three terms came from the program of a symposium on the Council in Bologna, December 1996. *Experience* means "the contemporary intentions, motives, encounters, decisions, and actions during the council," and *final* documents refer to the "product of that experience."

[5]Ibid., 339.

[6]Ibid., 345.

[7] David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission,* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991), 447. Fr. Masson was a professor at the Gregorian University in Rome. According to Aylward Shorter, Fr. Masson wrote the following in 1962: "Today there is a more urgent need for a Catholicism that is inculturated in a variety of forms." See Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation,* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988), 10.

[8] James A. Scherer and Stephen B. Bevans, "New Directions in Mission and Evangelization" vol. 3 *Faith and Culture,* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1999), 2.

[9]Ary A. Roest Crollius, S.J., "What is so new about inculturation?: A Concept and Its Implications," *Gregorianum* 59 (1978): 722.

[10]It is said that the Pope "wavered between embracing and rejecting the inculturation idea" but in the end chose in favor of it. See Bosch, 452. The famous quote from the Paul VI's encyclical reads, "Evangelization is to be achieved, not from without as

though by adding a veneer, but in depth, going to the very center and roots of life." (EN #20)

[11]Peter Schineller, S.J., *A Handbook on Inculturation,* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1990), 21.

[12] Crollius, 722.

[13] Anscar J. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacramentals, Religiosity and Catechesis,* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 25.

[14] Cf. CT # 53 "'The term 'acculturation' or 'inculturation' may be a neologism, but it expresses very well one factor of the great mystery of the Incarnation.' We can say of catechesis, as well as evangelization in general, that it is called to bring the power of the Gospel into the very heart of culture and cultures. For this purpose, catechesis will seek to know these cultures and their essential components. . . ."

[15] It has been suggested by Fr. Berard Marthaler and Sr. Catherine Dooley that the theme of inculturation had emerged during the International Catechetical Study Weeks that stretched from 1960 to 1968. This link in the history of the emergence ot inculturation has yet to be studied more closely, and as such, is beyond the scope of this paper.

[16] *Redemptoris Missio*, 52.

[17]Arrupe, quoted in Shorter, 11.

[18] Crollius, 726.

[19] Shorter, 7. Also found in Crollius, 723.

[20] Schineller, 14-17.

[21] Ibid., 18-24.

[22]Crollius, 723.

[23]Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology,* rev. ed. Faith and Culture Series, (MaryknoIl, NY: Orhis, 1992), 37-137.

[24] The term *adaptation is* generally considered inadequate by the previously quoted authors since it allegedly connotes a superficial interaction between faith and culture. However, it has been argued well by Chupungco that the use of the term in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* refers to "the general program of Church renewal or updating," and that its neutral, non-anthropological connotation is actually the reason for its continued use in liturgics. See Anscar J. Chupungco Liturgical Inculturation: *Sacramentals, Religiosity and Catechesis,* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992),24.

[25] For definitions and comparisons of these terms, see Robert Schreiter, "Faith and Cultures: Challenges to a World Church," *Theological Studies* 50 (989): 746-48; Schineller, 14-27; Shorter, 3-16.

[26]Ibid., 746. Schreiter deals only with the terms *faith* and *gospel*; the comment on *Church* was my addition.

[27]Bernard Lonergan, "Belief: Today's Issue," in *A Second Collection*, eds. William F.I. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrell (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974),92-93.

[28] Crollius, 721.

[29] Schreiter, "Faith and Cultures," 757-58.

[30] Ibid., 757.

[31] Richard G. Cote, *Revisioning Mission: the Catholic Church and Culture in Postmodern America*, (Mahwah, N.J.): Paulist Press, 1996),42.

[32] Cf. Footnote # 1.

[33]Ibid., 78.

[34] Other aspects of this paradigm shift are liberation, ecumenism, and inter-religious dialogue. While it is not the concern of this paper to tackle these "siblings" of inculturation, it is important to note that the development of all three ideas, while not without precedent, was hastened by the Second Vatican Council.

[35]Ibid., 80.

[36] Ibid., 82.

[37] Bernard Lonergan, "Belief: Today's Issue," 93. Of Catholics, Lonergan says, "up to Vatican II they were sheltered against the modern world and since Vatican II they have been exposed more and more to the chill winds of modernity."

[38] Scherer and Bevans, *New Directions in Mission and Evangelization* vol 3, 6.

[39] Joseph A. Komonchak, "The Local Realization of the Church," in *The Reception of Vatican II*, eds. Giuseppe Alberigo, Jean-Pierre Jossua, and Joseph A. Komonchak, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 1987), 87.

[40]Ibid., 79.

[41]Joseph A. Komonchak, "Modernity and the Construction of Roman Catholicism," *Cristianesimo Nella Storia* 18 (1997): 353-85.

[42] Another excellent discussion of the Council's understanding of culture is to be found in Herve Carrier, S.J., "The Contribution of the Council to Culture," in *Vatican II: Assessment and Perspectives: Twenty-five Years After* (1962-1987) vol. 3, ed. Rene Latourelle (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1989), 442-65.

[43]According to Philips, the chapters of the first draft had the following chapter titles: (1) the nature of the church militant, (2) the members of the Church and the necessity of the Church for salvation, (3) the episcopate as the highest grade of the sacrament of orders, the priesthood, (4) residential bishops, (5) the states of evangelical perfection, (6) the laity, (7) the teaching office, (8) authority and obedience in the Church, (9) relationships between Church and State and Religious tolerance, (10) the necessity of proclaiming the gospel to all peoples and in the whole world, (11) ecumenism. At the very end was an appendix on the Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Mother of Men. See Gerard Philips, "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: History of the Constitution," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II* vol I, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (NY: Herder and Herder, 1967), 106.

[44]Ibid., 107.

[45]Ibid., 107-110.

[46]Louis Bouyer, *The Church of God, Body of Christ and Temple of the Spirit,* trans. Charles Underhill Quinn (Chicago; Franciscan Herald Press, 1982), 165.

[47]LG #13.

[48] Aloys Grillmeier, "Chapter II: The People of God," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II* vol. I, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (NY: Herder and Herder, 1967), 168.
[49] See Thesis 5.3 of the Theological Advisory Commission of the FABC, "Theses on Inculturation," in *New Directions in Mission and Evangelization* vol. 3, 92.

[50]LG #23.

[51]LG #26. The theme that the universal Church is realized in and through local churches in articles 23 and 26 of *Lumen Gentium* also appears in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* #42 and *Christus Dominus* # 11.

[52]The Incarnation is usually cited as the key doctrinal basis for inculturation. The Paschal Mystery is also often brought up to emphasize the aspects of "cross/death" and resurrection in the process of inculturation. Some have emphasized the necessity of adding Pentecost in the development of the doctrinal bases for inculturation. See for example, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, "Pastoral Exhortation on Philippine Culture," in *Landas* 13 no. 1(1999): 7.36.

[53]See Joseph A. Komonchak, "The Struggle for the Council During the Preparation of Vatican II (1960-1962)," *in History of Vatican II* vol. 1 *Announcing and Preparing Vatican Council II Toward a New Era in Catholicism,* gen. ed., Giuseppe Alberigo, English ed., Joseph A. Komonchak (Leuven: Peeters and Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995), 192; and Suso Brechter, "Decree on the Church's Missonary Activity: Origin and History of the Decree," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II* vol. 4, ed., Herbert Vorgrimler (NY: Herder and Herder, 1969), 87.

[54]Brechter, 90.

[55]Ibid., 99.

[56]Ibid., 98. Also see Donal Lamont, O.Carm., *"Ad Gentes*: A Missionary Bishop Remembers," in *Vatican II Revisited by those who were there*, ed. Alberic Stacpool (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1986), 270-82.

[57]Brechter, 106.

[58] W. Richey Hogg, "Some Background Considerationsfor *Ad Gentes*," *International Review of Missions* 56 (July 1967): 282-84. Also see Komonchak, 'The Struggle for the Council," 193-94. This geographic view of mission was said to be based on the ideal of medieval Christendom which needed to be expanded.

[59] Ibid., 290.

[60]Brechter, "Preface and Chapter 1: Doctrinal Principles," 117.

[61]Ibid., 125. Section 1: Christian Witness (Articles 11 and 12), Section 2: Preaching the Gospel and Gathering God's People Together (Articles 13 and 14), and Section 3: Forming the Christian Community (Articles 15-18).

[62]AG #15.

[63]AG #16.

[64]AG #19. For example, "The faith should be imparted by means of a well-adapted catechesis and celebrated in a liturgy that is in harmony with the character of the people; it should also be embodied by suitable canonical legislation in the healthy institutions and Customs of the locality."

[65]AG #21.

[66]Brechter, 146.

[67]Ibid., 147. One wonders in what sense Brechter interpreted the Council's use of the "adaptation" term. At present, there can be seen an increasing attempt to account for social change in various theories of inculturation.

[68]Ibid., 150.

[69]Charles Moeller, "Pastoral Constitution in the Modern World: History of the Constitution," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II* vol. 5, ed., Herbert Vorgrimler (NY: Herder and Herder, 1969), 4. It is also relevant to mention that Moeller points out that the presence of some tension arising from approaching the same theme from various sides. This is a theme that recurs throughout the stages of Schema 13.

[70]Moeller, 10-11.

[71]These texts were the following: (1) The" originating" texts from the Theological Commission and Apostolate of the Laity were *De ordine morali christiano and De ordine sociali, and De apostolatu laicorum in actione sociali;* (2) Schema 17 (Jan-May 1963); this was followed by Interim text A (Malines, September 1963) and Interim Text B (Zurich, February 1964); (3) Second Zurich Text-later called Schema 13 (Third Session, Feb-Nov 196); (4) Ariccia text (Jan-Sep 1965); (5) Final text.

[72]Ibid., 16. This question was raised in the preparation of the second text.

[73]Ibid., 21 and 35. The phrase "signs of the times"which first appears in *Pacem in Terris* is used in this draft. That a Subcommission for the Signs of the Times was created at the Third Session shows how seriously the formulation of the state of the world was taken.

[74]Ibid., 22.

[75]Ibid., 43.

[76]Ibid., 60.

[77]Joseph A. Komonchak, "The Redaction and Reception of *Gaudium et Spes:* Tensions within the Majority at Vatican II," Photocopy from course packet, Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.. This point was also developed in Joseph A. Komonchak, "Dealing with Diversity and Disagreement; Vatican II and Beyond," Fifth Annual Lecture of the Catholic Common Ground Initiative held at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., 27 June 2003.

[78]Komonchak, "The Redaction and Reception of *Gaudium et Spes,"* 5.

[79]Ibid., 2-4

[80]Ibid., 7-8.

[81]Ibid., 16.

[82]Ibid., 15.

[83]These texts are Articles 42 and 44 of Part One, Chapter IV "Role of the Church in the Modern World;" and Articles 53, 55, 56, 58, 59 in Part Two, Chapter II "The Proper Development of Culture."

[84]GS #42.

[85]GS #44. The rest of this text states, "the Church learned early in its history to express the Christian message in the concepts and language of different peoples...." The term adaptation also makes one of its few appearances in the Council's documents in this text.

[86]Ibid.

[87]Moeller, 256.

[88]GS #55. Articles 56 to 59 elaborate the implications of culture as a human creation.

[89]The models are summed up in Bevans, "Models of Contextual Theology," 141 ff.

[90]Robert J. Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and Local,* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997), 77.

[91]Alberigo, "The Christian Situation after Vatican II," 11.

[92]Ibid. See his footnote #33.

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DOCTRINE AND WORSHIP AS THE FORMATIVE GROUND OF CHRISTIAN MORALITY

Ma. Christina A. Astorga

Ethical inquiry has long been centered on the analysis of principles and norms. Often the focus of attention is given to the question: what ought I to do? This focus necessarily places the stress on the skills and processes needed for making particular moral judgments of acts. Approaches to moral education have in the recent years been dominated by this concern.[1] A prime example of this approach is the theory of Kohlberg, which holds that moral life is primarily a matter of making choices on the basis of reason.

While making a reasoned choice is an important and necessary dimension to moral life, it is not the whole of it. Morality includes not only making moral decisions but also forming moral character. The person that we are, what we do and how we act are involved in any moral endeavor. Any approach that dichotomizes these two dimensions of being and doing, self and action distorts the reality of both. The sort of person one is depends to a great extent on free moral decisions and actions one has taken. There is no 'being" except through "doing." Conversely, the sort of decision and action one takes

depends on the kind of person one has become. But again, doing does not only spring from being, it also changes, modifies, and creates being. The interplay of person and acts brings a definite moral shape and consistency to the character of an individual.[2]

Moral judgment arises out of moral vision. We judge as we see. However, we see as we are. Our moral vision is intertwined with the kind of person that we are. We see the world in a particular way, because we are a particular sort of person.[3] "It is nearer to the truth to think of moral life not as a multitude of acts but as a project—that of becoming a person."[4] The moral process is such that "we do not come afresh to each and every decision."[5] Thus we are already inclined to decide in one way or the other because of who we are and what we have made of ourselves, This is not just a matter of *what* we have done, but also *why* and *how* we have done it. Our moral vision is far reaching as it touches a depth-level, where persons take hold of who they are, where they have set their energies and how deeply they have been moved and influenced by their beliefs and convictions. How a person sees and just how he or she will possibly respond springs from this depth-level.[6]

The moral vision we gradually acquire is the lived expression of the beliefs, values, and loyalties of the communities to which we belong; the collection of stories and images of what makes life worth living. It is born of all the relationships of which we are a part, and of the commitments to which we have bound ourselves.[7]

For Christians, the beliefs and rituals, the language, images, and symbols of the Christian faith constitute the vision that has a great part in shaping what they see and who they are. Undoubtedly, the Christian vision which provides a particular way of seeing the world is at times at variance with the values, images, and symbols arising from the secular world in which Christians live. But the more Christian men and women enter into the meaning of the faith images and symbols and immerse themselves in the work of discipleship, the more they take on the Christian way of seeing and envisioning the world. Moral vision provides the perspective which influences

the disposition, the intention, and the affectivity that move us to act in a certain way.

The Christian moral vision is developed in terms of the close integration of the truths of the faith and morality and of the influential role of prayer and worship in moral transformation. When moral life comes in contact with the truths of the Christian faith, it acquires a depth-meaning which grounds it. When moral life draws from the wellspring of worship, it draws from its roots, the very source of its life.

Doctrine and Moral Life

An authentic understanding of doctrine is the basis in interpreting and illuminating basic human values. The truths of the Christian faith give a particular view of what it means to be human and of the basic attitudes and dispositions a Christian ought to have toward the world. According to Charles Curran, the five Christian mysteries of creation, sin, incarnation-redemption, grace, and eternal destiny are the constitutive elements of a Christian perspective, horizon, and stance. They articulate the fundamental truths underlying human meaning, dignity, and destiny.[8] In the same vein of thought, Richard McCormick writes that the full Christian experience provides the refinement of sensitivity to human values.[9] The Christian perspective opens the broader and deeper horizons of meaning to moral reasoning. A value judgment distanced from the faith horizon of meaning might otherwise be determined solely by sheer empiricism.[10] It is turned into a merely rationalistic and sterile ethics. He writes:

> The Christian story tells us the ultimate meaning of ourselves and the world. In doing so, it tells us the kind of people we ought to be, the goods we ought to pursue, the dangers we ought to avoid, the kind of world we ought to seek. It provides the backdrop or framework that ought to shape our individual decisions. When decision-making is separated from this

> framework, it loses its perspective. It becomes a merely rationalistic and sterile ethics subject to distortions of self-interested perspectives and cultural fads. A kind of contracted etiquette with no relation to the ultimate meaning of persons.[11]

To elucidate these assertions of Curran and McCormick, I present the doctrines of the faith from a specifically moral perspective, showing how they are so linked with morality, as they ground the orientation, intentionalities, and dispositions for moral life.

Creation

The adherence to Almighty God forms the rock bottom basis for Christian moral life. Although this firm belief in God the Creator and the Divine Planner of all history may open itself to a certain fatalism, it remains the foundation for relating Christian faith to moral life. The basic experience of God's beneficent love calls forth gratitude. Nurtured by the belief that everything has God as its source and that everything is held in existence by God's continuing and sustaining action, one approaches life with a basic stance of gratitude. The recognition of gratitude before God can ground a genuine Christian justice and compassion for the suffering and marginalized. Because one has received freely from a love that is magnanimous and beneficent, one is moved to love others especially those who are deprived of their most basic human needs.[12]

The mystery of creation provides the theological framework for the supreme place of the human person as God's image and likeness. That human persons are created in the image and likeness of God means that, given their gifts of intellect and free will, and their capacity for creative freedom and love, they reflect in their nature the very nature of the Godself as the supreme, free, and intelligent principle of all being, and the ultimate love. Their being God's image and likeness constitutes their inherent inalienable dignity, the ground of their human rights.[13] Only in seeing every person in relation to God who is the author and goal of all, is true human dignity preserved.

Our true dignity is founded on the fact that we are called to communion with God. As Vatican II states:

> If we exist, it is because God has created us through love, and through love continues to hold us in existence. We cannot live fully according to truth unless we freely acknowledge that love and entrust ourselves to our Creator.[14]

This fundamental relatedness of human beings to God as his image and likeness is the foundation of morality. This basic truth poses a challenge to a mindset which identifies a person's dignity with his/her social and economic status; a mindset that opens the door to the abuse of the poor and the marginalized by the powerful and the rich. The person's basic rootedness in God is the ultimate basis of human dignity. All morality is founded on the value of persons as persons; their sacredness, their worth, and what befits their well-being. This foundational value lays at the core of the moral obligation to be just, to be truthful, to be chaste, and loving.

