THE YEAR OF GRACE

We know that God is good, that our God is a loving God. If we are fortunate, we have believed it all our lives. The Year of Grace, from Pentecost 2012 to Pentecost 2013, is a year for us to ponder these truths, a time to reflect on what we have received from our good and loving God, to reflect on how ‘graced’ we are.

It would help if we were to make some sort of a list of the graces we have received, of all that we are grateful for.

High on our list must come the gift of faith. Our faith is so precious to us. It comes to us from our family, parents, friends, community, teachers. It comes to us from hearing the Word of God, from the scriptures and through the Church teaching us.

It is especially in the Liturgy of the Word that we hear about and prepare to celebrate God’s love for us in Christ. We learn to recognise how cared for we are, how much we are loved by God. As we ponder the story of the Good Shepherd, for instance, we come to know ourselves as protected by our God, that Jesus, the Good Shepherd, feels protective of us, against all the wolves and other menaces. We ponder the mystery of Jesus giving himself for us, how God loved the world—and us—so much that he gave his only Son.

As we ponder these mysteries we rejoice. Jesus wants us to rejoice: ‘I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete’ (John 15:11). He tells us also that we are to do more than enjoy our good fortune and celebrate all God’s goodness and love for us. As God is generous to us, we must be generous to others.

So Jesus moves on in the following verse: ‘This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you.’ Jesus’ call for us to ‘love one another as I have loved you’ can make us wonder. Does he really mean it? Isn’t he setting the bar far too high? How can we love with the divine completeness with which he has loved us?

But then, he is not asking anything other than what we have heard elsewhere: ‘Be perfect as you heavenly Father is perfect’ (Matt. 5:48). The demands made of us are nothing if not consistent. And as we reflect on this new commandment and what are the helps—what are the graces—God gives us to enable us to obey it we are led to still more profound realisations of God’s action in our lives.

When Jesus gives us a command he also gives us the capacity to do what he commands. So, we ask, what does God do for us and to us that makes us able to do what God commands?

We might start by thinking over our faith journey: how we have received from God mercy, pardon, reconciliation, and how God is enabling us to find healing and wholeness.

Still more amazing is what happened at our baptism: we became members of the Body of Christ and by God’s grace became ‘other Christs’. We received the gift of the Spirit, and became ‘temples of the Holy Spirit’ (1Cor. 3:16-17). We were adopted into the family of the Trinity. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit came and made their home in us, so that we participate in the life of the Trinity.

By grace we are transformed so completely that since the earliest times this transformation has been called a true ‘divinisation’.

St Irenaeus wrote: ‘He (the Word) became human that we might become divine’ (Adversus Haereses, IV, 28,1).

Pope Leo XIII taught in his encyclical Divinum Illud (1879):

By grace God abides in the just soul as in a temple, in a most intimate and singular manner...Now this wonderful union, which is properly called indwelling ... is most certainly produced by the divine presence of the whole Trinity: ‘...and we will come to them and make our home with them’ (John 14:23); neverthe-
less it is attributed in a particular manner to the Holy Spirit.’ (As quoted in McBrein, Catholicism, p.180.)

Vatican II also taught that ‘The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful as in a temple.’ (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, no.4.)

Being made God-like in this way we are enabled to carry out Jesus’ command to ‘Love one another as I have loved you’—to love as God loves, to love with the completeness that God loves us. God has given us the capacity to do it. Such is the wonder of grace.

As was affirmed in the Council of Trent —Barry Brundell MSC, Editor

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GRACE

Our justification comes from the grace of God. Grace is *favour, the free and undeserved help* that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life.

Grace is a *participation in the life of God.* It introduces us into the intimacy of Trinitarian life: by Baptism the Christian [...] receives the life of the Spirit who breathes charity into him and who forms the Church.

[...] Sanctifying grace is an habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that perfects the soul itself to enable it to live with God, to act by his love.[...]

Indeed, we also work, but we are only collaborating with God who works, for his mercy has gone before us. It has gone before us so that we may be healed, and follows us so that once healed, we may be given life; it goes before us so that we may be called, and follows us so that we may be glorified; it goes before us so that we may live devoutly, and follows us so that we may always live with God: for without him we can do nothing. (St Augustine, *De Natura Gratiae*, 31)

— (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1196-2001.)
AMAZING GRACE
LOST AND FOUND

JOHN E. RYAN

A WELL-ORGANIZED synod or consultation engaging the committed membership of our contemporary Australian Catholic Church would be an exciting prospect. Given that our Bishop’s Conference could not see the way clear for such an event the Year of Grace which seemingly comes in its place may well be not such a bad idea!

Though there has not been one consistent meaning given to Grace over the years it does draw into its spell many of the matters that determine our present faith life for better or worse. There are the issues of the interrelationship between God and us; sin especially Original Sin; the value of the human and the natural over against the supernatural; the relationship between Church and world; the place of sexuality in general and in particular in the transmission of that so-called Original Sin; questions of salvation, justification and merit; freedom and determinism; authority; dogma versus opinion and surely many more.

Within this world encircled by Grace there is a conglomeration of stories that have been assembled over the centuries in our efforts to grasp some understanding of this immeasurable gift. These stories have taken their contexts from the evolving historical eras from which they have emerged and which therefore ebb and flow in their ability to contain and transmit the mystery involved. Too often in our Church culture we find it difficult to accommodate change; ‘what has been must always be’ leads us too easily into a morass of statements that confuse and even stifle the overall message. Whenever we come to a project such as this Year of Grace we must be prepared for some serious changes and we are well warned of this in the preliminary literature. Change in the context of conversion means new thinking and new values! We must be ready to have our hills leveled and our valleys filled in! (Isaiah 40.4)

Some time ago the late, great Jesuit psychiatrist James J. Gill, speaking of our attempts to understand sexuality over the years said: ‘So many are victims of ignorance and dysfunctional myths/[stories] that need not exist. These distortions and ‘ignorances’ are causing great pain and awful behavior and are a burden to the Church and its mission to evangelise’. These words are prophetically true of sexuality as Bishop Geoffrey Robinson is courageously reminding us and equally true of our teaching about Grace!

In Church we have a worrying tendency of moving on from one position to another without pausing to say why we are changing from what has been or what there is about the new that is different and promising to be better. My guess is that it has something to do with our fear of making a mistake and the damage that this might do to our perceived credibility. Be that at it may, in this question of Grace there must be a lot of attention given to this task of sorting and explaining.

One, though not alone, who must surely take a big hit in this process is the great Saint Augustine. If today we are seeing Grace as predominantly in the context of relationships, we will have to face the claim that this great man was in the words of the eminent English Catholic psychiatrist Jack Dominian, ‘an emotional disaster as far as relationships go’. Though he used a language of love he spoke out of a particular set of traumatic experiences
and heavily cited his understandings in the context of objective philosophical categories thereby