The doctrine of creation grounds a moral vision which recognizes the sacramental presence of God in the world, mediated through signs and symbols, calling forth the openness of the human spirit in discerning God's presence. Opposite to this vision is a form of scientism which reduces all truth to what can be proven scientifically, and thus negates the depths of truth that go far beyond mere sensible evidence or rational proofs.[15]

The sacramental presence of God in the world is the basis of the moral obligation to respect nature, against the secularistic attitude of "using" nature, which places it at the absolute disposal of the person, as if the person, not God, is its very source and origin. The moral responsibility to use nature according to the purpose and design of its Creator is for human persons to subdue the earth, bring creation to perfection and place themselves at the service of humankind.[16]

Sin

When men and women fail their fundamental calling in creation as God's image and likeness, they sin. There seem to be two extreme tendencies in the way Christians regard the reality of sin. We can name one as sinflation and the other as sin-obliteration. Sinflation is an excessive focusing on sin, constantly asking: Is it a sin? How do we know if it is a sin? When is it a sin? How far can one go before the act becomes a sin? There are oft-repeated questions which betray a rather minimalist and casuistic notion of sin. The other extreme tendency is what is called sin-obliteration, or the loss of the sense of sin. Perhaps the greatest sin in the world today is that men and women have begun to lose their sense of sin. The loss of the sense of sin springs from the loss of the sense of transcendence, from the "eclipse of a religious world view through the rise of the secular spirit."[17]

When spiritual sensitivity diminishes, the sense of sin also diminishes. Consumerism, which seems to increasingly dominate contemporary lifestyle, turns values upside down, as it tends to give more and more primacy to the things of the flesh rather than to the values of the spirit. Consumerism plagues the human spirit and tyrannizes it with the ever growing felt needs for the sensual and material. These feverish needs diminish the sensitivity to the spiritual, to what is transcendent, to what is beyond surface desires. Consumerism as it tends to relativize everything and subordinate everything to its end, arrogates to itself a certain form of divinity. As John Kavanaugh, S. J. develops in his book *Following Christ in a Consumer Society,* consumerism replaces a life-giving God and a humane community with inanimate commodities which are worshipped and craved with a sterile passion.[18]

One of the challenging tasks of moral formation concerns this lack of an authentic sense of sin. Sin can only be properly understood when contrasted with the positive values of love,

friendship, and unity. Sin at its roots is not merely something we do, an act performed, a crime committed. We turn in on ourselves against others, orienting ourselves toward disintegration and death rather than growth, wholeness, and life. Sin as basically a turning in on oneself and closing others out of one's world, says James Keenan, S.J., in his article, "The Sin of Not Bothering to Love."[19] He states that not bothering to love is precisely the gospel concept of sin. Throughout the gospel, we see that the sinners are not the obvious wrongdoers but those who don't bother to love. Sin as not bothering to love is, however, not what most people relate to in their understanding and experience of sin. This is so, as Keenan points out, because for centuries we have held a simplistic view of sin: anything wrong we did we called sin.[20]

Sin is a kind of sickness, an addiction which is beyond one's capacity to heal. Like addiction, it tends to take an increasing grip on persons, enslaving them more and more. It leads to the loss of self-possession, as sinners experience an inability to center and direct their energies. They experience within themselves contradictions. Sin alienates the true self. Locked in guilt, fear, shame, and suspicion, sinners end up undermining their significant relationships. They are alienated from themselves, from others, and from God. Finally the process of sin, paralleling the pathology of addiction, sets a person on some kind of spiral of disintegration, ending in spiritual death.[21]

This understanding of sin as sickness and addiction, offers a deep insight into the reality of original sin. Human sinfulness does not start or stop in the individual. The tragedy and horror of human sinfulness is that it is contagious. The destructive and debilitating power of sin attacks not only individuals but their whole network of relationship. The sin of one becomes the occasion of the sin for others; the burden of one becomes the weakness of another. "Our lived human experiences tell us that none of us are 'original' sinners, but that, as Scripture teaches, we all have been conceived in sin, born of sin, and live in a world infested by sin."[22]

> For all of our freedom and independence, for all of our precious individuality, we live in a world in which sin is a deadly and contagious virus which threatens, saps, and debilitates our moral and spiritual health and lives. Parents pass sin onto their children, teachers instruct people into it, governments lead their peoples into it. From generation to generation, in all sorts it is passed from one heart to another like a deadly and insidious contagion.[23]

To speak of sin as addiction corrects an excessively juridical and individualistic notion of sin. It offers a key insight into how sin operates on various levels and dimensions beyond the individual.[24] It not only threatens individuals; it threatens the life of the entire community in its cultural patterns, its institutional structures, its political and economic systems.[25]

The treatment of sin as sickness and addiction goes far in explaining the repetition and persistence of sin, despite prayer, reception of the sacrament of penance, and sincere efforts at renewal. Recovery from sin is a process—a lifelong, sometimes painful and agonizing process. Conversion is ultimately sheer grace, because the personal brokenness due to sin is beyond one's own healing.[26]

Sin is the "moral evil that human beings originate: cruel, unjust, vicious, and perverse thoughts and deeds."[27] It is, however, only a part of the total human reality. Deeper and even more powerful is the reality of grace. In fact an authentic sense of sin is grace itself, experienced within God's mercy, as we realize the true evil of sin only in his forgiveness. Richard Gula writes: "Above all sin is fundamentally a religious reality. This means that sin makes no sense apart from the presence of God in Christ, through the Spirit, and our awareness of being in relationship to God."[28]

The mystery of human sinfulness, at least for the Christian, must be understood in this context. But sin is not the last word in human history. Jesus Christ is.

Incarnation-Redemption

Christian faith proclaims that Jesus Christ is the presence of the liberating, reconciling, and loving God reaching out to men and women. In Jesus, God's love, as a historical and personal reality, reached its fullest and irreversible disclosure. In his living and dying, a radically new liberating power invaded the world, a power stronger than hatred, and deeper than sin. The power and love and forgiveness of Jesus on the cross was bound to a concrete historical situation. But when he rose from the dead, the power of the Risen Christ's love and forgiveness broke through the confines of this historical situation, permeating all spheres of human existence.[29] Creation and grace have come to a radical unity in Jesus Christ, in whom one encounters the saving God.

To be redeemed means to be healed, to be made whole, to become more truly human in one's fuller communion with God and with others. Jesus the redeemer is the paradigm of the humanity that one ought to become, the life one ought to live. Of whatever age and situation, we are called into an ever deeper, more vibrant and living faith-relationship with Jesus Christ. Only in the context of a living relationship with and vibrant commitment to him, can our perspective, disposition, intention, and affection be formed from a truly Christian moral vision. Vincent MacNamara has written eloquently of the particular moral stance that Jesus embodies and which every Christian is called to follow:

> Our Christian story is of one who proclaimed God's love and forgiveness for the least and the most forgotten and whose life was the incarnation of that of one who received his life as a gift and who was prepared to lose it in the cause of goodness and truth. It is of one whose life broke through the barriers of prejudice and privilege and through limited views of goodness; one whose view of success and failure was

> rooted in his union with his Father and who was faithful to this vision in what was humanly a failure.[30]

One of the most important assertions of the historical research on the Bible, particularly that of social history, is that the center of Jesus' ministry was the imminent reign of "kingdom of God."[31] Jesus' ministry in the Gospel of Mark is heralded by the proclamation of the reign of God being at hand. Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: "This is the time of fulfillment. The reign of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the Gospel!" (Mk. 1:14). Through his teachings, preachings, his miracles, and his associations with "sinners" and other social outcasts, Jesus made present the dynamic reign of God in the heart of life, in its ordinary turns or its sudden breakthroughs.

At the heart of life, with Jesus at the most personal center, the reign of God entailed a reversal of worldly values, turning upside down the common standards of worthiness and acceptability. In the parables of the kingdom (the parables of the prodigal son, the great supper, the two debtors, the rich man and Lazarus, the Pharisee and the Publican, the unmerciful servant, the lost coin, the lost sheep), Jesus shows a love that bursts all expectations and conditions; a prodigal love which reaches to all in disproportionate ways, especially those who are in need, whether they are deserving or virtuous. Such a love, which discipleship must imitate, reaches its edge in its forgiveness of enemies and in its utter self-abandonment, as seen in the story of the Good Samaritan and as instituted in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7.

Jesus shared meals with the social marginals, the social underclass, the "sinners" and the tax collectors, who particularly were reviled because they were perceived as opportunists and grafters.[32] Defying norms and laws of social relationships, Jesus' table fellowship was iconoclastic. It destroyed the boundaries that separated the pure and the unpure, and it instituted a whole new inclusive communal ethos rather than that which was exclusive, discriminatory,

and hierarchical. The spirit of Jesus' table fellowship permeated his whole stance to the world of relations: he approached women directly without the usual practice of male intermediary; he touched the sick, the lepers, those who are untouchables; he, by forbidding divorce, protected women from the practice of divorce governed by patriarchal domination and caprice.[33] Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza interprets Jesus as wisdom prophet who established a "discipleship of equals" which broke down all barriers determined by class, gender, family status, or religious standing.[34]

Biblical portrayals of Jesus show that the Jesus ministry subverted institutionalized power relationships. However, although he represented a radical alternative social vision, he did not create a new social entity.[35] The reign of God was immediate in the very presence, teaching, and miracles of Jesus, but it too had an eschatological nostalgia. This nostalgia for the final consummation of the reign of God sustains one's faith in its irrepressible power, in the face of suffering, conflict, and failure.[36]

Christian morality presupposes that commitment to Christ shapes our total stance to the fundamental meaning and direction that human life ought to take. Living in Christ, and for him, sets life in one particular direction, in one singular vision. At the heart of Christian moral life, rooted in the mystery of Jesus Christ, is a call to the paschal way of believing, living, loving, and forgiving—the way of life through death, of fullness in self-emptying, and of glory in suffering. There is mystery here, deep and unfathomable. Only in the context of faith can we make a sense out of the paradox of the Christian moral vision.

Jesus is not just an idea, principle, norm to follow. He is not only an external goal, a vague dimension, a universal rule of conduct, a timeless ideal to approximate. As Hans Küng puts it:

Ideals, principles, or norms have neither words nor voice. They

> cannot call, cannot appeal. They can neither address us nor make demands on us. In themselves they have no authority. A concrete historical person can address us and make demands on us. And the following of Christ means being required by his person and his fate to commit ourselves to a specific way.[37]

Grace

God continues to give Godself to us in and through the indwelling Spirit, who is the bond of the love of the Father and the Son. "Anyone who loves me will be true to my word and my Father will love him; we will come to him and make our dwelling place with him." (Jn. 14: 23) The Holy Spirit is not only the symbol of the love of the Father and Son, but is the very love of the Father and Son. A person who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit is not indwelt by a *thing*, but the divine love of the Father and the Son. Grace which is the Holy Spirit is at the same time the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity or the very presence of the Holy Spirit is the presence of the Father and the Son, as the very bond of their love.[38]

This awareness of grace as the indwelling and the interdwelling presence of the Trinity is not common. For many, grace is understood as a thing, an impersonal force or power, separate from God which God bestows upon humankind. Any effort to purify this common understanding of grace must be able to relate the reality of grace with concrete living. "Grace should be understood as the presence of the Trinity in daily lives—not just in receiving the sacraments, or in formal prayer, but in the interpersonal relationship of family, school, work, recreation—carried on in a truly Christian way."[38]

We are, thus, called to be more attentive to the "inside' of our ordinary lives and to discover and experience the tripersonal God with us—Emmanuel: the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:13).[40] The reality of grace is present in people's devotions, rites, pilgrimages, fiestas

which gather families, relatives and other groups of people in the spirit of a shared communal life. It is experienced in their joyful togetherness, in their unity and solidarity in the face of deprivation and suffering. It is present as they go out of themselves to reach out to others and be a compassionate presence to the poor and needy. Grace is the dynamic power that invigorates their efforts to attain a level of living beyond debilitating subsistence, in their aspiring to fuller and more free participation in the political processes and in their fight for justice and equal rights before the law.

Grace is not something but someone—the very self-giving of God; God communicating Godself. Grace also refers to men and women achieving new being as they are penetrated in a sanctifying way by God. Thus, grace is not an object received but is a person transformed by God's gift of Godself.[41]

Grace is the radical opening of the total consciousness of persons and the directing of their whole existence to the very being of God in the beatific vision. God is the ground and goal of human existence in as much as God has put this basic movement towards God in the innermost center of creation. But no created reality holds any claim to this self-giving of God as something due. Grace is God's most free act, absolute and gratuitous. The gift is the giver.[42] God as Giver gives of self to creatures as their own fulfillment.

Grace is not to be considered as something superfluous and extrinsic to the essence and structure of human beings. It is intrinsic, with fundamental effects on the interior subjectivity of human persons. God, in gracing created beings, does not violate their nature, rather fulfills it. The coming of person, thus, to their fullness is proportionate to the greater and fuller presence of grace.[43]

Grace, which permeates the whole world, is made visible and communicated through the Church. The Church, in its essential nature, is the presence of Christ in history, in and through the Spirit.[44] As an institution, the Church is the means and mediations of grace

in the many spheres of human existence. There are seven "peak" actions of the Church through which in a special way, grace is made visible and communicated. These actions are called the seven sacraments which celebrate major moments of the life cycle, and allow these moments to open persons to an explicit and efficacious experience of the mystery of grace present at the heart of all created existence.[45]

> As the means of salvation by which God offers salvation to an individual in a tangible way and in the historical and social dimension, the Church is the basic sacrament. . . . [T]he Church is the sign, but it is the sign of an efficacious and successful grace for the world, and it is the basic sacrament in this radical sense.[46]

The Church, as the basic sacrament of God's victorious offer of Godself in the world, in and through the seven sacraments, addresses itself to and involves itself in the decisive moments in Christian life-initiation to new life in Christ, growth and maturity in the Spirit, belonging to the Eucharistic community, experience of God's mercy and forgiveness for one's sins and failures, the donation of self in a fundamental commitment, and the gift of God's comfort and healing in the face of sickness and death.[47]

The experience of grace in moral life underscores very clearly the relational dimension of being human. At the heart of a graced existence is a grateful response to the self-giving of God by giving oneself in turn to others. We are communal at our core and thus, to be human, to be moral is to be essentially directed towards others.

Eternal Destiny

The belief that all are destined for an eternal destiny grounds the ultimate meaningfulness and purposefulness of human existence and activity. The life of everlasting communion with God, through

Jesus Christ, in the indwelling and interdwelling Spirit, moves towards a greater, more complete, more perfect fulfillment in the final future. Men and women are destined for everlasting life with God which is already partially experienced in the human joys, loves, and fulfillment in the present now, until all becomes all in the plenitude of God's love, in the fullness of time.

The "already" or incarnational and the "not yet" or eschatological are operative now. Concretely this means that heaven, hell, purgatory are not realities only of the final future, but are already realities here and now in the joys, pains and tribulations of daily life.[48]

The biblical images of heaven and hell are no longer fully credible to contemporary believing Christians.[49] What is proposed are more personal and existential images of heaven and hell as the continuation, confirmation, and intensification of our interpersonal relationships on earth.[50] Heaven is the fullness of life. It is important to focus its meaning in the reality of Christ. For in Him, who is life (Jn.14:6) and who has come that we "might have life and have it to the full" (Jn.10:10), all of human reality comes to final coherence and wholeness.[51] The belief in heaven embraces particular aspects of eschatology: the gift of the beatific vision, the intimate face to face vision of God, the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, the material being of the person brought into a whole new realm of life, completely vivified by the Holy Spirit, the teaching on the new heaven and the new earth, the cosmic renewal of all material creation in Christ.[52]

With the vision of eternal life, a Christian is encouraged to see the transcendent reality shining through the ordinary everyday events. There is in the human heart a cry for what is deep and lasting, for the ultimate and eternal amidst the regular rhythm of living, loving, and dying. In his encyclical, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope,* John Paul II declares that "our faith is profoundly anthropological."[53] Our conviction of God arises from multitudes of human events and

situations in which we search for the ultimate significance and meaning of our existence.[54]

The firm belief in the just God who rewards the good and evil is deeply rooted in the Christian faith. It is a faith orientation that qualifies one's moral living. The belief in individual judgement after death, the purifying passage through purgatory, and the dreadful possibility of eternal death which is hell opens one to the eschatological dimension of moral life.[55] This means that individual choices and actions have permanent deep lasting effects, and for better or worse, they enter into the shaping of one's moral destiny. Either one is directed to a fuller communion with God or to a growing alienation from God.

That persons are created in God's image and likeness, redeemed by Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and destined for eternal life with God, are the basic truths which ground the Christian moral life. Our image of who we are and what we are destined to become, brings a perspective, a depth, and intensity to our daily moral living.

Worship and Moral Transformation

The life of worship is central to the life of the Church.[56] "The Church not only acts but also expresses herself in the liturgy, lives by the liturgy and draws from the liturgy the strength for her life."[57] Worship is a fundamental human act rooted in the relatedness of persons to God which constitutes their basic nature and existence as human beings. Men and women, in coming to a consciousness of their fundamental relatedness to God, come to a sense of their own basic goodness as well as their sinfulness which lie at the core of their moral being.

There are various aspects of the place of worship in Christian moral formation. Three are taken up here: firstly, worship as a ground of imagination, affections, and dispositions which govern Christian

moral life; secondly, worship as constituting the depth-dimension of Christian moral living; and thirdly, worship as the matrix of the communal Christian moral life.

Worship as a ground of Christian imagination and affectivity

In stressing the rational component of moral choice and behavior, Christian morality in the past tended to neglect the place of imagination and affectivity in the total moral process. The attention to the role of imagination in shaping moral life is an important advance in the area of morality.[58]

Imagination is our most powerful moral resource. But too often imagination is identified with fantasy, illusion, or make-believe.[59] It is associated with emotion and intuition that are considered subjective, unscientific, and therefore without foundations. But imagination properly understood brings one in touch with the deepest level of truth within oneself where one's fundamental meaning resides. It can stir response from the depths, decisively influencing one's vision and interpretation of reality.[60] We are speaking here of a dimension of human knowledge, different from the abstract and conceptual, which releases creative and emotional energy. The special power of imagination is its ability to bring to synthesis all the powers of the human person: the intelligence, senses, emotions, and will.[61]

Contemporary writers, like Craig Dykstra, have been drawing attention to the place of imagination and affectivity. A very striking part of Dykstra's writings involve the place of imagination in moral life. He sees moral growth as intimately related with human imagination. For him, imagination is the foundation for perception, understanding, and intepretation of the mystery of life, of all reality, and of God. Images bring us in touch with the deepest levels of truth, where our fundamental meaning resides. It can stir response from the depths, decisively influencing our vision and interpretation of reality.[62]

The person's imaginative-affective energy evokes, nurtures, and sustains moral decisions and commitments. The direction of the moral choices which persons take is often determined by the interplay of imaginations and emotions which move and persuade them. Christian moral formation, therefore, must reach down to the emotional affective roots of moral choices and decisions. The capacity to love, that is the ability to respond to the call of love in all its forms, is necessary for one to be moral. Studies in moral development have shown that authentic moral living is not possible until a person is capable of empathy. Where there is empathy, there is care, there is love, there is morality.[63]

To be moral, one must reach down to the heart where the deep springs of affections and emotions lie. The sensitivity required to be moral is a sensitivity of the heart, which is attuned to the presence of God. "Such sensitivity requires prayer. A heart sensitive to God is born of prayer, and is nurtured in prayerful attention to the presence of God in the diverse experiences of living."[64] The human spirit has an innate nostalgia for God.

Worship is one major formative ground of the Christian imagination, affections and emotions, all of which enter into the total moral process. The symbolic pattern of words and actions in worship touches the depths from which Christians respond. The power of worship in forming individuals and communities comes from the stirrings of emotions and feelings alone and from certain qualities of the spirit nurtured by these feelings and emotions which dispose persons to God and to others both in intention and action. The senses of finitude, gratitude, obligation, sin, and repentance are basic qualities of the spirit of worship which inspire and influence Christian moral living.[65]

Worship as Constituting the Depth-Dimensions of Moral Life

Christian moral life is fundamentally a response to grace, a reaching out in love rather than simply avoiding sin. At the heart of

Christian moral life is a constant renewal and conversion unto Christ. This Christian conversion is greatly fostered and strengthened by prayer and liturgical sacramental celebrations. Celebrations are privileged moments when the heart is most open and susceptible to the attraction of the power and presence of Christ in whose love one draws meaning and motivation for moral living.

There is a level of our subjectivity that goes far deeper than our conscious actions, roles, and experiences. It is where God meets us in our most sacred depths, calls us by our names, and utters the word addressed to us alone. The deepest level of ourselves, which the Scripture designates as the "heart" where God's Spirit communes with our spirit (Rom. 8: 16).[66] The deepest level of our persons escapes clear conceptual knowledge. And yet we can have a sense of ourselves, a felt awareness of who we are. It is an awareness that takes hold of the whole of our person. Worship takes us to this level and summons us to an attentive and loving listening to the stirrings of our heart of hearts. When we come in touch with our truest selves, there in our wordless depths, we come in touch with God. Worship attunes our interiority with the Word of God calling and beckoning, that God's voice may resound ever more clearly and surely in our hearts. There is a rabbinical teaching which says: "There are depths in the human soul which ritual alone can reach."[67]

God's spirit joins with our human spirit to form and transform us more and more into men and women of God, children of the Father, and disciples of Christ the Son. In the purity of God's holiness, we see the puniness of our hearts but also the grandeur of divine love. Our darkest and most wounded selves are revealed by God's light but only that we may be healed. As God bends over us with the most gentle of mercy, we are once more renewed in our struggle to be good, true, and loving.

Moral life comes in touch with its depth-dimension in worship. Authentic worship brings moral life to its inner springs, where it draws

its deepest meaning from the treasures of the faith. The stories that constitute us as people of God provide the depth-dimension of our moral living. The remembrance of the Christian stories, and especially their communal recital in the liturgy, can influence and shape the vision of moral life.[68] In the context of worship, we are able to come in touch, beyond our surface desires, with the true and real good that we seek at a very deep level. Worship provides a climate, in which our moral sensitivity is evoked, making us desire and appreciate all that is "honest, pure, admirable, decent, virtuous, or worthy of praise. . . ." (Phil. 4:8)[69]

As worship brings moral life to its depth-meaning, it enables and empowers worshippers in their living and loving and in their pursuing relentlessly the will of God amidst the complexities, bewilderment, and brokenness of human situations and relationships.[70]

Much should be done in our life of worship to harness the force and power of the liturgical celebrations for the nurturing of moral virtues and values. But to do so requires serious preparation, with a sense not only of what is proper for divine worship, but of what best expresses the faith-response of the people in a most inculturated and indigenized way. Noteworthy is the place of the feasts and seasons of the liturgical year in engaging the power of symbolic acts and sensible signs which evoke profound meaning.[79]

Worship as the Matrix of Communal Christian Moral Life

Moral life calls men and women to enter more fully in human relationships against the pull of selfish isolation. Since all morality is essentially social and communal, its ethos is shaped by the shared vision and tradition of communities.[72] We are called to resist and break the force of individualism, of selfishness, the kind especially that makes others suffer. We are communal at our core for we are persons-in-community, beings made for others. The moral person

labors far and long to seek God in others. One's heart must expand beyond one's inner circle of family and of friends, and embrace the humanity of all others which one shares.

Christian moral life is anchored in the life, history and tradition of the Christian faith community. Worship, as one matrix of the living faith traditions, helps shape the individual Christian's moral attitudes, sensitivities, and dispositions.[73] By word and sacrament, the faith images and symbols of the Christian community are mediated and brought to life within the individuals and the entire assembled community.[74]

To be a Christian is to be a member of a body, a *communio*, a people with reflection and memory.[75] Thus the resources and perspectives of the Christian formation go beyond the individual's capacities. They are drawn from the collective wisdom embodied in the laws and rules that have guided people of the past in their personal and communal living. The encounter with the community's shared faith vision and tradition, as mediated through the images and symbols is essential for Christian moral formation.[76]

The formation of character and vision is within the context of a storied society, of a collective redemptive memory. For the Christian, the Church is the locus of Scripture's account of God's story in Jesus Christ. What is demanded of Christians is to be faithful to their identity as a people whose true destiny is found in God's story. Thought, character and vision are formed within the normative influence of Christian narrative which plays a central role in self-understanding. "Stories are indispensable if we are to know ourselves; they are irreplaceable by some other kind of account."[77]

Craig Dykstra sees the important role of community in the entire process of forming Christian character. The community, he says, shapes our perceptions, values, and identities by the many subtle ways it uses language, sets norms, makes decisions, and carries our action. In the depth of its engagement with life, it sets the criteria in the discipline of morality.[78] Persons mature and grow within a moral

tradition. Apart from the moral tradition in a community, one is left with a sense of bewilderment and vulnerability in the face of moral dilemmas. A person becomes an operative moral person only in the context of community.

Worship as the matrix of communal Christian moral life is experienced in the base-level ecclesial communities. As members of these communities, people are much more alert to the communal dimension of Christian moral living as they are called to be one people in responding to the living Word of God, and in their common struggle for the promotion of peace and justice.[79] It is the Christian worship of the Father, Son, and Spirit in the Christian community that pulls us away from our selfish illusions and individualism, and effects a shifting of centers in us from ourselves to others. Being rooted in this worship, we are motivated to the greatest social responsibility, inspired by the Trinity's infinite interpersonal, creative, and redeeming love.[80]

Concluding Statement

When Christian morality is grounded in doctrine and worship, it is seen within a larger faith framework. Doctrines are not ends in themselves; rather they articulate the fundamental truths underlying human meaning and destiny as illumined by God's revelation and perceived in faith. Christian truths are salvific truths—truths that save, uplift, guide, illuminate, inspire. They are truths that make a real difference in people's lives since they are not abstract generalities or "indifferent bits of information." They are sources of understanding our human meaning, dignity, and destiny as illumined by God's revelation. They are not about things, but persons: the persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—the Living God who loves and saves us—and ourselves as persons created, redeemed, and sanctified.

The mysteries of creation and sin, together with the mysteries of Incarnation, Redemption, the Indwelling Spirit, Church, and Eternal Destiny ground the Christian personal and social morality. Persons as they are created in the image and likeness of God see

their fullest and deepest meaning in Jesus, who has liberated and empowered them from the tensions and contradictions of sin and has given them the power through the Indwelling Spirit to work towards their wholeness and dignity as images of God.

By interrelating moral life with worship, the depth-dimensions of Christian moral life are drawn out, and its inner springs unravelled. The interplay of emotions, imaginations, and affectivity nurture the qualities of the spirit and the dispositions of the heart for moral life. Christian morality is not just a list of do's and don'ts, but the moral vision and principles grounded on the truths of the faith, with their depth-meaning evoked and nurtured in worship. Worship is not some spiritualist, out-of-this-world ritualism, but rather the celebration of the fundamental convictions of the Christian faith, which grounds, inspires, and empowers moral witness and action.[81]

There have been profound changes in Moral Theology since Vatican II called for its renewal. The call was for Moral Theology, which was separated for a long time from the entire theological enterprise, to be grounded in the sources of the faith, founded on the great mysteries of the faith, and rooted in worship and spirituality. The call has been heeded, but the work has not yet come to its full fruition. Referring to this unfinished work, Richard McCormick says, "the problem of elaborating a satisfying value system within the totality of Christian realities remains one of the most important unfinished task in the field of Christian morality."[82] This article is a modest contribution to the realization of this task.

NOTES

[1]Richard M. Gula, S.S., *Reason Informed by Faith* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 136-37.

[2]Ibid., 37.

[3]Vincent MacNamara, *Love, Law, and Christian Life* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1988), 68.

[4]Ibid., 125.

[5]Ibid., 117. "It is not precisely the moment of choice that is the decisive one but all the moments that have gone into the making it likely that this is how we would see and choose." One may take a different perspective and hold that even while it is indeed true that the person in the process of moral life is of primary importance, it is ultimately the moment of choice that is decisive, for the precise choice may represent what the person is in the here and now, whatever he/she must have been in the past. A person seeks to be free from the determinisms of the past, in whatever form they take, by a radical openness to the surprises of the Spirit at the turn of every moment.

[6]Ibid., 126.

[7]Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith,* 142.

[8]Charles E. Curran, "The Stance of Moral Theology," in *Directions in Fundamental Moral Theology* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press. 1985), 29-62.

[9]Richard McCormick, S.J., *Notes on Moral Theology 1965 through 1980* (Washington, D. C.: University Press of America, 1981), 82.

[10]Ibid., 63.

[11]Richard McCormick, S.J., *Health and Medicine on the Catholic Tradition* (New York: Crossroad, 1984), 50.

[12]ECERI, *Maturing in the Christian Faith: National Catholic Directory of the Philippines* (Manila: St. Paul Publications. 1985), no. 32. (thereafter cited as *NCDP*)

[13]Karl Rahner speaks of the basic orientation of persons to God as their only ultimate fulfillment and as constituting their fundamental dignity. For a more extensive treatment of the person's basic orientation to God, see Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith,* trans. William V. Dych (New York: Seabury Press, 1978), 116-32; Michael Buckley, S.J. "Within the Holy Spirit," in *A World of Grace,* Leo J. Donovan (New York: Seabury Press, 1980), 31-49; Kenneth D. Eberhard, "Karl Rahner and the Supernatural Existential," *Thought* 46, no. 183 (Winter 1971): 537-61; Michael Cleary, "The Openness of the Human Person: The Anthropological Foundations of Graced Existence," *Louvain Studies* 10 (Fall 1984): 97-105; Karl Rahner, "Grace" in *Sacramentum Mundi* 2:515-22.

[14] "Gaudium et Spes," no.19, in *Documents of Vatican II,* ed. Walter Abbott, S.J. (New York: America Press, 1966).

[15]*NCDP,* nos. 146, 148.

[16]"Gaudium et Spes," no. 57, in *Documents of Vatican II.*

[17]John Paul II lists trends that have contributed to the loss of a sense of sin: the movement from seeing sin everywhere to not recognizing it anywhere; the emphasis on fear of eternal punishment to preaching a love of God that excludes punishment; from correcting erroneous consciences to respecting consciences but excluding the duty to tell the truth. To restore a healthy sense of sin, the pope advocated "a sound catechesis, illumined by the biblical theology of the covenant, by an attentive listening and trustful openness to the Magisterium of the church, which never ceases to enlighten consciences, and by an ever more careful practice of the sacrament of penance." See *Origins* 14 (December 20,1984), 443-44. Quotation on p. 444.

[18]John Kavanaugh, S.J., *Following Christ in a Consumer Society* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1981), 21-26.

[19]James F. Keenan, S.J., "The Sin of Not Bothering To Love," *Church* (Winter 1995): 40-41.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Patrick McCormick, C.M., *Sin as Addiction* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 146-63.

[21]Ibid., 113.

[22]Rahner stresses the unique beginning of sin in the world. The first sin, no matter who committed it, has a special status, since it is the absolute beginning of sin in the world. Cf. The treatment of Karl Rahner's notion of original sin in Brian O. McDermott, S.J., "The Theology of Original Sin: Recent Developments," *Theological Studies* 38 (September 1987): 484-85. What is transmitted is not the actual sin of the first human person since the personal responsibility of sin is inalienable; rather it is the condition of sin into which every person is born. Ibid., 476-82. To stress the fact that original sin is not only "sin of the world," the Council of Trent defined original sin as "in all men, proper to each." (ND 510).

[23]The *NCDP* integrates the basic emphases of original sin: the exterior dimension of original sin as "sin of the world," its interior dimension which is concupiscence and its relation to personal sin. Personal sin constitutes part of the sin of the world since a person's individual sins further worsen the sinful situation in which every one is born, grows and dies. *NCDP*, no. 221. The Council of Trent, however, "professes and thinks that concupiscence or the inclination to sin remains in the baptized. Since it is left for us to wrestle with, it cannot harm those who do not consent by manfully resisting it by the grace of Jesus Christ. . . . The Catholic church has never understood that it is called sin because it would be sin in the true and proper sense in those who have been reborn, but because it comes from sin and inclines to sin (ND 512). For a theological treatment of concupiscence, Cf. Karl Rahner, "Theological Concept of Concupiscentia," in *Theological Investigations* (London: Darton, Longman, & Todd, 1961) 1:347-82.

[24]McCormick, *Sin as Addiction*, 88.

[25]Conversion will probably include a number of recovery processes. Conversion is not usually a linear, but and integrative process in which a person progressively is helped to put himself/herself back together. Ibid., 174.

[26]John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love* (London: Lowe and Brydone, 1966), 18.

[27]Richard M. Gula, S.S., *Reason Informed by Faith*, 100.

[28]Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith*, 176-264; David Coffey, "The Incarnation of the Holy Spirit in Christ," *Theological Studies* 45 (September 1984): 466-80.

[29]Vincent MacNamara, *Faith and Ethics* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1985), 111.

[30]Kingdom is better translated as the kingship of God powerfully ruling over creation, the people of God, and history. Cf. John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), Vol. 2, *Mentor, Message, and Miracles.*

[31]Meier wrote that they were "minor functionaries who collected the payment of toll of customs (indirect taxes) on goods being transposed across borders."

[32]See Lisa Sowle Cahill's *Sex, Gender and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), 121-165, for a fuller treatment of the iconoclastic effects of Jesus' teachings on the social and sexual ethos of his age and of early Christianity.

[33]See Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Jesus: Miriam's Child, Sophia's Prophet* (New York: Crossroad, 1994).

[34]E.P. Sanders maintained that Jesus did not "urge the creation of a new social entity," *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 179.

[35]See Roy A. Harrisville, "In Search of the Meaning of the 'Reign of God,'" *Interpretation 47,* no.2 (1993): 149.

[36]Hans Küng, "The Criterion for Deciding What is Christian," in *Introduction to Christian Ethics: A Reader,* ed. by Ronald P. Hamel and Kenneth R. Himes, O.F.M. (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 126.

[37]Cf. The article of David Coffey, "The Gift of the Holy Spirit," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 38 (July 1971): 202-23, and his book, *The Gift of the Holy Spirit* (Sydney: Catholic Institute of Sydney, 1979), 223-32.

[38]*NCDP,* no. 205.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Otto Semmelroth, S.J., "The Christ Event and Our Salvation," in *Man Before God* (New York: P. J. Kenedy, 1966), 89. Grace as the gift of the Holy Spirit does not refer only to a gift that the Holy Spirit bestows, but

rather to the gift which is the Holy Spirit. The Father gives the Holy Spirit to us through the Risen Christ. Coffey, "The Gift of the Holy Spirit," 54.

[41]Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith*, 116-24.

[42]John Coventry, S.J., *The Theology of the Faith* (Cork: Mercier Press, 1968), 63-64.

[43]Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith*, 116-24.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Ibid., 410.

[46] Ibid., 412.

[47]*NCDP*, no. 248.

[48]Joseph Bracken, S.J., "Salvation: A Matter of Personal Choice," *Theological Studies* 37 (September 1976): 416-18.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Tony Kelly, C.S.S.R., "A Hope for Heaven," *The Australian Catholic Record* 61/4 (October 1984): 348-51.

[51]John H. Wright, S.J., "The Hermeneutics of Eschatology,"*Chicago Studies* 24 (August 1985): 217-18. Focusing on the promise of the resurrection of the body, biblical scholars suggest that the idea that the body is the whole person. They interpret the moral task as treating our bodies as fully integrated with our being in unity and relationship with others. The consideration of the body as subject is opposed to the objectification or materialization of the body. S. Kay Thomas describes the objectifications as a "dualistic notion that separates mind and body and which conceptualizes the physical body in purely mechanistic terms. The physical machine-like body is assumed to be extrinsic to the essential self." "Illness and the Paradigm of Lived Body," *Theoretical Medicine* 9 (1988): 201.

[52]John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* (New York: Allied A. Knopf, 1994), 36.

[53]Ibid., 31.

[54]*NCDP,* no.246.

[55]Ibid., no. 319.

[56]John Paul II, "Letter on the Eucharist" 1980, no. 13. The *NCDP* does not use prayer, worship, and liturgy interchangeably. Though they belong to the same genre, the *NCDP* uses them with certain distinctions. Christian prayer means the consciousness of a personal communion with God through Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit. *(NCDP,* no. 325). Worship adds to this general notion of prayer, two dimensions: the communal dimension and the celebrative, ceremonial dimension *(NCDP,* no. 326); Liturgy is Christian worship expressed in specific ritual acts, e.g. Eucharist. *(NCDP,* no. 331*).*

[57]This advance is reflected in the *NCDP* in its shift of stress from rules to values, from prescription to vision, from individual free choice to fundamental commitment. Cf *NCDP,* nos. 264-71.

[58]Image research has demonstrated a multiplicity of connections between images and emotions. "Image can be formed in direct response to emotions, and images can evoke emotions. The image system of the person is directly linked to the individual's emotional structure." Matthias Newman, "Towards an Integrated Theory of Imagination," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 18 (September 1978): 256-57. Imagination is seen as a most powerful resource as it touches the affective roots of a person. Imagination can also be the spring of the person's most objective insight. Cf. Kathleen Fischer, *The Inner Rainbow: The Imagination in Christian Life* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), 13. Also Frederick G. McLeod, "Imagination within the Act of Faith," *Review for Religious 46* (March/April 1986): 243. There are more studies now on the place of emotions in moral life. One *illuminating* article is that of Bill Cosgrave, "Our Emotional Life," *Furrow 49* (1998): 270-281.

[59]Frederick G. McLeod, S.J., "Imagination Within the Act of Faith," *Review for Religious 46* (March/April 1986): 243.

[60]See Philip S. Keane, S.S., *Christian Ethics and Imagination* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 87-90.

[61]Craig Dykstra, *Vision and Character* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 28.

[62]Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith,* 15.

[63]D. E. Saliers, "Liturgy and Ethics: Some New Beginnings," *Journal of Religious Ethics 7* (Fall 1979): 174-75. The *NCDP* calls for a deeper, more personal, and more affective prayer (no. 323), and for a more active and affective worship (no. 370). Margaret Farley in her critical response to Ramsey and Saliers, grants that both have explored important points in the relation of worship and morality. But she claims that both authors do not raise the most critical issues confronting the worshipping life of the Church. Many Christians experience liturgy as deadening, impoverishing, and burdensome. In her article, Farley identifies three causes for this phenomenon. See Margaret Farley, "Beyond the Formal Principle: Reply to Ramsey and Saliers," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 7 (Fall 1979): 191-202.

[64]Cf. James Gustafson, "Spiritual Life and Moral Life," *Theology Digest* 19 (Winter 1971): 290-307.

[65]John Carroll Futrell, S.J., *Ignatian Discernment* (St. Louis: School of Divinity, St. Louis University), 321.

[66]Marcel Bastin, Gbislain Pinckers, Michel Teheux, *Day by Day,* vol. 2, trans. by Matthew O'Connell from *Dieu pour Chaque Jour* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 172.

[67]McNamara, *Love, Law, and Christian Life,* 128.

[68]Ibid., 74-75.

[69]See Don E. Saliers, *The Soul in Paraphrase* (New York: Seabury Press, 1980), 97, 101-2.

[70]*NCDP,* nos. 334, 335, 338.

[71]Lucien Richard, O.M.I., *Is There a Christian Ethics?* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 75-76.

[72]William Everett claims that Saliers and Ramsey have not dealt with the realities of social pluralism. Social pluralism holds that persons are members of associations, institutions, and communities whose perspectives, interests, and visions may compete with, complement, or ignore one another. He sees

Saliers' accomodation to social pluralism as excessively individualistic, verging on a form of escapism but he finds more readiness in Ramsey to challenge social pluralism. He holds that liturgy should lead one to a critical engagement of social and cultural pluralism. William Everett, "Liturgy and Ethics: A Response to Saliers and Ramsey," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 7 (Fall 1979): 203-14.

[73]Richard, *Is there a Christian Ethics?*, 79-82. While the identity of individuals is shaped by the traditions of their faith-community, they at the same time engage these traditions in a creative dialogue, developing a hermeneutic of the traditions based on their own critical self-understanding and appropriation.

[74]McCormick, S.J., *Notes on Moral Theology 1981 through 1984* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1984), 70. As human beings, we live always in relation to others, and as Christians, in a believing community, an *ecclesia*. "Our being Christ is a shared being. We are vines of the same branch, sheep of the shepherd." This fact with deep biblical roots, brings to focus the person's essential equality (regardless of functional importance) and his radical sociality, his interdependence with others. McCormick, *Health and Medicine on the Catholic Tradition*, 50.

[75]Ibid.

[76]Stanley Hauerwas, *Truthfulness and Tragedy: Further Investigation in Character Ethics* (Notre Dame Univeristy of Notre Dame Press, 1970), 8.

[77]Dykstra, *Vision and Character*, 124.

[78]*NCDP*, no. 343.

[79]CBCP, *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (Manila: Word and Life Publications, 1977), no. 197.

[80]Joseph Roche, S.J., "The *NCDP*'s Multiple Integrations," *Docete* (April-June 1987): 4.

[81]McCormick, S.J., *Notes: 1965-80*, 295.

Landas 18:1 (2004) 125-131

THE MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF JESUS' DEATH IN THE PREFACES AND THROUGH THE HISTORICAL APPROACH: TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

Mercedes B. Abaya

In the many years that I taught Christian Living in the Grade School level, I will never forget the times when certain pupils would express that they could not comprehend how Jesus had to die to save us all from sin; how God, whom we proclaim to be a loving Father, would send His Son to die on the cross to save humankind. When I "inherited" these students as they turned Grades 3 and 4, this was already the understanding they had—that Jesus saved us by dying for our sins, and that God the Father had sent His Son into the world precisely to fulfill this mission. Most of them hardly questioned this; but for a few, this concept was something they truly grappled with. When I became a coordinator and observed the classes of Christian Life Education (CLE) teachers, I encountered one teacher who actually answered the question "Why did Jesus die?" with "To save us from our sins."

There is so much to be said regarding this, but suffice it to say that although this theological interpretation of Jesus' death is rich with meaning and significance, it only serves to confuse when it is not explained properly, and especially when it is not grounded first

and foremost on the historical reality of Jesus' death: that Jesus was killed as a result of His resolute and faithful living out of His mission to proclaim the Kingdom of God. This holds true much more so for children and young adolescents.

With these differences in the meaning and significance given to Jesus' death in mind, I went through the Prefaces for Weekdays and Sundays in Ordinary Time to ascertain the theological interpretation of Jesus' death as expressed therein. To my surprise, four out of the eight Prefaces for Sundays and two out of the six Prefaces for Weekdays explicitly pronounce that Jesus' suffering and death on the cross saved us from sin and death.[1] The four Sunday Prefaces convey the following expressions regarding Jesus' passion and death: "Through his cross and resurrection he freed us from sin and death," "By suffering on the cross he freed us from unending death," "In His suffering we are freed from sin," and "When your children sinned and wandered far from your friendship, you reunited them with yourself through the blood of your Son and the power of the Holy Spirit."[2]

These statements highlight the salvific work of Jesus more than His "person." Very much in line with the Biblical and Classical Patristic view, they show that Jesus' suffering and death freed and saved us from the bondage and darkness of sin and death. Msgr. Louis Soubigou says of Preface I: "The glory to which the Preface refers is... of the magnificent titles we bear in Christ *in consequence of a three-fold deliverance—from* 1) *death,* 2) *sin and* 3) *darkness"* (emphasis mine).[3] Many, if not most, of the statements in these Prefaces are in fact lifted from Scripture, which Classical-Patristic Soteriology repeats.[4] The same applies for Prefaces for Weekdays in Ordinary Time.

The two Prefaces for Weekdays in Ordinary Time that likewise reveal the above understanding of Jesus' passion and death state: "Though his nature was divine, he stripped himself of glory and by shedding his blood on the cross he brought his peace to the world."

And "For our sake he opened his arms on the cross; he put an end to death and revealed the resurrection. In this he fulfilled your will and won for you a holy people."[5] The former reveals an understanding of Jesus' death as expiation when it says, "by shedding his blood on the cross." The latter reveals not only the theological reflection that Jesus died to save us ("For our sake he opened his arms on the cross,") but also that Jesus did His Father's will through His passion, death, and resurrection. "In this he fulfilled your will" somehow impresses upon us that God sent His Son Jesus to save us by suffering and dying on the cross; that Jesus was the "Sacrificial Lamb" who obediently allowed himself to be slaughtered for our sake.

When viewed in light of the historical approach, the theological interpretation of the meaning and significance of Jesus' death in the said Prefaces is quite incomplete, and, in a sense, can even be misleading. The historical approach shows that Jesus *was killed* because of the radicality of what He preached by His words and His very life. He did not just open His arms on the cross and die for our sins; rather, He faced his death resolutely and accepted it as the inevitable consequence of fidelity to His mission, as asked of Him by His God. Thus, what God was asking of Him was faithfulness to His mission; and death was a consequence of such. This reveals a very active approach, compared to that of the identified Prefaces, which focus only on Jesus' dying, as if there was no fight involved. Furthermore, the historical approach shows that by accepting His death as a consequence of His mission, which is *service,* Jesus' death becomes a form of service.

Thus, the "reality" of Jesus' crucifixion and death reveals very clearly that Jesus' death was a consequence of His mission of proclaiming and inaugurating the Kingdom of God. He lived His mission in a way no human being ever has, and as such, invited a lot of ill will and anger from those who disliked and feared His message and lifestyle. Moreover, Jesus' death was constitutive of His

mission—for fidelity to His mission necessitated facing such a violent death.

It is noteworthy to mention that Preface VII of Sundays and Preface V of Weekdays in Ordinary Time, though they do not explicitly express the theological interpretation as in the above Prefaces, nevertheless imply such an understanding. The former specifically focuses on salvation through the obedience of Christ: "Your gifts of grace, lost by disobedience, are now restored by the obedience of your Son."[6] This interpretation is beautiful in that it brings to mind God's loving action in salvation history, and reveals Christ as the "New Adam". However, it also makes us conceive of Jesus' obedience in dying a violent death as fulfilling His mission of saving us, when, looking at the historical reality of His death, there is much more here than plain obedience. Jesus' agony on the cross does not glorify suffering and death through meek obedience, but rather, shows Jesus' resoluteness in living out His mission. Once more, Jesus' suffering and death were a *consequence* of His mission, and *constitutive* of His mission.

The latter, Preface V of Weekdays in Ordinary Time, states, "With love we celebrate his death"[7] seemingly suggesting that we rejoice because Jesus' death brought us salvation. If we were to see His death through the historical approach, however, we would appreciate more deeply that we celebrate his death because of the way He radically lived His life and fulfilled His mission of loving service. This prods me to ask, "Why do we not emphasize and celebrate His life and ministry as well, so that His self-offering and death will become more meaningful and relevant to us?" Fr. Carlos Abesamis says that Jesus went about *giving life* to people through teaching, healing, forgiving, feeding, gathering (all Kingdom and messianic actions) which eventually led to his being put to death.[8] Moreover, he adds that Jesus "brought and continues to bring about salvation through his *ministry,* death, resurrection, and parousia (emphasis mine)."[9] Nowhere in any of the Prefaces in Ordinary Time do we find mention of Jesus' ministry, how His very life proclaimed

and inaugurated the Kingdom of God—not just His death. Only Preface III of Weekdays in Ordinary Time comes close to doing so. Not only does it *not* mention the paschal mystery explicitly, particularly the notion of Jesus dying to save us; but more so, it alludes to two Kingdom actions—that are very significant in Jesus' ministry—gathering us into a human family, and restoring our dignity as God's children: "Through your beloved Son you created our human family. Through him you restored us to your likeness."[10]

It cannot be denied that there is such a stark difference in the meaning and significance of Jesus' death as expressed in the Prefaces, compared to that engendered by the historical approach. It also cannot be denied that what prevails in the understanding of many people, at least among Filipino Christians, is a more or less distorted notion of the Biblical and Classical theological reflections on Soteriology as expressed in the Prefaces—a notion that many times negatively affects *spirituality* and *discipleship.*

I do not propose that we do away with these theological interpretations, as they are very rich in meaning. They bring out the various aspects of the Eucharist: sacrifice, memorial, communion, and its eschatological implications.[11] However, I do see two very important challenges that need to be responded to by those who minister to the faith: to creatively lead people to the right, proper, and positive understanding of these theological reflections; and, more importantly, to "flip the coin" so to speak, so that people see the other side and get a more complete picture, and thus grow in a fuller understanding of Jesus' death and how Jesus saves us. Relegating this concern to the background will sadly maintain the *distorted* understanding of the titles "Sacrificial Lamb" and "Suffering Servant" as applied to Jesus, thereby re-enforcing the "culture of victimization" and "spiritualization of suffering" that abound in Philippine society. I believe that such an understanding, through God's grace, can very well lead to a paradigm shift, a revolution from the heart, a community of disciples with a renewed consciousness, renewed relations, and a renewed sense of mission that will contribute more and more to the

building up of the Kingdom of God. Only by seeing both sides of the same coin can we grow ever more fully in appreciation of and faithful commitment to our being and constant evolving into the *New People of God:* "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people set apart.[12]

NOTES

[1]These Prefaces are as follows: Sundays in Ordinary Time I, II, IV and VIII; Weekdays in Ordinary Time I and VI.

[2]Preface for Sundays in Ordinary Time I, II, IV and VIII respectively.

[3]Msgr. Louis Soubigou, *A Commentary on the Prefaces and the Eucharistic Prayers of the Roman Missal,* trans. Rev. John A. Otto (U.S.A.: The Liturgical Press, 1969), p.152.

[4]Raymond Moloney, S.J., shows which parts of the Scripture the expression in 4 Eucharistic prayers are cited from, in his book *Our Eucharistic Prayers in Worship, Preaching and Study* (Delaware, Michael Glazier, Inc., 1985).

[5]Preface for Weekdays in Ordinary Time I and VI respectively.

[6]Preface VII of Sundays in Ordinary Time.

[7]Preface V of Weekdays in Ordinary Time.

[8]Carlos Abesamis, *On Mark and the New World, the Good News: Letter from Carlos Abesamis,* Theology in the Third World, SPI Series 1 and 2 (Quezon City: Socio Pastoral Institute, 1983), p. 19.

[9] Ibid., p. 47.

[10] Preface III of Weekdays in Ordinary Time.

[11] Andre Rose, *The New Prefaces in The New Liturgy: A Comprehensive Introduction to the New Liturgy as a Whole and to its New Calendar, Order of Mass, Eucharistic Prayers, the Roman Canon, Prefaces and the New Sunday*

Lectionary, Lancelot Sheppard, ed. (Great Britain, Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd. 1970), p. 254.

[12] Preface 1 of Sundays in Ordinary Time. The text is cited from 1 Peter 2:9. Vatican II's *Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* also uses this text from 1 Peter.

Landas 18:1 (2004)132- 148

LIVING GOD'S DREAM OF COMMUNION: COMMUNITY IN SEMINARY FORMATION

Daniel Patrick Huang, S.J.

Today is the great feast of Christ the King, and perhaps this morning is a sign that the Kingdom of God is near: an unworthy Jesuit has been invited to speak at a major celebration of a Dominican-run institution. More seriously though: I would like to congratulate the UST Central Seminary on the occasion of its Diamond Jubilee as an interdiocesan seminary. I echo the admiring sentiments of Archbishop Quevedo's opening homily: this Seminary has contributed a great deal to the life and mission of the Church in the Philippines. I am very honored to be part of your celebration.

I am also edified by the way you have chosen to begin your celebration. There is celebration and thanksgiving present, but you have chosen *not* to indulge in triumphalism and self-congratulation. Rather, your emphasis has been to reflect on your life and mission as a seminary, and you have even invited other seminaries to join you in reflecting on their life and mission. So I thank you too for modeling for us, for teaching us, the way to celebrate anniversaries: as occasions for thanksgiving and renewal. I hope that all present here will learn from your example: when it is our turn to celebrate an anniversary of our parish, diocese, seminary or even priesthood, may we engage in similar grateful reflection and discernment, towards renewal of identity and mission!

I have been asked to speak about community formation, the significance of the life of community in the formation of future priests. There will be three parts to my presentation. First, we shall investigate what a community is in the first place. How does one know that a group of people is, in fact, a community? Secondly, we shall ask why community is such an important—indeed, in some sense, *the most important*—part of seminary formation. Thirdly, we shall try to identify some qualities of a truly formative community.

What is community?: Elements of community

I base my reflections here on the ideas of the theologians Bernard Lonergan and Joseph Komonchak, and the reflections of the founder of *L'Arche*, Jean Vanier.[1] What is a community? What makes a community different from a crowd? Both are groups of people who happen to be together. What is the difference? A crowd is a group of people who are bound only by temporal and spatial bonds, who simply happen to be in a particular place at a certain time, like people riding a jeep together, or in a mall or in an airport. What transforms a crowd into a community?

Two interrelated bonds transform a crowd into a community. First, **relationships of mutual knowledge, love and responsibility:** the deeper, the more personal the level of relationship, of mutual knowledge and love, of responsibility for one another, the stronger the community. Jean Vanier writes: "So many people enter groups in order to develop a certain form of spirituality or to acquire knowledge about the things of God and of humanity. But that is not community; it is a school. It becomes community only when people start truly caring for each other and each other's growth."[2] It might be good to ask: do you experience your seminary as a crowd, as a school, or as a community?

A second bond is that of a **common culture. Culture** is a complex reality composed of various levels. First, it involves *a common set of meanings and values.* The people who live together are bound not only in concern for one another, but also share a sense of what life is for and what is truly important. Again, listen to Vanier: "The difference between a community and a group of friends is that in a

community we verbalize our mutual belonging and bonding. We announce the goal and the spirit that unites us."[3] Again, it might be good to ask: do you experience your seminary as simply a group of friends, or as a community bound by "a goal and spirit," as Vanier puts it?

Second, this common set of meanings and values is "captured," celebrated, and communicated in *paradigmatic symbols, stories, words, symbolic events.* In San Jose Seminary, for example, we have, in front of the Seminary building, a magnificent statue of San Jose with one arm around Jesus and the other arm holding an ax. It has become a great symbol for us: just looking at it evokes a sense of our seminary and our spirit. In the past few years, when a Josefino hears the words "Virtue, Learning, Spirit, Service," he remembers the goals of our seminary formation, the founding of the Seminary to form men of *Virtud y Letras* who will work in *opus ministerii.* These "great words" in English and Latin express and evoke the common vision of our life together. Our seminary life too is punctuated by symbolic events. For example, one of the most powerful is the culmination of the initiation or welcome of our new members: by the sea, the neophytes are led blindfolded into the water; then they climb out and are made to crawl under the legs of all the members of the community, passing, as it were, through a new birth canal; and as each new member emerges, as though reborn, he is embraced in welcome by the rector and all the members of the community, sometimes with fireworks exploding in the background! These are rich, constantly evocative bearers of the vision, meanings and values of our community.

Third, these common meanings and values, expressed in symbols, words and events, are *lived out in ordinary life in common practices and lifestyles.* This is important: sometimes there is a contradiction between the meanings and values put down on paper, in mission statements and the like, on the one hand, and the way people actually live together and relate to one another, on the other. We shall say more about this later. At this point, let me simply point out that the common practices, the "rule of life," the schedules and required tasks and responsibilities that form a community's actual day-to-day life are powerful bearers of the community's common meanings and values.

To summarize then: what is a community? A community is not just a crowd, a group of people simply bound together by time and space, but rather people who are bonded to one another in relationships of belonging and care, and by a common culture, vision, way of life. A *Christian* community is a group of people who are related, in the Spirit of Jesus, in friendship with God and with each other, and who are committed to the vision, the meanings, the values, the lifestyle of the Gospel.

As we end this first part of our reflection then, let me suggest some questions for a preliminary reflection on the quality of your community life. First, what is the quality of relationships in your community? Are you happy in your community? Do people feel they belong? Is there trust? Are relationships functional or personal? Would members of the community choose to come back and undergo seminary formation in that community again if they had a choice? Second, what is the culture of the community? What are the great symbols of the community's ideals? Are people bound by a common vision? Is it the vision of the Gospel? Is there a discrepancy between the official vision, values, symbols, practices—and the real and operative visions, values, practices?

The importance of community for seminary formation

Having clarified what community is, we might now ask a further question: why give such importance to community in seminary formation? Do we want to build community only in order that seminarians can study with a minimum of aggravating circumstances? Are we aiming simply for a pleasant environment for individual growth? After all, seminarians are not permanently in the seminary. Why bother to build ties or community? *Magsisiuwian din naman sila sa pinanggalingan!* Why not just a pleasant, harmonious boarding house and school? I would like to suggest three reasons why attention to building community in the seminary is *not* just a "frill," an additional but non-essential aspect of diocesan seminary formation.

First, if one looks at the Scriptures, from Abraham to Jesus to the new Jerusalem of the book of Revelation, one sees that the plan of God for our salvation is constant: *God saves by building*

community, salvation involves insertion into community. God is the great community-builder. In our limited time, we might just focus on Jesus: Jesus proclaims the Kingdom of God, but he does it by building up and gathering a People of God.[4] *Lumen Gentium* No. 9 says it very well: "At all times and in every race, anyone who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him. He has, however, willed to make men holy and save them, not as individuals without any bond or link between them, but rather to make them into a people who might acknowledge him and serve him in holiness." We might recall too John 11:51, where Caiaphas says it is better for one man to die for the people, and the evangelist comments that the high priest spoke prophetically, for Jesus died "to gather together into unity the scattered children of God." On the eve of his death, Jesus asks his Father to grant to his friends the gift of community, but the kind of community that is like the community of Father and Son: that "they might be one, just as he and his Father are one" (Jn.17). The point is: the whole history of salvation is aimed at forming community, especially the kind of community, which is the very life of the Trinitarian God: *communio.* The seminary, as with any Christian community, must be a foretaste of the communion God desires for the world. As with any Christian community, it is called to be a radiant sign, in the midst of a broken and fragmented world, of the *communio,* which is God's dream for humanity.

Secondly, the seminary however is not just any Christian community. It has its finality in the formation of future priests. In the *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* it is surely significant that the sacrament of Holy Orders (along with that of matrimony) is described as a sacrament *"at the service of communion"* (*Cf. CCC,* Nos. 1533 and 1534). *Presbyterorum Ordinis* No.6 teaches: "The pastor's task is not limited to individual care of the faithful. It extends by right also to *the formation of a genuine Christian community."* PCP-II, No. 518 declares: "The priest is to build up Christian community!" This is vital to keep in mind. The priest's ministry of preaching the Word and the celebration of the sacraments is aimed at shaping and nourishing *a people* who will live as God's people. At every Eucharist that the priest presides over, the priest does not only demonstrate his power to "confect" the Eucharist; rather, he makes the body of Christ present so that *a people may become the body of Christ in the world!* The finality of his priesthood, symbolized in his Eucharistic role, is not only the

cultic consecration of the bread into the body of Christ but the pastoral transformation of a people into the body of Christ.[5] The point is: How can he build Christian community except from his positive experience of Christian community? The community life he experiences in the seminary will, for better or for worse, probably be the kind of Christian community he will build up as a future priest.

Pastores Dabo Vobis Number 60 stresses the point being made above this way:

> It is essential for the formation of candidates for the priesthood and the pastoral ministry, *which by its very nature is ecclesial,* that the Seminary should be experienced not as something external and superficial, or simply a place in which to live and study, but in an interior and profound way. *It should be experienced as a community, a specifically ecclesial community,* a community that re-lives the experience of the group of Twelve who were united to Jesus.

Finally, I would like to argue that community is the most powerful formative element in the seminary. Formation can and does take place through programs and classes. But the way a spirit is handed on, the way the interiority of a person is truly changed is not primarily through classes or lectures but by immersion and participation in a milieu, a common life and culture. The way the lectures and conferences make the "longest journey" from the head to the heart is in the life of the community.

I think it is only fitting, as I am speaking in a great Dominican university and seminary, to support my argument with ideas from three great Dominicans! First, St. Thomas Aquinas, who asked: Why did Jesus not spread his teaching by the written word? One answer Aquinas gives is this: Christ is greatest teacher, and thus, he did not teach by written lectures or books because he wanted to "engrave his doctrine in the hearts of his listeners."[6] We might follow up Aquinas' answer by asking: how precisely did Jesus do that, how did he teach in such a way that his lessons were inscribed directly onto the hearts of his friends? How did he reach, not just their minds, but the core of their persons? John Paul II points out that "the experience of formation which our Lord provided for the Twelve" involved *"a*

prolonged and intimate sharing if life with Jesus as a necessary premise for the apostolic ministry." *(PDV,* 60) Surely, here we find our answer. Jesus engraved his lessons directly onto the hearts of his disciples, not simply by giving lectures, but by inviting them to share life, to live in community with him. This common life of Jesus and his friends was marked by distinctive words, like "kingdom," "forgive," and "service"; by distinctive prayers, like the "Our Father"; by distinctive practices, such as preaching and healing. In this day-in and day-out living of common life, a spirit, a new interiority was formed in the disciples.

The great Yves Congar makes a similar point. In speaking about tradition, Congar points out that a child does not learn goodness by being given lectures on ethics, but by living within a milieu, a culture, a community, where he witnesses goodness, is made to practice fairness, sharing, respect for others, etc.[7] Finally, my "idol," the former Master General of the Dominican Order, Fr. Timothy Radcliffe explains that Gospel values are fragile and need an ecosystem. Just as some forms of life cannot live without the right mix of sun and air and water and plants, so with Gospel values. They can only come to life in people when a kind of ecosystem promoting their growth in the hearts of people exists, and community is this ecosystem.[8] All these writers agree in the importance they give to life in community as the privileged means for the formation of the hearts and interiorities of people.

To recapitulate this section of our reflection then: why is community so important an element of formation? We have proposed three reasons: Because God's dream is to build community; because the priest's mission is to participate in this dream by building up Christian community; because the transformation of the inner man takes place by immersion and participation in the life and culture of a community.[9]

Qualities of formative seminary community

Having explained community and its importance for seminary formation in general, can we now further identify some desirable

qualities of such a formative and transformative community? In this last section of our reflection, I will not propose an exhaustive list of qualities, but will specify six qualities, drawing primarily from my own experience at San Jose Seminary. I do not propose the contours of our communal life at San Jose as ideal, but am simply seeking to stimulate your reflection, by illustrating how one seminary seeks to build and nourish a formative/transformative community.

1. *A formative seminary community is a sacrament of God's unconditional hospitality: it is a community in which members feel they belong, are known deeply and accepted as they are, and are therefore free to be who they are in their irreplaceable uniqueness.*

Early on in my term as rector of San Jose Seminary, I read a book on the virtues by the American moral theologian Richard Gula. In discussing the virtue of hospitality, Gula shared a metaphor used by a former mentor to describe this virtue:

> Each of us is like rock with walls and barriers that keep others out and keep us secure. But year after year God keeps carving away at our rock. One day we discover that God's hand has created some empty space in our rock. . . . We have space to welcome people in, people who are also weary, tired. . . .They come in and say to us, 'Oh. . . I see you have some empty space. Perhaps I might come in. You know what I have been through. Perhaps you can hear me. Perhaps you won't force your plans on me, manipulate me, or try to control me. Perhaps you will offer a place where I can be me.'[10]

I was very moved by these words, and found that they expressed beautifully both what I wanted to be for my brothers in the community, and what I felt our community as a whole was called to be for each member of the community. Our seminarians come to us very wounded, in need of healing. I have discovered that one of the most healing experiences is a community where one experiences unconditional acceptance, a sense of being welcomed and loved for who one is, a sense that is deepened into the foundational experience of God's unconditional love and acceptance. Frankly, I might add, I do not know how one can be a good priest without a powerful

experience of this unconditionally accepting love of God.

In other words, it seems to me that the most basic reality of a formative seminary community must be that it is a sacrament, a mediation of God's welcoming, accepting love. The opposite of such a community is one marked by intrigue, distrust, caution and suspiciousness, politicking and favoritism, exclusion and fear. While no community, insofar as it is composed of sinful human beings can ever be completely free of these pathologies, I am deeply grateful to belong to a community of hospitality and acceptance in our seminary.

It should be added, furthermore, that the atmosphere created by hospitality makes possible the minimum conditions for formation: *honesty and openness.* There can be no formation without these, for how can one form seminarians when they are not trusting, open, honest and self-disclosing enough to present their real selves? A seminary with a rigid focus on external compliance of rules will do no real formative work. It will create a "colonial consciousness" in which formands show formators the behavior the formators desire, but go on living in hidden, untransformed ways. Formators will not be dealing with the real person of the seminarian, and so neither formation nor transformation takes place. Thus, it is crucial to ask the question: is the atmosphere of the seminary community one in which people feel accepted and valued enough to be vulnerable?

Finally, the atmosphere of belonging, trust, "at-homeness" of a community creates the possibility for the emergence of distinctive charisms of seminarians. Hospitality is deepened when these charisms are celebrated, and when there is a culture, not of competition, but of mutual appreciation for each other's gifts. These can and should be developed for the service of the Church.

> 2. *A formative seminary community is a community of dreaming, that draws its members to share Jesus' dream of the Kingdom for our time, challenging its members to self-transcendence in pursuit of this dream.*

A radical acceptance of persons does not mean not challenging them to grow in the Spirit. Jesus unconditionally loved sinners, yet called them to conversion and discipleship. Jesus' call to conversion was precisely an expression of the unconditional love that desires

fullness of life for the beloved; that longs to draw people away from the areas of death in their lives, and to allow them to become life-givers, in turn, for the world.

Thus, it is important that the atmosphere of the community be one not only of hospitality and acceptance, but one too that is permeated with dreams, ideals, vision, passion, inspired by Jesus' own dream of and passion for the coming of the Kingdom of his Father. Seminary community life cannot be "cozy" and self-absorbed: it is usually a danger signal when all the community discussions in a seminary revolve around improvement of lifestyle or interpersonal relationships, without any similar passion to speak of the great challenges and concerns facing the Church and the world today and the community's response to these challenges. The quality of a community's life should not allow seminarians to experience priesthood primarily as a means of self-promotion, fulfillment of ambitions or improvement of status and lifestyle. This is a real danger, given that our seminaries are usually much more materially comfortable than many of the home environments of our seminarians.

Does the community encourage seminarians to be bold in dreaming dreams, not for themselves, but with God, for the Church and the country? Are self-transcending ideals of service, self-gift, of generous and creative response to the many hungers of the world outside the seminary presented in an inspiring and "contagious" way in the life of the community? Do seminarians support, challenge, and correct one another, in view of these ideals and dreams? Are there venues for the realities of the world today—the erosion of faith and hope among the young; the heartbreaking struggle for basic survival of the poor; the blight of widespread corruption in public life, to name just a few—are there venues for these realities to "disrupt" the life of the community, to challenge seminarians and to inspire them to respond in self-transcending service as Jesus did?

> 3. *A formative seminary community has an operative culture consonant with its articulated vision. It is attentive to the way it communicates the vision and values that it finds most important in its "great words," its heroes and witnesses, its use of time and space, its traditions and practices.*

A seminary community is formative not only when it *talks* of service, humility, generosity, and the like in its mission statement. Unless these ideals are embodied and encountered in the *operative culture* of the seminary, the mission statement remains empty talk. This means therefore that attention and care have to be given to the words people use in day-to-day conversation, to the "heroes" and witnesses lifted up for seminarians to admire and emulate, to the use of time and space in the community, to the ethos-defining traditions, symbolic events and practices of the community. Together, these words, persons, times, spaces and practices form the operative, influential culture of the community, and they can communicate or contradict the stated vision and ideals of the seminary

Simply by way of illustration, allow me to share some indications, somewhat arbitrarily presented, of our "operative culture" at San Jose. We have sought, for example, to reintroduce "great words" from our tradition into our day-to-day communications, words that capture our ideals, words like *"Magis," "Responsible freedom," "Agents of Renewal."* These are not just "mission statement" words but have become, by a "campaign of repetition," part of ordinary communication, and even of jokes, and thus, influence the planning, behavior, and evaluation of individuals and the community. Our imagination as a community is peopled with names and faces of alumni who are outstanding in their priestly zeal, simplicity, prayerfulness and ministerial effectiveness, men like Bishops Chito Tagle or Ted Bacani, Frs. Robert Reyes, Joey Martin, Eric Castro, Ben Villote, Manny Gabriel, among others. We hold these "idols" up to our men as models, or even apprentice seminarians to them in apostolates or spiritual direction. In our day-to-day life, these "heroes" serve to inspire and edify our seminarians, to help them shape their own dreams of their future. Furthermore, an apparently simple thing such as the structuring of space for eating, for example, also influences our culture: the formators do not have a separate room for eating major meals, nor is their food different from that of the seminarians. During our alumni homecoming, in fact, there are no special tables for our bishop alumni, nor in fact are they spared from having to line up for their food, along with seminarians, lay alumni, and clerical alumni! All of this is to emphasize our essential equality, as envisioned

by Vatican II, our oneness as brothers, who happen to be called to different forms of ministry. Also, at *every* community Eucharist, during the sign of peace, we spend a significant amount of time exchanging, not just a handshake, but a warm embrace of brotherhood; and this daily rite has effectively created an atmosphere of belonging. Finally, during the Christmas season, instead of simply caroling for fund raising, we have introduced two important symbolic events that define the meaning of Christmas for the community: a recollection and party with our seminary workers; and a communal "pilgrimage to the poor," in which part of the funds solicited during caroling by the classes is used in a day of service and solidarity.

The point of all of this is: generosity, simplicity, zeal, equality, belonging, care for the poor become operatively experienced in our life as community because they do not remain words, but are somehow embodied in conversation, people, and practices experienced in daily life.

A final point in this discussion of attentiveness to operative culture needs to be made. The community must also be sensitive to and honest enough to admit features in their operative culture *that go against* the vision and ideals of the seminary, and be ready to critique and correct them. This can often be a painful process, as when our community, for example, went through years of discussion and discernment concerning "un-evangelical" features of our process of initiation of new members. The process began when some members of the community had the courage to critique the prevailing culture. It was painful to admit that some of our time-honored practices did not, in fact, reflect or form the values of the Gospel. In the end, however, the critical attentiveness and the willingness of the community to engage in self-critique of its own culture resulted in a wonderful purification and renewal of the initiation process.

> *4. A formative seminary community has common structures that form the virtues through practice, but holds these structures in creative tension with a certain amount of responsible freedom.*

Structures and common schedules are important in a seminary community for the formation of virtues. Values are not enough:

values, which are ideals, have to become virtues in our men, stable dispositions towards authentic human good in the person. A formative seminary community needs structures of common life that form priestly virtues like prayerfulness, simplicity, accountability, pastoral zeal, solidarity with the poor. But, structures should allow some space for personal choice and discernment, so that values are truly chosen, internalized, appropriated and loved, rather than merely imposed from the outside and complied with for the sake of promotion and good evaluations.

> *5. In its decision-making processes, a formative seminary community lives out Vatican II's vision of a participatory Church, in which all, graced with the Christ life in baptism, are involved, through dialogue, participation and discernment, in the life and mission of the community.*

Vatican II ecclesiology sees all in the Church as ecclesial subjects by virtue of baptism, equal in dignity and mission. A formative seminary community will live this vision in the way decisions are arrived at in community. As much as possible, and particularly where important decisions are concerned, all in the community will have a voice in a process of dialogue, participation, and discernment. Issues facing the community will be discussed with maturity and freedom, with respect for differing views, as well as for the principle of authority. The formators may still have the last word, but they will not have the *only* word. This process also allows for self-correction or fraternal correction and mutual challenge; it also allows dialogues of reconciliation and forgiveness between seminarians themselves, and between seminarians and formators.

It must be noted that this process of dialogue towards communal discernment and decision-making requires two things. First, a great deal of patience with and respect for process, as contrasted with a desire for immediate results. In our community, for example, issues are usually discussed first in the seminarians' BEC's, then in the Steering Committee composed of seminary officers, then in a plenary session of the Seminary Assembly, and finally with the formators! Secondly, the fruitfulness of dialogical decision-making process depends on the ability of members of the community to engage in open, honest, and direct communication, an ability that

one cannot simply presume, given the often-distorted patterns of communication that we have learned and grown up with. Communicative skills must be formed for real dialogue and communal discernment to take place.

Finally, a dialogical process of community decision-making gives space for prophecy in the community! "Rebelliousness" is an accusation I often hear formators make of seminarians. Sometimes I wonder whether this accusation is simply an indication of the discomfort of formators with voices and points of view that differ from their own! A formative seminary community however allows seminarians, within the limits of civility and the convictions of the seminary and the Church, to speak and challenge, to correct and disagree at times. Sometimes it might be the "rebellious" in our midst who hold God's word for a community!

6. Authority in the formative community is exercised according to the charism of parenting, that is, it is aimed at nurturing life in the men. Thus authority figures in the formative seminary coomunity are not primarily disciplinarians or CEO's, but shepherds in the pattern if the Good Shepherd.

Thus far, we have specified five qualities desired in a formative seminary community. The community must be characterized by welcome and acceptance, on the one hand, yet dreaming and self-transcendence, on the other. Its operative, day-to-day culture and structures should promote its meanings and values, but it should also allow space for responsible freedom and self-appropriation and determination on the part of its members. Its decision-making processes should be characterized by dialogue and communal discernment. All of these characteristics have implications, of course, for the exercise of authority in the formative seminary community, and indeed, challenge the way authority is often actually exercised in many of our seminaries.

In a fine and often moving article, the American theologian Wendy Wright identifies some characteristics of what she calls the "charism of parenting."[11] This is a kind of loving which involves the exercise of authority over those entrusted to the parental figure, but

that authority is for the sake of nurturing life in them. We do not have the time to discuss all the qualities of this kind of "loving with authority," but I would simply like to suggest that the model for authority in a formative seminary community is not primarily administrative or disciplinary, but parental. It will be an exercise of authority that will involve much personal care and accompaniment, much visioning and discerning, much trust and empowering, much forgiving and reconciling.

Authority then, in the formative seminary community, will be patterned after the blending of love and power, which is exemplified in Jesus the Good Shepherd. One Protestant preacher correctly observes that: "If the shepherd loves the sheep but cannot protect them, the image becomes merely sentimental." We might add that if the shepherd exercises power without love, then the image becomes one of degrading and infantilizing dictatorship. "In the Good Shepherd," the author concludes, "power and love meet."[12] In the Good Shepherd, we see the model of the kind of personal, visionary, flexible, dialogical, empowering, and patient exercise of leadership that formators are called to.

Conclusion: The seminary community and the future of the Church

We have, in our reflection, sought to do three things: understand the nature of community; appreciate the importance of community for seminary formation; and finally, identify some characteristics of a formative seminary community.

As we come to the end of our reflection, let me recall a quotation from John Paul II already mentioned earlier. Of the seminary, John Paul writes: *"It should be experienced as a community, a specifically ecclesial community." (PDV,* 60) In other words, the seminary community is an experience of Church. Recalling these words led me to a realization. It dawned upon me that all six qualities of a formative seminary community listed above should, in fact, be the qualities of *every* parish and diocese, *every* local Church. Every parish, every diocese, should be characterized by hospitality, dreams and

ideals of the Kingdom, culture consonant with vision, formation in responsible freedom, participation and dialogue, and should be led by parental leaders who are hospitable, flexible, discerning, visioning, empowering and reconciling.

This realization underlines a point already alluded to above, in the second part of this paper, and which I wish to re-emphasize in conclusion. The kind of community our seminarians experience in their seminaries will probably be the kind of Church they will seek to build up as priests. The implicit warning is, if they experience a seminary community which does not possess in some way the six qualities mentioned above, if they experience an impersonal, self-preoccupied, inconsistent, oppressive, secretive and authoritarian community in their seminary formation, they may build such a Church in the parishes and dioceses, which they will lead. It cannot be overstated: the future of our life as Church depends very much on the quality of our community life in the seminary.

In 1914, an Anglican clergyman, during his installation as pastor of the small Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields in London, used some memorable words to describe his dream for his parish. I would like to end with his luminous words, with the hope that words like these might describe our experience of community in our seminaries, and consequently our experience of community in our parishes and dioceses:

> *"I stood on the West steps, and saw what this Church would be to the life of t he people. There passed me, into its warm inside, hundreds and hundreds of all sorts of people, going up to the temple of their Lord, with all their difficulties, trials and sorrows. I saw it full of people....It was never dark, it was lighted all night and all day)', and often tired bits of humanity swept in. And I said to them as they passed: 'Where are you going? And they said only one thing: This is our home. This is where we are going to learn of the love of Jesus Christ. This is the Altar of our Lord where all our peace lies. This is St. Martin's. 'It was all reverent and full of love and they never pushed me behind a Pillar because I was poor. And day by day they told me the dear Lord's Supper was there on His Altar, waiting to be given. They spoke to me two words only, one was the word 'home' and the other was 'love'."* (Dick Sheppard)

NOTES

[1] For Lonergan, see *Method in Theology.* For Komonchak, see "The Church: God's Gift and our Task," *Origins* 16 (April 2, 1987): 735-741. For Vanier, see *Community and Growth,* revised edition, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1989).

[2] Vanier, *Community and Growth,* 20.

[3] Ibid., 18.

[4] For a recent scholarly and persuasive study of the communal/communitarian aspect of salvation, and of the inseparable links between Kingdom of God and People of God in the ministry of Jesus, see Gerhard Lohfink, *Does God Need the Church?: Toward a Theology of the People of God,* trans. Linda M. Maloney (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1999). The classic work in this area is Henri de Lubac's *Catholicism.*

[5] John Paul's latest encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* precisely highlights what one might call the "ecclesiogenetic" function of the Eucharist: the Eucharist makes the Church, the Church comes from the Eucharist.

[6] *Summa Theologiae,* IIIq, qu. 42, art. 4, quoted by Yves Congar, O.P. in *Tradition and the Life of the Church,* trans. A. N. Woodrow (London: Burns & Oates, 1964), 27.

[7] Congar, *Tradition and the Life of the Church,* 26.

[8] Timothy Radcliffe, O.P., *Sing a New Song: The Christian Vocation* (Springfield: Templegate Publishers, 1999), 206-207.

[9] Jean Vanier also has a very helpful discussion on the transformative effects of living in community in *Community and Growth,* especially pp. 25-60.

[10] Richard Gula, *The Good Life: Where Morality and Spirituality Converge* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1999), 115.

[11] Wendy Wright, "The Charism of Parenting," in *Retrieving Charisms for the Twenty-First Century,* edited by Doris Donnelly (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 85-101.

[12] Fleming Rutledge, "Love and Power," in *Help My Unbelief* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 100.

Landas 18:1 (2004) 149-169

THE FLAWED PASSION FILM OF MEL GIBSON: PROBLEMATICAL ESTHETIC, A PROBLEMATIC CHRISTOLOGY

Lloyd Baugh, S.J.

The art of cinema has been producing its own interpretations of the story of Jesus since its beginnings. Already in 1897, the year after the invention of cinema, the first filmic "Passion Plays"—collections of largely static *via crucis* tableaux lasting only a few minutes—were being produced and avidly screened by enthusiastic patrons of the "moving pictures." Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* brings this 106 year tradition full circle: like those early films, and like the tradition Catholic "Stations of the Cross" and the "Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary," Gibson's film limits itself to the final twelve hours of Jesus' life, beginning with the scene in the Garden of Gethsemane and ending with Jesus' death on the cross. The film also includes several brief flashbacks to events in Jesus' public life and a brief reference to the Resurrection.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE JESUS-FILM TRADITION

Since 1997 and the early "Passions," the Jesus-film tradition has ranged widely, with some of its most popular and important films providing interesting evidence of a variety of approaches, both in style and in content. Then Hollywood made its mark with a series of spectacular Jesus-epics: DeMille's *The King of Kings* in 1927, Nicholas Ray's *King of Kings* in 1961 and George Stevens' *The Greatest Story Ever Told* in 1965. Later Broadway and the musical drama inspired two Jesus-films, both of them coming out in 1973: Norman Jewison's rock musical *Jesus Christ Superstar*, developed out of the single million-seller song by the same name, and David Greene's much more serious folk musical *Godspell*, based on a Master's thesis in theology. The next mutation of the tradition is in the mode of the psychological thriller, Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ*, which was released to a firestorm of protests in 1988. In the 1970's two Italian Jesus-films were produced, which have had a lasting impact on the tradition: in 1976, Rossellini's *The Messiah*, with its cool, low-key production values and its extensive dialogues, proposed what has been termed the didactic approach, and in 1977, Zeffirelli's *Jesus of Nazareth*, with its great beauty and good taste, announced the esthetic approach and has since remained a milestone to be reckoned with by anyone hoping to make a Jesus-film.

In recent years, and catering much to popular taste and the television-modulated sensibility, three Jesus films have been produced: *Jesus*, made in Italy by Catholics as part of a series of biblical films,[1] and *The Book of Matthew* in 2002 and *The Gospel of John* in 2003, produced in the United States by Protestant Evangelical groups, and approaching the Gospel narratives very literally. All three find their commercial outlet mostly in the video market. There is no doubt that the high point of the Jesus-film tradition is Pier Paolo Pasolini's *The Gospel according to Matthew*, released in 1964, and garnering much critical acclaim over the years; rather significantly, it is the only "life

of Christ" included in the Vatican's list of greatest religious films issued in 1997.

Given the awesome power of cinema to reach and touch the lives of millions of people, it is not easy for a Christian, with the minimum missionary spirit, to argue against a representation of Jesus in that medium: any honest attempt to artistically represent the life of Jesus is, in theory, laudable. That said however, we must recognize that all the Jesus-films, given the background and the esthetic choices of their directors, provide the viewer and the critic with thorny issues and problems; many of them, in fact, become object lessons what to avoid when making a Jesus-film. For example, the earliest "Passions," precisely because they are silent and brief, favor exaggerated gestuality in their actors and unnuanced caricature in their characters, dividing them neatly into good guys and bad guys, and the bad guys, of course, are Jews, most often portrayed as ugly, avaricious, blood-thirsty, thoroughly evil men. This simplistic and very problematical technique leaps to one's attention when viewing, for example, the brief Jesus episodes in Griffith's *Intolerance* (1916): the disciples of Jesus are unabashedly good and the hand-wringing, constantly-conspiring, visually-unpleasant Jewish religious authorities are "to a man" unabashedly evil.

The Hollywood-epic tradition raises a number of issues, among them the "creative enhancement" or "fictionalizing" of the Gospel text with unhistorical and unbiblical characters and episodes, often elaborated at great length and disconnected from the central Jesus story and often detracting from it. For example, the soft-porn scenes of the totally unlikely Mary Magdalene-Judas liaison which opens DeMille's *The King of Kings*—including an orgy at Magdalene's lavish palace, and Mary riding (Ben-Hur-like) off in a Roman chariot pulled by four zebras—sets a disastrously wrong tone for the story of Jesus which follow. Later, in *King of Kings*, Ray creates a fictional character, the sympathetic centurion Lucius, who, from the birth of Jesus till his death, has contacts with all the major characters in the

piece; in effect, and strangely, it is Lucius and not Jesus who holds together the narrative.

Clearly, artists have the right to base a film on their own even-highly personal vision of Jesus and of the Christ-event. But Jesus-films which fictionalize the biblical text or spirit present a particular problem. It is a well-documented fact that typical filmgoers perceive what they see on the screen—an image whose power is heightened, much magnified by the wide-screen Technicolor treatment, a variety of hyper-realistic photographic effects and a super THX sound system—as reality. And if it is an even vaguely biblical film, then what is on the screen is experienced as the biblical reality. And so, when a Jesus-film—perhaps full of non-historical, non-biblical material, and perhaps proposing a Christology and a Soteriology so distant from the commonly-held and proposed belief of the Church today as to be borderline heretical—presents itself, or is praised by others, as "truly Catholic in its vision," as "the authentic story of the Bible," the Catholic critic has the right and the duty to point out the film's errors, weaknesses and limitations.

Another problematical dimension of the Jesus-film has to do with the actors chosen to play the biblical characters. In *The Greatest Story Ever Told*, for example, the contrast between the solemn, lugubrious Max von Sydow (as Jesus), a classical actor whose previous roles had been mainly as angst-ridden antiheroes in the films of Ingmar Bergman, and the many Hollywood stars in cameo appearances, including Charlton Heston, Shelley Winters, Sidney Poitier, Angela Lansbury, Pat Boone, raises the issue of the identity of popular actors interfering with the identity of the characters they portray—the filmmaker Robert Bresson refers to them as dark "filters"—and so with the communication of the Gospel message. Another fatal limitation of *The Greatest Story*, is Ray's choice to so obscure the Jewishness of Jesus—for example, the Last Supper is not represented as a Jewish ritual meal—that in the end, not only is Jesus not Jewish, but his concrete humanity and historicity also disappear and, in effect

denying the Christian belief in the Incarnation, he becomes a strange sort of universal, abstract, and unreal Christ.

The two Jesus musicals introduce the problem of the credibility and effectiveness of a Jesus character who, along with his disciples, regularly breaks into song—in *Godspell* the device works, in *Superstar*, no—and then *Superstar*, with its representation of the Jesus-story in fragmented postmodern style, is a classic case of the limits of that approach and of the consequent loss of the Gospel proclamation. A more serious limitation of both films is that they waffle—*Superstar* fatally—in their representation of the Resurrection.

Jesus of Nazareth, while seamlessly crafted and breathtakingly beautiful, lacks the radical incisiveness that marks the gospels and that should characterize a representation of the Jesus-story. Scrupulously authentic in costumes, cultural ambience and *mise-en-scene*, the film becomes a series of visually-striking, Hallmark card tableaux, including a thoroughly sanitized crucifixion, a kind of Passion without the passion. Thus the radical quality of the Gospel fades away. Zeffirelli also falls into the trap of Nicholas Ray, creating a non-biblical character, Zerah, who so manipulates both the Roman and the Jewish authorities, that in the end it is he—non-historical character—who is most responsible for the death of Jesus. Zerah serves two purposes: he neatly deflects any accusation of anti-Semitism, and he creates a soap-opera-type subplot which holds audience interest through this very long film. The cool didacticism of Rossellini's *Messiah*—Jesus teaches and preaches here more than in any other film—leaves the viewer strangely uninvolved, and his much-abbreviated, unemotional representation of the Passion makes Jesus' death seem more the noble, stoical death of a hero, like Socrates perhaps, than the passionate act of sacrificial kenosis of the Incarnate God which effects the salvation of the world.

The popular evangelical approach too, evinces severe limits. The Catholic-produced *Jesus*, for example, illustrates well the peril of

diluting the Gospel text—Jesus engages in a water-fight with his disciples at the Samaritan well and he never gets around to talking with the woman—and so of the Christian message, so that the film might appeal to all. The producer's statement, "We wanted to be sure not to offend either Catholics or Protestants or Jews or Muslims," says it all; the film offends no one, but the salt of the Gospel has been replaced by sugar. Both *The Book of Matthew* and *The Gospel of John*, films which have not been distributed in commercial cinema circuits, evidence well the problems of the too literal, and ultimately bland, undramatic transfer of a prose biblical text, entire and verbatim, to the film genre with its very different stylistic canons and requirements. McLuhan says that "the medium is the message," and the film medium communicates its message differently from the print- and proclamation-media.

Until Gibson's *Passion*, Martin Scorsese's *Last Temptation of Christ* clearly has been the most controversial of the Jesus-films. When it came out, many people were scandalized because of a basic misunderstanding of the "last temptation" sequence, which they erroneously read as an objective representation of Jesus' sexual acting out. In fact, the far more serious issues of that film are its inconsistent and often bizarre technical choices: for example, a Muslim song invoking Allah during the Last Supper scene, and an anachronistic and unbelievably gory "Sacred Heart" scene, beyond anything in Gibson's *Passion.*

The film also errs badly in its heavily psychological analysis and in the skewed anthropology it applies to Jesus: he is a man suffering severe psychological conflicts, perhaps to the point of psychosis, who in fact never resolves those conflicts, and ultimately, it is thanks to his sidekick, Judas, that this Jesus goes to die on Calvary.[2] Finally, and in spite of Scorsese's repeated professions of Catholic faith to the press, and the hastily-produced printed disclaimer before the opening titles, *Last Temptation* fails to resolve adequately the dynamic mystery of the human/divine dimensions of Jesus' existence and to represent a valid Christian theology of salvation.

Gibson's *Passion* in Context

The latest of the Jesus-films, Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* offers a very powerful emotional experience; at times it is painful to watch and painful to reflect on. Only nominally similar to the early "Passion" films, Gibson's work obviously goes way beyond them: its length, the complexity of its narrative and its contemporary style, all distance it from the early "Passions," as does the fact that it not only represents visually the traditional elements of the Passion of Jesus, but it interprets them, giving them a theological thrust. While the early films were silent with title frames every so often indicating the dialogue, Gibson has his characters speaking the ancient languages: Jesus and the other Jews speak Aramaic, and the Romans, Latin.

While avoiding most of the excesses of the Hollywood epics, Gibson's *Passion* does develop, at times annoyingly, some dimensions of the biblical narrative, usually moving them in the direction of the sentimental. He gives a much-expanded role to Pilate's wife and to her concern that her husband not condemn Jesus; it includes a most sympathetic meeting between her and Jesus' mother. In fact Gibson creates a dynamic relationship among Mary, Mary Magdalene[3] and Pilate's wife, and in a certain sense, his representation of Jesus' Passion is seen and modulated through their eyes. There are some very beautiful moments among the women, for example when Mary, seconded by Magdalene and Claudia and in keeping with Jewish religious ritual—respected still today after Jews are blown apart by suicide bombs—wipes up Jesus' blood from the pavement in the place of the scourging.[4] But ultimately, this clever device, functioning at times as relief from the horror of the torture of Jesus, leans too much on the sentimental.

The scourging scene itself, seemingly endless, its sadistic cruelty—the "R" rating of the film is well-deserved—magnified by far too many extreme close-ups of flowing blood and flayed flesh, by

a heavy musical accompaniment, that often echoes the largely synthesized soundtrack of Scorsese's film and the seven or eight terrible falls of Jesus during his ascent of Calvary, can hardly be justified as the necessary suffering of Jesus in expiation for the sins of humanity. They seem more like pseudo-biblical counterparts of the gory battle scenes in Mel Gibson's earlier directorial (and acting) effort, Braveheart (1995), all action but little moral-spiritual significance.

More than once, Gibson slips into the kitsch that characterizes the Hollywood Jesus-films. For example, in order to have Jesus-in-chains meet Judas one more time, Gibson has him beaten by the arresting soldiers, lose his balance and fall over a cliff, and in a weird imitation of the extreme sport of bungee-jumping, he has him remain suspended just a few feet from the ground, above Judas. Later, in order to punish the bad thief for cursing Jesus, Gibson has a huge raven land on his cross and, in what I sensed was a reference to Hitchcock's *The Birds*, peck out his eyes; the tasty moment is photographed in vivid close-up. Then, at one point towards the end of the crucifixion, Gibson has Mary of Nazareth approach her dying son and kiss his feet; she ends up with a blood-stained mouth, face and clothes. The effect is bizarre, somewhere between images of vampires in horror movies, and the terrible images of a bloodied and devastated Jacqueline Kennedy on 22 November 1963. Later, to suggest that the Roman soldier with the lance is "washed in the blood of the Lamb," Gibson, in a truly bizarre move, has the man fall to his knees and pray under a veritable shower of Jesus' sacred blood. Did no one tell the special effects people that at that point, after twelve hours of profuse bleeding, Jesus would have had very little sacred blood left, and it certainly would not have sprayed out of his side. The earthquake, that in the Gospel splits the veil of the Temple in two (Lk. 23: 45), in *The Passion* goes on endlessly and splits the entire Temple in two. One of the strangest effects in the film is the "tear of God," a drop of water that, via digital manipulation, falls hypersonically from the eye of God in heaven all the way to earth

and to Calvary, and unleashes the violent storm-earthquake that marks Jesus' death.

It would be an understatement to say that Gibson's *Passion* has nothing of the musical about it, but its representation of Herod as a nervous, mincing neurotic complete with a hastily-donned, off-centered wig, seems lifted directly from *Jesus Christ Superstar.* I was half expecting the Tetrarch to lead Jesus to his swimming pool and ask him to "turn the water into wine." If *Jesus of Nazareth* and *The Messiah* lack on the one hand, incisiveness, and on the other hand, emotional impact, Gibson's film makes up for both: nowhere does it seek to represent beauty for the sake of beauty, its theological point is crystal clear and its emotional impact on the viewer is powerfully undeniable.

Finally, while studiously avoiding the dominant and fatal psycho-sexual analysis of *The Last Temptation of Christ*, Gibson, like Scorsese, subjects the viewer to an emotional roller-coaster ride. The two films share heavy production values—very energetic photography, with lightning fast zooms and pans, many subjective shots from the point of view of the swooning Jesus, special effects (in Gibson, limited largely to his several repulsive figures incarnating evil); aggressive editing and heavy music score—and an at-times-overpowering focus on physical and emotional violence. In Scorsese, there are some moments of visual and emotional relief, in Gibson's *Passion*, very few.

Pasolini's *Gospel* and Gibson's *Passion*

Pasolini's *Gospel According to Matthew* has been, and is still, the greatest of the Jesus-films. And, though radically different from it, Gibson's *Passion* curiously has several elements in common with *Gospel.* Pasolini made his film because of a profound personal religious experience he was graced with after reading Matthew's gospel during a retreat in Assisi; Gibson's faith commitment in the Catholic

tradition—made even clearer to me when I spoke with him after the screening of *Passion*—is undeniable. And both men produced their films with unflagging courage and spiritual energy.

The two films are strong, uncompromising documents in content and in style. The Christian messages they proclaim are clear, unambiguous; they confront their viewers, perhaps uncomfortably, with radical choices . . . as did the preaching of Jesus. And perhaps because of this, both films have been subjected to a firestorm of controversy. For months in 1963-64, during the production of Pasolini's *Gospel*, accusations and condemnations were published in the Italian media, by people who, of course, could have no idea what the finished film would be like. The gist of the negative comments, mostly from circles connected with the Christian Democratic Party, was that Pasolini—former member of the Italian Communist Party, atheist and declared homosexual—could not possibly make a valid film about Jesus, indeed such a film would necessarily be a dangerous perversion of the Gospel. The premiere of the film at the Venice Festival of 1964 was presided over by hundreds of armed *Carabinieri*; riots were expected. The film was also strongly criticized in the Vatican's *Osservatore Romano*; some thirty-three years later however, its greatness was recognized by the Vatican.

The Accusations of Anti-Semitism

Gibson's *Passion* has generated more comment and controversy—both before its release and after—than most of the other Jesus-films,[5] in fact a highly-charged, polemical atmosphere has developed around it. Accusations and counter-accusations have been published in the media almost daily, most of them concerning with what is suspected and feared to be the anti-Semitic stance of the film. Some are based on an early cut of the film, before major editing, but most are founded on pirated copies of a very early version of the film's script, hardly a good ground for judging the final film, because most final cuts—except perhaps for Hitchcock's films—differ

greatly from their original scripts. Theologians, pastors, and high Church authorities, have been enlisted by both sides in the hope of bolstering their positions. Even the ailing John Paul II has been unjustly and unfortunately pulled into the fray, with claims that he has seen and liked the film, and then disclaimers insisting that the Pope does not comment on films, preferring to leave that to experts.[6] Of course, even if the Pope has seen and liked the film, his evaluation of it, whether it be positive or negative—his purported comment "It is as it was" seems positive—hardly has the theological and binding authority of an *ex cathedra* proclamation. Further, doom-prophesying reviews have been written by people who have not seen the film, invoking the dark shadow of the Holocaust and claiming in alarm that the film "could unleash new pogroms against Jews," and fundamentally irrelevant and often inaccurate comments have been made about the director's personal life and faith, mainly to discredit the film.

The basic issue here is the way the film portrays the responsibility for the condemnation and execution of Jesus, and this has been a hot issue for all the Jesus films, one that their directors must necessarily come to terms with. Are the Romans to blame for Jesus' death? Or are the Jewish religious leaders responsible? Is it *all* the Jewish leaders, or only some of them? Or is the blame for Jesus death widened, implicating the Jewish people as a community or as a race?

The issue and these questions are very significant because the accusation of deicide made against the Jews since early Christian times has been the source and structure for the persecution of Jewish people by Christians for many centuries, and because the often grossly anti-Semitic dramatic Passion Plays of Europe, from the Middle Ages till recent times, are considered by many as one of the crucial religious elements in the background of the Nazi Holocaust in the Twentieth Century. This terrible accusation is most often based on a verse in Matthew's gospel, "His blood be on us and on our children," (Mt. 27: 26), epithet shouted unanimously—the text specifies: "to a man"—

by the crowd of angry Jews in the courtyard of the palace of Pilate; the phrase, in effect, calls down a divine curse on those Jews and on all Jews of all times, and has been evoked many times as a justification for organized acts of violence against Jews, perpetrated, most often, by Christians.

Since Vatican II, the position of the Church has become ever more clear regarding anti-Semitism, condemning it in whatever form it may appear. John Paul II has visited the Rome synagogue, where he referred to the Jews as "our much beloved brothers and sisters, our older brothers and sisters,"[7] he has prayed at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem and has publicly implored God's forgiveness for the many acts of hatred and violence of Catholics against Jews. In 1988, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops of the United States, drawing their inspiration from the Vatican document, "*Nostra Aetate*," published a document that very clearly sets the guidelines for the representation of the Passion of Jesus by Catholics, "including, but not limited to dramatic, staged presentations of Jesus' death most popularly known as 'passion plays.'"[8] Until very recently, Passion plays have been notorious for their violently anti-Semitic representations of the Jews, always using the offending verse from Matthew.

Gibson's *Passion of the Christ* assumes a rather balanced position in regard to the critical issue of the representation of the blame for the death of Jesus. On the one hand, the individual Caiaphas and some of his colleagues on the Council that pushes the Romans to condemn Jesus may be slightly stereotyped and their power over a weak and perhaps too good Pilate exaggerated; the Bishops' "Guidelines" warn against "caricaturing the Jewish people."[9] But then, conforming to the "Guidelines," Gibson balances well the position of Caiaphas and company by showing several aggressively dissenting members of the Council—Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus and other Jews supportive of Jesus—who strongly condemn the inquest against Jesus as a "travesty. . . a beastly travesty," and angrily storm out of the assembly.

In the crowd scenes during the "trials" of Jesus, regrettably, the film has too many people gathered in the courtyards, an exaggeration the "Guidelines" warn against, saying that the likely historical reality of "the small 'crowd' at the Governor's palace" should never be replaced by a "teeming mob."[10] But, then, as if to counter this lapse, and very significantly, Gibson does not include the usually offending words of the crowd, "His blood be on us and on our children."(Mt 27: 26) Furthermore, not everyone in the large crowd is against Jesus, dissenting voices are heard, and these scenes are then strongly contrasted a few moments later when Gibson shows large crowds of people crying out in favor of Jesus as he struggles to ascend Calvary. Their protests in word and action are so strong that the Roman soldiers have trouble controlling them. Then, as Simon of Cyrene, compelled into service by the soldiers, begins to help Jesus carry his cross, one of the Roman soldiers sneeringly refers to him as "You Jew!" The anti-Semitism here is the Roman's, and the film clearly condemns him. The pro-Semitism of this Simon-Jesus episode is quite eloquent: Simon, at first reluctant, afraid, to help Jesus, once he is on contact with him, supports not only the cross but also, literally, Jesus, repeatedly whispering loving words of support to him: "We're almost there. . . it's almost done. . . ." Gibson's shot of the two of them from behind, their arms intertwined as they stagger up the hill, is quite moving.

Finally, the most clear evidence of the film's not intending to assume an anti-Semitic stance is its striking penultimate scene, a physically static but morally dynamic representation of the *Pietà*, in which a grieving Mary, flanked by Mary Magdalene, John and the converted Roman soldier, stares *not* at the dead Jesus in her arms, the more logical gesture, but rather into the camera and so, directly at the viewer, the only time in the film that Gibson breaks the dramatic frame, and so the dramatic "illusion" of the narrative, and addresses the viewers directly. This singular shot, lasting a long twenty seconds, compellingly invites the viewers "to enter" the narrative and assume our responsibility, as sinners, for the death of this Jesus, who—the film repeatedly makes clear—has died for our sins. Whether or not

one agrees with him, Gibson here is saying, more strongly than any other Jesus-film director, that it is not the Jewish people who have killed Jesus; every one of us sinful human beings is responsible for his death.

The gospel according to Mel

If Pasolini's *Gospel* and Gibson's *Passion* have some elements in common, in fact the differences between the two films far outweigh these. The most obvious difference is that Gibson's is a Passion play, while Pasolini's covers (quite literally) almost all of Matthew's gospel. Pasolini limits the dialogue of his film exclusively to the words of Matthew, while Gibson, justifiably, develops it widely. While both films have English subtitles, Pasolini has his characters speak in Italian, and Gibson's communicate in Aramaic and Latin. Unique in the tradition of the Jesus-film, this audacious and courageous move on the director's part is wonderfully effective.[11]

In the final analysis, Gibson's film is a highly personal interpretation of the Jesus story, something the director admits to quite candidly. It is very much "the gospel according Mel." In its content, it reflects elements from the gospels, from other non-canonical books[12] and from the director's own devotional interest; in its style, it reflects many elements from mainline Hollywood cinema—a genre Gibson knows well—and most obviously from Gibson's earlier film, *Braveheart* (1995), whose tagline— "All men die. Not all men really live."—is oddly similar to the tagline on some of the posters for *The Passion of the Christ*: "Dying was his reason for living."

In contrast to Pasolini's film in ascetic black and white, with its straightforward linear editing, which respects the ellipses in Matthew's gospel, *Passion* is in vivid color and operates a series of time- and space-twisting techniques—flashbacks and parallel-editing—to modulate and analyze the events of its narrative. Personally I found Gibson's exaggerated use of slow-motion

photography, and his digitally-generated monsters/incarnations of evil, annoying, a concession to mainline Hollywood cinema and in the end, quite ineffectual. On the other hand, particularly effective and theologically astute are Gibson's subjective flashbacks to the words and gestures of institution at the Last Supper as Jesus is being crucified: Jesus is living in his flesh the sublime reality that he created sacramentally in the Last Supper and what Christians commemorate efficaciously in the sacramental celebration of the Eucharist. While Pasolini inserts a few brief excerpts of classical music contrapuntally, Gibson enhances most of his film with a dense, at times too heavy music score created for it; Pasolini favors very basic and unobtrusive camera angles and movements, Gibson, as we have already said, elaborates a wide variety of self-conscious and often dizzying photographic techniques, including some shocking digital special effects, all staples of the contemporary Hollywood action drama.

Several of Gibson's innovations in the traditional content of the Jesus-film, while extra-biblical, are very beautiful and effective. When Mary enters the courtyard over the chamber in which the arrested Jesus is being held and tortured, Gibson has her lie on the ground and press her cheek to the stones; she wants to be close to her son, and Jesus, below, senses her presence, her love, and it strengthens him. On the way to Calvary, when Mary runs to help Jesus who has fallen for the nth time, Gibson inserts a flashback of her running to pick up the crying child Jesus who has fallen in their home; then in the present time, Jesus, bloodied and suffering, consoles his mother: "See mother ... I make all things new." The words are from Revelations (21: 5), but here they take on a theological-soteriological significance, showing Jesus as fully aware that he is effecting the salvation of the world. Gibson makes the same point beautifully in two other gestures of Jesus regarding his cross: at the beginning of the climb to Calvary, Jesus literally embraces his cross, a gesture which causes confusion among the Roman soldiers, and once on the summit of Calvary, Jesus, knocked to the ground by the blows of the soldiers, literally crawls onto his cross, a striking symbol of his freely choosing to die for the sins of humanity.

The Theological Positions of the Two Films

Each director announces his thematic program, and so, the theological position of his film in its title. Pasolini's *Gospel* proclaims the Good News of the life, the preaching and healing and the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus the Christ, the definitive event of salvation, the liberation of the People of God: though uncompromising in its demands, ultimately Pasolini's theology is a theology of joy and hope in the Risen Lord. In contrast, Gibson's *Passion* demonstrates primarily a theology of atonement, a theology of the cross. He focuses narrowly on the suffering and death of Jesus, largely disconnected from his preaching and healing ministry; on Jesus' free decision to take onto himself, like the scapegoat, like the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, the sins of humanity and to live this horrific ordeal to redeem sinners. Clearly to set up this focus, the film opens with a quotation from the Suffering Servant songs in Isaiah, understood by Christians as images of Jesus' Passion: "He was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities" (Is. 53:5); every one of the many lashes of the whip during the later, extended scourging scenes would seem to represent one of these human transgressions. Gibson's flashbacks to the Last Supper, as we have already seen, while briefly attenuating the overpowering effect of the physical agony of Jesus, also modulate that suffering, act as a hermeneutic for that agony. As Jesus' cross is lifted up, a flashback shows him saying, "This is my body which is given up for you" over the bread; as the cross falls into place, a second flashback shows him saying "This is the cup of my blood ... shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins" over the wine. Jesus is the sacrificial lamb, the victim on the altar, whose body and blood—as in the Eucharistic Sacrifice—are offered in atonement for the sins of humanity.

The Most Crucial Scene of the Resurrection

The Resurrection scene is one of the most crucial of every Jesus-film; the content and style of its representation reveal much about the director's theological position and can confirm or deny the

theological thrust of the entire film. Pasolini creates a twenty second long shot of Jesus, standing on a hilltop, strongly and urgently proclaiming the concluding words of Matthew's gospel, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. . . . I am with you always" (Mt. 28: 19, 20), while a group of disciples and other people run joyously towards him. On the soundtrack, an explosion of sacred music and song—the very powerful, energetic *Gloria* of the Congolese *Missa Luba*, with its pounding drums and joyful voices—underlines the significance of the Resurrection as a cosmic victory not only for Jesus but for the entire people of God, a victory with a clear communitarian and missionary thrust.

In high contrast to this, Gibson's Resurrection scene seems to have no implications for the people who have lived the Passion with him, for the nascent Christian community. Gibson places his camera in a dark space. We hear the tomb-sealing stone being rolled back and we realize that the camera is inside the tomb, which gradually is suffused by bright sunlight from outside. The camera lingers on the shroud of Jesus, which contains his body and then mysteriously collapses, a transparent reference to the Shroud of Turin. Then into the frame steps Jesus: we see him in profile in a head-and-shoulders shot, all the marks of his Passion gone from his face. One wonders if he still has the wounds in his hands and feet and side, but there is no doubting Thomas, or anyone else, to verify this fact. On the soundtrack, we hear the beating of drums, striking a military rhythm—the Resurrection of Jesus the Christ is certainly not a military victory—and as they grow stronger and stronger, Jesus slowly steps out of the frame. Fade to black.

Gibson represents the Resurrection event not as a cosmic victory for Jesus *and* for all women and men of all times, the pivotal event of human history, but rather as a private experience of Jesus—actually he seems more resuscitated than Risen—which does not touch either his disciples or the viewers of the film. There is no joy or hope in the scene; Mary, Mary Magdalene, John and the converted Roman soldier remain suffering and passive in the *Pietà* tableau, separated from the Resurrection by a screen that is held black for six

seconds, and by the self-centered and isolated Lord once again alive. From the beginning of the film, Gibson has shown us a Mary who has such a strong psycho-spiritual mother-son communion with Jesus that even at a distance, she feels his pain, and he feels her presence and love. Surely this mother-son communion, whose renewal is promised when Gibson has Jesus whisper to her with authority, promise and even joy, the words from Revelation, "See mother ... I make all things new," a communion so brutally broken off by his death, would, could, should have been manifestly renewed in the Resurrection. But Gibson, caught up in the extreme preoccupation with the sins of humanity that informs his atonement theology,[13] and much of the action of his film, misses a chance to give all of us sinners hope. Too bad!

Gibson's *Passion* and Ignatius of Loyola's Spiritual Exercises

Mel Gibson's *Passion of the Christ* is not easy to watch, not easy to take. I found the endless and extreme physical violence visited on Jesus very strong, magnified by the often violent style of the film, at times "over the edge" (Gibson's own words), at times exaggerated beyond what is necessary to represent Jesus' self-sacrifice for the redemption of us sinners. As a Jesuit, a sinner who is saved, my life is centered on Jesus the Christ experienced through the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. In the Exercises, which we Jesuits do yearly, the "Third Week" is the experience of Jesus' Passion, contemplated in prayer for five hours each day, at times as vividly as anything in Gibson's film. But in my experience there is a crucial difference between Gibson's version and that of Ignatius. The Spiritual Exercises structure the prayer experience of the Passion between an experience of the ministry of Jesus, the "Second Week," in which the exercitant joyfully shares vocation and community with Jesus and becomes his disciple, and the Resurrection of Christ, the "Fourth Week," during which—again for five hours of contemplative prayer daily—the exercitant lives the joy and power and victory of the Risen Lord. That gives the exercitant hope!

In Gibson's film, a devotional meditation in the Franciscan mode on the Stations of the Cross—Francis' devotion to the crucifix is well-known, as is his being the first Christian to be gifted with the stigmata, the signs of Jesus' Passion—we experience the Passion from the outside, separated from the Good News of his preaching and healing ministry, and isolated from his Resurrection; we remain at the foot of the cross, passive and despairing with the other mourners. For John and the soldier, for the women, who, in the Gospel are the first witnesses of the Resurrection and for us—sinners who found their hope in the victory of the Risen Lord—Gibson's *Passion of the Christ* offers little hope.

NOTES

[1] For an in-depth treatment of this film, see my article, "Friendly and Fun-loving Are Not Enough: A Theological Critique of the Latest Jesus Film," in *Landas*, 16: 2 (2002): pp. 1-20.

[2] For a detailed treatment of this thorny issue, see the chapter on *The Last Temptation of Christ* in my book, *Imaging the Divine: Jesus and Christ-Figures in Film* (Franklin WI: Sheed and Ward, 2000), pp. 48-71. To the argument that this "skewed anthropology" is in fact something that Scorsese inherits from Kazantzakis' novel, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, I refer the reader to a book coming out in 2005—*Scandalizing Jesus?: Reappreciating Kazantzakis's The Last Temptation*, edited by Darren J. N. Middleton, and published by Trinity Press International-Continuum, New York—in which, in a chapter dedicated to the Kazantzakis/Scorsese "meeting over the *Last Tempation*," I point out in considerable detail how Scorsese repeatedly gives his own, extreme spin to material that in the novel is quite subdued. The bizarre Sacred Heart scene, for example, is original with Scorsese.

[3] Unfortunately, Gibson subscribes to the mistaken notion that Mary Magdalene and the prostitute saved from stoning by Jesus are one and the same person. In the Gospel there is no conclusive evidence that Mary of Magdala (mentioned in Mt. 27: 56, 61; 28: 1; Mk. 15:40, 47; 16: 1; Lk. 8: 2; 24: 10; and Jn. 19: 25; 20:1-18) is a sinner. From the Sixth Century onwards—when Pope Gregory the Great in a homily associated Mary of Magdala, Mary of Bethany and the sinful woman in Luke's gospel (7: 36-50)—Mary Magdalene has been

assigned the role of the archetypal sinner. No less than Krzysztof Kieslowski, in his masterful film, *A Short Film about Loving/Decalogue Six*, repeats this error. Dan Brown in his bestseller, *The DaVinci Code*, corrects the error but then goes on to make his own regarding the Magdalene, suggesting her as Jesus' woman, a much less significant role that the one given her in John's gospel (20: 11-18), as the first witness of Jesus' Resurrection.

[4] I suspect that most non-Jewish viewers of the film will not understand the significance of this Jewish gesture of Mary. It would have been very easy for Gibson to include a hermeneutical line to explain it, for example, Claudia saying to Mary: "I know your religious tradition and I brought you some towels."

[5] The only film that has elicited more, and more violent, protests, is Scorsese's *Last Temptation of Christ.*

[6] The Pope's private secretary, Archbishop Stanislaw Dziwisz, is reported, by the Catholic News Service, to have denied the Pope's positive comment; on the other side of the issue, the Vatican Press Secretary, Joaquin Navarro-Valls, is reported (by Icon Productions, the film's producers) to have confirmed the Pope's laudatory judgement. For a detailed critical description of this ongoing controversy, see John L. Allen Jr, "Pope on Gibson Movie: Was it as it was?" in *National Catholic Reporter*, www.NCRonline.org, 30 January 2004.

[7] On 13 April 1986, the Pope made this nothing short of revolutionary step towards reconciliation with the Jewish community, the first of many he has made during his pontificate. Speaking in Italian, he used the word "prediletti," "much beloved," to qualify the "bothers and sisters." The reference is clearly biblical: "prediletto" is the very word God uses to proclaim Jesus his "beloved" Son at the Transfiguration (Mt. 17:5).

[8] The document, whose official title is *Criteria for the Evaluation of Dramatizations of the Passion*, can be found online at: www.bc.edu.research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/documents/catholic/Passion_Plays.htm

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Two colleagues of mine in the University, Classics scholars specialized in the languages spoken in the Middle-East in biblical times, argue that while it is clear that Jesus and the disciples would have spoken Aramaic among themselves,

the Romans in Palestine, in fact used two languages: Latin for military matters and Greek for all matters of general civil administration. It is more likely, for example, that Jesus would have spoken Greek as a second language than Latin, and more likely that Pilate would have spoken to Jesus in Greek than in Latin. In the film, Pilate speaks Latin to Jesus and Jesus responds to him in that language. Gibson, who says he is striving for historical authenticity with the ancient languages, chooses to simplify things by eliminating Greek. One can only wonder if the exclusive choice of Latin was perhaps dictated by Gibson's much publicized personal devotion to the Latin Mass.

[11] It would appear that some extrabiblical elements in the narrative come from the diaries of Anne Catherine Emmerich, an Eighteenth Century Catholic seer and considered a saint by many, collected in a book entitled, *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ.* These include a cross, perhaps that of Jesus, that is being constructed in the Temple precincts; the physical violence against Jesus during the hearing before Caiaphas and Annas that is far beyond what the Gospels report; Pilate who angrily criticizes the High Priest for the abuse of Jesus: "Since when do you punish prisoners before you bring them to me?" Emmerich's diaries are notoriously and embarrassingly anti-Semitic.

[13] In fairness to Gibson, it is clear that personally he believes in the Resurrection. But in his film, in the emphasis he places on the atonement-sufferings and death of Jesus, and in Jesus' private Resurrection, he does not connect the Resurrection with the people of God. Theologically-speaking, it is the Resurrection that guarantees the victory of Jesus' act of atonement, for the people of God who need that atonement and who without the death and Resurrection of Jesus the Christ, would not be saved. Gibson's *Passion* does not give the people of God that victory.

BOOK REVIEWS

INSIDE ISLAM: A GUIDE FOR CATHOLICS
100 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
By Daniel Ali and Robert Spencer
West Chester, Pennsylvania: Ascension Press
2003, 179 pp., paper, ISBN 0-9659228-5-5
Reviewed by James H. Kroeger

This is a problematic book, and this review hopes to clearly illustrate why it is *not* to be taken as "a guide for Catholics" as its subtitle claims. A book of this nature does not promote genuine interreligious dialogue, which as recent popes have continually emphasized, is "part of the Church's evangelizing mission" (*Redemptoris Missio* 55).

The co-authors of the book are Daniel Ali and Robert Spencer. Ali was raised in Iraq and converted to Catholicism from Islam in 1998; he is co-host of the video series *Islam and Christianity* on the Eternal Word Television Network. Spencer says of himself that his study of Islam began in 1980; he has written *Islam Unveiled: Disturbing Questions about the World's Fastest Growing Faith* (Encounter Books, 2002). Mitch Pacwa, S.J. writes a forward to the book, in which he

commends the authors, asserting that: "No one who is beginning to confront the reality of Islam should be without this book" (14).

Inside Islam: A Guide for Catholics utilizes a question-and-answer format; one hundred questions are posed and given response. The book has several additional sections: "Sharing the Gospel with Muslims" (145-147); "Contradictory Teachings ... found in the Koran and Hadith" (149-154); [End] "Notes" (155-166); "Appendix: *Nostra Aetate*" (167-172); "Index" (173-178).

Spencer states several reasons for the relevance of the book: "most Catholics know little about this formidable faith [of Islam]" (15). He notes, "The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the recent war with Iraq, and the ongoing crisis plaguing the Holy Land have put Islam in the news now more than ever" (*Ibid.*). "Islam is now embraced by more than a billion people—one out of every six people on the planet" (16). Indeed, a deeper understanding of the Islamic faith is needed, but in the opinion of this reviewer, this book is *not* a balanced source for such an appreciation. Some brief examples will illustrate this assertion.

Question One, "What is Islam?" presents a very superficial answer; no effort is made to portray what is "true and holy" or the "spiritual and moral goods" found in this faith as Vatican II recommended in *Nostra Aetate* 2. In the presentation of Islamic faith about Jesus (Question 33), Christian-Islamic divergences are noted but not in a neutral manner. For example, the authors state: "As He does in the infancy narratives of the heretical gospels, Jesus in the Koran even speaks in His cradle" (55). Christian exegetes term the non-canonical gospels as "apocryphal"; this statement implies that the Koran (authors' spelling) [not the preferred *Qur'an*] includes heresy.

When the authors speak about Mary (Question 40) they assert that the Koran contains "mixtures of legends, apocrypha, and certain canonical books" (62); they go on to point out some inconsistencies between the Bible and the Koran, and conclude the section with this

disparaging remark: "If the Koran is so obviously mistaken on this point, why should it be considered reliable on other points of history?" (*Ibid.*).

Another clear example of the deprecatory tone of the book is the following: "it is every Christian's duty to become informed about Islam since it (along with secularism) is the Church's chief and most energetic present-day rival for souls" (86). It is unfortunate that a sincere but unsuspecting Christian reader desiring a better understanding of the Islamic faith will be led astray by several elements of this volume.

Permit one final example which shows the negativity toward Islam woven into this book. Questions 54 to 60 address the Islamic and Christian understanding of God. The answers given assert that Christians and Muslims do not worship the same God. This is clearly in opposition to the position of the Second Vatican Council in *Lumen Gentium* 16. As Islamic expert Robert Caspar, who was an advisor at Vatican II, has noted: "We cannot ever again say that we do not adore the same God, even if we call Him by different names" ("Islam according to Vatican II," 237). The authors Ali and Spencer often show their bias: "In Islam, a distorted view of God (Allah) has often led to several problems" (83).

This reviewer purchased the Ali-Spencer book through an internet supplier; the complete title was attractive and portrayed the volume as a resource in Muslim-Christian relations: *Inside Islam: A Guide for Catholics. 100 Questions and Answers*. Unfortunately, the opposite proved true. A reader looks in vain for a "Catholic" appreciation of Islam and interfaith dialogue in this book; nowhere—even in the endnotes—will the positive teachings of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue or those of recent popes (Paul VI and John Paul II) be found between the covers of this volume. In a word, it is *not* a trustworthy guide for Catholics—or anyone else. *Caveat emptor!* Let the buyer—and reader—beware!

A MORALLY COMPLEX WORLD:
ENGAGING CONTEMPORARY MORAL THEOLOGY
By James T. Bretzke, S.J.
Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press
Philippine Edition: Jesuit Communications Foundation, Inc.
2004, 248 pp., paper ISBN 971-0305-15-8
Reviewed by Pasquale T. Giordano

This book should be of great interest in the Philippines since the author is a regular visiting professor of moral theology at the Loyola School of Theology in Manila. Bretzke begins by outlining a certain methodical approach, focusing on the rational claim axis of natural law and moral norms as well as the sacred claims axis of scripture and tradition, intersecting in the primacy of conscience. He manifests great pastoral sensitivity when he discusses how one is to approach concrete ethical issues and how one ought to move from moral theory to moral practice. The last word in our lives is not sin and judgment, but mercy, forgiveness, and reconciliation. The book ends with a glossary of Latin terms.

Bretzke knows the tradition well and presents it clearly. This is an invaluable service for students of moral theology. However, this reviewer finds himself disagreeing with many of the positions Bretzke takes when he moves beyond the tradition. One student approached him after he had explained a historicist approach to natural law. The student was genuinely disturbed by a prospect that such an approach to moral norms might entail the risk of leading people to believe that there are no fixed absolutes at all, and therefore, people could (and should) do just as they pleased. This is my concern as well.

I question the title of the book. There are certainly times in our lives when we are confronted with morally complex issues and questions, but these are the exceptions rather than the rule. It is the study of moral theology itself that is so complex, not living the moral life. Pastorally speaking, moral formation must be linked with

evangelization, forming and informing the consciences of people in which the teaching of the magisterium plays an essential role. This process of moral formation must lead towards a connaturalization of the heart, growing in virtue, one with our Lord Jesus Christ, the ultimate norm of the moral life, and alive to the New Law of the Holy Spirit, manifested in a life of active love. To focus on a morally complex world can lead people to confusion and relativism. Once they are fully formed with hearts one with Christ and alive to the Spirit as well as consciences aware of the teaching of the magisterium, it is then that they will be able to discern the proper moral response in complex moral decisions.

Bretzke clearly presents the areas of conflict and difference in contemporary moral theology. Among them are the classicist paradigm versus the historicist paradigm, physicalism versus personalism, the faith ethics school versus the moral autonomy school, the debate over intrinsically evil acts, and the role of the magisterium in the formation of conscience, as well as many others.

Allow this reviewer to present some areas of disagreement with Bretzke's positions. Why use the term "physicalism?" It is already a perjorative term. Why not use the term "embodied spirit" or "unity of body and spirit"? Pope John Paul II is a strong advocate of the "unity of body and spirit" approach, but he is also a strong personalist. Basically the magisterium presents the Church's teaching of sexual and bio-ethics works from a classicist paradigm with a "unity of body and spirit." Those advocating a historicist paradigm are often in conflict with the Church's teaching in these areas. Many of the contemporary moral theologians in the classicist paradigm advocate the "unity of body and spirit" as well as a personalism promoting a virtue ethic.

In discussing the debate over intrinsically evil acts, Bretzke makes a good point when he says that the debate over intrinsically evil acts could be ameliorated if not actually resolved by a more careful investigation into the precise meanings of terms that stand

behind the claims and counter-claims. However, when he discusses the position of Pope John Paul II presented in *Veritatis Splendor*, he misses the main point of the pontiff's argument: "In order to be able to grasp the object of an act which specifies that act morally, it is therefore necessary to place oneself *in the perspective of the acting person*.... Rather, that object is the proximate end of a deliberate decision which determines the act of willing on the part of the acting person" (VS 78).

Bretzke places too great an emphasis on the autonomy of personal conscience. This is in conflict with the teaching of *Veritatis Splendor* quoting *Dignitatis Humanae* 14, "In forming their consciences, the Christian faithful must give careful attention to the sacred and certain teaching of the Church. For the Catholic Church is by the will of Christ the teacher of truth." While he states that he in no way is seeking to attack or diminish the legitimate authority of the Church's magisterium, Bretzke does point out issues where the magisterium has been wrong in the past like slavery and usury, citing the need to discern clearly what the truth is. "Often certain moral authorities do seem to present themselves as if the full splendor of the truth were contained in their utterances, and this kind of moral certitude is virtually impossible for any person or institution to achieve" (140).

In discussing these conflicting positions in moral theology, it is clear that no position captures all of the moral reality. What is needed is continual dialogue in searching for the truth. While Bretzke does call for discerning and broadening the common ground in our contemporary moral debates, he presents this point in discussing the problem of abortion and the conflict between the pro-life and the pro-choice groups. An even more important area to promote discernment is within the Church itself in the critical conflict between opposing positions in moral theology. He presents the historicist position quite well and is quite critical of the classicist position. Even the bibliography makes no reference to the works of significant

classicist theologians such as Benedict Ashley, Romanus Cessario, William E. May, Livio Melina, and Servais Pinckaers.

The value of the book is in its clear presentation of the teaching of the tradition, yet breaking new ground in carefully nuanced arguments. Despite my disagreements with the positions of Bretzke, I find that *A Morally Complex World* will be an excellent textbook for a course in fundamental moral theology. Many of the critical issues in contemporary moral theology are discussed intelligently. Bretzke vigorously presents his positions, positions which I believe are open to further discussion. Such an engagement will truly help in the discerning process and in the broadening of the common ground in contemporary moral debates.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE RELIGIONS:
FROM CONFRONTATION TO DIALOGUE
By Jacques Dupuis, S.J.
Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books
2002, xii, 276 pp., paper, ISBN 1-57075-440-3
Reviewed by Ruben C. Mendoza

In a multi-cultural and multi-religious context, how can Christians make sense of and understand the reality of religious pluralism? In what way can they evaluate other religious traditions and how are they to relate to them in a way that is truly open and at the same time, faithful to their Christian tradition? Is religious pluralism to be accepted *de facto* or *in principle*? These are the basic questions which Jesuit Jacques Dupuis persuasively and convincingly answers in his most recent book on religious pluralism, *Christianity and the Religions: From Confrontation to Dialogue.*

In asking what role the different religions have in the one design of God for humankind, Dupuis shows how the Christian faith can be true to its identity while at the same time, be genuinely open to and appreciative of other religions. All throughout the book he manifests great sensitivity to other religions in interpreting the teachings of the Church and in presenting a contemporary theology of religions. He approaches the matter "convinced that a broader approach and a more positive attitude, provided that they be theologically well grounded, will help us discover, to our surprise, new breadths and new depths in the Christian message" (259). For him, a "qualitative leap" is needed in order for the Church to retain its credibility or to grow in it as it openly seeks God's ways beyond the confines of the Christian tradition. He notes that there is a need both to purify theological language with regard to other religions and at the same time, to purify the memories of these religions with Christianity and vice-versa, since these relationships are many times marked by suspicion, animosity and even violence.

Dupuis' book is a development and clarification of the ideas that he presented in his earlier work, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* (Orbis Books, 1997) [Review: *Landas* 12:2 (1998), 120-123]. He develops his own "Trinitarian and pneumatic Christology" which he calls "inclusive pluralism" or "pluralistic inclusivism," a combination of inclusive Christocentrism with theocentric pluralism. He proposes an open theology of religions by developing his theology of the "two hands of God," (St. Irenaeus), the Son and the Holy Spirit, highlighting the universal and salvific activity and presence of the Word and the Spirit before and after the Incarnation.

On "one hand," Dupuis argues that the Word of God, present in history before its Incarnation, is not to be confined with the Word Incarnate, Jesus Christ, precisely because the humanity of Jesus cannot exhaust the Divine Mystery. He emphasizes the universality of that Word revealed by God and which God continues to reveal not only to the Judaeo-Christian tradition but also to peoples of other faiths in their own traditions. Dupuis is careful to note though that the revelation in other faiths does not mean that something is lacking in Jesus' revelation and also that what this revelation in other religions may do is to highlight aspects of God, not equally emphasized in the Christian tradition. And, on the "other hand," the Spirit who is the point of entry of God into the human person is present not only in the religious lives of the peoples of other religions but is present in those religions as well. The Spirit who anticipates the Christ event is also present in the world before and after this event, vivifying all things and enabling peoples to respond to God's initiatives in the human heart, including those who are outside the Church.

Against the pluralists (e.g. John Hick and Paul Knitter) Dupuis affirms the constitutive uniqueness of, the salvific universality of, and the fullness of revelation in Jesus Christ. Differing from those who approach and present the faith in a dogmatic manner, characterized by insensitivity and exclusivity, Dupuis gives these Christian tenets a fresh and creative interpretation, which actually

leads him to claim that there is "mutual asymmetrical complementarity" between the Christian faith and other religious faiths. For him, "an exchange and a sharing of values, a dynamic interaction, can take place between Christianity and other traditions, such that it can result to mutual enrichment" (257). The acknowledgement of "truth and grace" in other religions does not cancel out the fullness of God's revelation in Jesus Christ. Other religions find the fullness of their meaning in the Christ event "without being absorbed or dispossessed" (257) by it. The various religions then represent various paths to a common goal, that is, a sharing in the divine life of God. The religions themselves through the Word and Spirit universally present and active in the world are the very means by which their adherents experience the mystery of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Dupuis highlights the elements of the Christian Bible, often interpreted as condemnatory of other religions, that actually show openness to and a positive regard for them. For him, one should refrain from interpreting the Bible in an exclusive fashion. God, who desires the salvation of all (1 Tim 2:4) and who shows no partiality (Dt 10:17; Rom 2:11), has established a covenant with all peoples and invites them to share in God's Reign. The Church as the sacrament of the Reign is where "we find the visible manifestation of the project that God is silently carrying out throughout the world ... the maximum concentration of the Father's activity" (214). Because of grace present in the world, all peoples are oriented to the Church as the privileged locus of the Spirit and they too mediate the Reign although in a different way.

For Dupuis, the point of departure for a theology of religions is the practice of interreligious dialogue. Dialogue is based on the foundation that all peoples share in the same origin and destiny in God, the universal mediation of Jesus, the universal presence of the Spirit, and the universality of God's Reign. And since all peoples are in communion in the mystery of salvation, in interreligious prayer prepared with great sensitivity and respect for each other, we find

"the deepest expression of dialogue and at the same time the guarantee of a deeper common conversion of the partners to God and to the others" (252). In prayer, we can then perhaps wonder at the very "immensity of a God who is Love and communication" (255), the very basis of religious pluralism *in principle.*

Dupuis in this book performs a great service for Christians who are confronted with the question of religious pluralism and who truly want to understand it. Although argued clearly and written for a general audience, the average lay person will be challenged in following the arguments of Dupuis. What he does is to open and widen the horizons for interpreting other religions, seeing God's presence in them. He lays a theological foundation for dialogue which is faithful to the Christian identity and at the same time, open to God's ways in other religions. His book is thus a valuable contribution to the on-going discourse in the theology of religions.

This book will be particularly useful for Christians who live in multi-religious situations and who are honestly confronting their personal questions with regard to other faiths. The "pointers" which Dupuis has given will prove valuable as the Church engages peoples of other faiths in dialogue. In a world where even Christianity has been used as a means of discrimination and violence against those who claim salvation exclusively for Christians, Dupuis' retrieval of and emphasis on the positive elements of the Christian tradition regarding other faiths opens the way for a more fruitful dialogue with others. What underlies Dupuis' theology is his deep conviction of the grandeur and incomprehensible depth of God's efforts in reaching out to humankind. If only we can truly listen to others in dialogue, then, perhaps, we will be graced by our discovery of and encounter with God in them. We may then be surprised that God is all along waiting for us in other religions.

BECOMING LOCAL CHURCH: HISTORICAL, THEOLOGICAL AND MISSIOLOGICAL ESSAYS
By James H. Kroeger, M.M.
Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Publications
2003, x, 138 pp., paper, ISBN 971-501-966-8
Reviewed by Francis X. Clark

This author has written extensively on a wide panorama of missiological themes. James H. Kroeger, Maryknoll Missioner, is Professor of Systematic Theology, Missiology, and Islamics at the Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines. He holds Licentiate and Doctorate Degrees in Missiology from the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome. Kroeger has served mission in Asia (Philippines and Bangladesh) since 1970. He is also President of the Philippine Association of Catholic Missiologists (PACM), Secretary-Convenor of the Asian Missionary Societies Forum (AMSAL), and consultant to the Asian Bishops' (FABC) Office of Evangelization.

On the basis of that background all readers will have high expectations when beginning this book. They will not be disappointed. It sums up, clearly and forcefully, everything that one wants to know about local Church today. The five chapters of the book, formerly published as articles in various theological and missiological periodicals, have now been thoroughly revised and updated for this volume.

The chapters are treated in this order. Chapter One: "An Emerging Local Church: the Philippine Experience"; this is an inductive foundation for the development to follow. Chapter Two: "Theology of Local Church: FABC Perspectives"; FABC is, of course, the abbreviation for the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, inaugurated and sustained by all the episcopal conferences of each country of Asia. Through the years this Federation has encouraged theological work on Asian Church problems, and published the result of the investigations.

Chapter Three: "A Church Living to Evangelize: Recent Popes and Integral Evangelization"; this section in a special way draws upon *Evangelii Nuntiandi* of Pope Paul VI and *Redemptoris Missio* of John Paul II. Chapter Four: "A Church Walking in Dialogue: Interreligious Dialogue Milestones"; this chapter stresses the relation between mission and dialogue, a knotty problem that is not neatly solved.

Chapter Five: "Naming the Conversion We Seek: Mission and Paschal Perspectives"; here the author opens up new vistas for missioners and mission organizations, expanding the old ideal of converting everyone to the Catholic Church as the goal of mission. That still remains one of the aims, if the Holy Spirit inspires a way to it, but the perspective is much wider and more comprehensive, namely, converting the missioner personally and converting all people to the values of the paschal mystery.

All these chapters include rich, current bibliographies of books and articles on their themes. This book is highly recommended for all libraries and individuals interested in or concerned with the Asian local Churches. It serves not only as an introduction to each topic but as a resource for a full development of the history, theology and missiology surrounding it.

MARY: SHADOW OF GRACE
By Megan McKenna
Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books
1995, 161 pp., paper, ISBN 0-88344-996-X
Reviewed by Teodulo P. Gonzales

Mary has always been an ideal Christian to many. In extolling her, however, her human side sometimes fades or is rendered inaccessible. Megan McKenna, in this book *Mary, Shadow of Grace*, makes Mary more reachable to people because of the image of compassion that comes out of the stories. McKenna paints a picture of Mary who can be a stranger to some people, yet be one who also gazes upon the cross of Jesus and embraces the pain of humanity. Mary is sensitive to the needs of others. She is like someone who binds the wound and welcomes with warmth and hospitality those who feel isolated and distant. Her intuition ushers in deeds of compassion.

McKenna proposes to readers an idea of virginity rooted in the word "*vir*" and "virtues." Virtues can lead to excellence, especially in the area of listening to God's will and sensitivity to the needs of people.

The author deepens the idea of what it is to be feminine without being offensive to men, or hostile, as a result of emotional baggage. McKenna also presents a Joseph who decides to take the higher road for Mary's sake. He could have allowed Mary to take the full consequence of the law. Instead, like the Old Testament Joseph, this New Testament Joseph understood dreams, the forgotten language of God.

McKenna presents a range of human stories that reflect the humanity of Mary: the Juggler, the Native American who went to look for healing and who gave his water away, the "touched" old lady, the spider woman, and many others. The stories are truly refreshing with unexpected endings.

Why should the book be read? Because it inspires and allows readers to possess an insight of Mary. Through the stories, McKenna allows you to enter the heart of Mary, her compassion, her sensitivity to human needs. And as you do so, you hardly notice that you have also entered the heart of Jesus. Truly, Mary is a shadow of grace.

CHRISTIANITY WITH AN ASIAN FACE: ASIAN AMERICAN THEOLOGY IN THE MAKING

By Peter C. Phan
Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books
2003, xvii, 253 pp., paper, ISBN 1-57075-466-7
Reviewed by Aristotle C. Dy

This fascinating volume is a significant contribution by Peter Phan to the building up of a Church *of* Asia as opposed to a Church that is simply *in* Asia. This is a basic distinction that recurs in Phan's essays as he describes how the Church has tended to simply exist in Asia without becoming a fully Asian Church.

Composed of eleven essays, *Christianty with an Asian Face* is organized into two parts. The first part, containing three essays, deals with methodological issues. Chapter One, "The Experience of Migration as Source of Intercultural Theology in the United States," makes the key assertion that theology must be "inter-multicultural" in the context of recent immigrants. There are close to twelve million Asians in the United States, and they are less inclined to blend fully into American society. This reality makes the task of developing a contextualized theology even more urgent.

The second chapter expounds upon the socio-analytical, hermeneutical, and practical mediations that are necessary in this theology, while the third chapter is a dialogue with John Paul II's *Fides et Ratio* as it impacts upon the philosophical heritage of Asia. The latter is very illuminating as Phan exposes the inadequacy of

seemingly harmless and sensible statements in *Fides et Ratio* when applied to the specific worldviews and philosophies of Asia.

The second part of the book has eight essays under the general heading of "Inculturation." Phan explores various dogmatic themes in the context of Asia, giving special attention to the kinds of Christology that have emerged from Asian theologians. Phan also gives serious attention to the challenges faced by Asian Christianity. For example, he asks whether the "Kingdom of God" is a meaningful symbol for Asians. Drawing from *Ecclesia in Asia* and the documents of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC), Phan outlines a "new way of being church" in Asia, affirming accomplishments made thus far, but also recognizing areas for growth in Asian Christianity. The sub-title of the book refers to Asian American theology "in the making," and thus the book ends with an essay that specifically discusses the development of a Vietnamese American theology, a topic that the author knows well due to his personal background.

Each of the eleven essays in the book can stand independently, making the book a valuable resource for theologians, students, and Asian Christians who want to reflect more deeply on the Asianness of their Christianity. Seven of the essays have previously been published in various academic journals. The compilation in this book, however, makes it easier for students and scholars of inculturation to approach the topic more systematically. The first three chapters on methodology are especially valuable in this regard.

Phan displays depth in his understanding of Asian, especially southeast Asian philosophy, culture, and contemporary theology. He describes Asian philosophy, especially Confucianism in Vietnam and China, and then evaluates the ways in which these philosophies have interacted with Christianity. He presents the Korean, Chinese, and Hindu Christologies that have been developed thus far and assesses them in the light of current theological trends. He is very honest in

affirming progress already made and identifying *lacunae* that he has observed. Phan knows that Asian Americans must reflect on their faith in a "both-and" and "beyond" (both Asian and American, but beyond being Asian American) social and religious situation, to which he as a Vietnamese American also belongs. This book further establishes Phan as a sturdy bridge between the Asian context and theology.

There is "cutting edge" theology here as Phan examines the image of the "Kingdom of God" with its patriarchal and authoritarian connotations, especially in Asia. He suggests several ways of retrieving the symbol, calling special attention to the theme of liberation. In Christology, Phan develops the image of Jesus Christ as the eldest son and ancestor in the Confucian context and as the refugee *par excellence* in the Asian American context.

Understandably, there is some overlapping and repetition in the themes treated in each chapter. Much of the book focuses on the interaction (positive or negative) between Asian philosophy/religion and Christianity. As the subtitle of the book suggests, Asian-American theology is still a work in progress. This book offers many building blocks for the work to continue and prosper. Phan's essays are very readable for the most part, with very few discussions that are technical in nature. Numbered summaries of his points or reflections are very helpful, and abundant footnotes make further research convenient.

PIUS XII AND THE HOLOCAUST:
UNDERSTANDING THE CONTROVERSY
By José M. Sánchez.
Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press
2002, ix, 197 pp., cloth, ISBN 0-8132-1080-1;
paper, ISBN 0-8132-1081-X
Reviewed by John N. Schumacher

The accusations against Pius XII for his alleged silence in the face of the attempted genocide of the Jews by Hitler and his Nazi collaborators during World War II were first raised as a consequence of Rolf Hochhuth's play, *The Deputy*, in 1963. Since the Pope's cause was proposed for beatification the number of books attacking and defending him has multiplied beyond measure. They have ranged over every point of the spectrum from pious apologists for everything the pope did or did not do, to broadside attacks on the entire Catholic Church, the most vicious of which is Catholic John Cornwell's outrageously titled book, *Hitler's Pope*.

Sánchez, a history professor at St. Louis University in the United States, has made it his purpose neither to defend nor condemn the pope. He gives evidence of having read everything that appears in his lengthy bibliography, but his approach is rather an orderly analysis of the major arguments brought forth, repeatedly in some cases. He then proceeds to evaluate the reasoning of their authors. A sign of a true scholar, he can show the improbability or even absurdity of some of these arguments, and at the same time conclude the chapter acknowledging that there are valid points that he has not answered. The orderly approach of the book, and its renunciation of refuting in detail all the arguments each writer has used, make it easy reading.

The controversy has not had the kind of impact in the Philippines that it has had in the United States and Europe. But it raises questions that every Christian, indeed every person who is concerned with moral conduct, must consider and try to answer.

When, and to what extent, can a person of integrity, particularly one who holds an influential position in his/her milieu, keep silence in the face of evil, whether of the magnitude of the Holocaust or lesser evils that seem to call for action? To what extent can one compromise with evil in public life, or be silent in the face of it? For these reasons, the book should not only be in any theological or philosophical library, but should be widely read among thinking persons who are concerned with integrity in their moral and civic lives.

Sánchez says frankly in his introduction that he cannot pretend to have solved the question of the evaluation to be put on Pius' silence, as he has not fully settled it in his own mind after reading all the authors and the sources. But he has done a great service in giving us a book that will serve as an orientation not only for those who have not read anything on the controversy, but also for those who have been overwhelmed by the polemic literature. This is a major contribution for a small book.

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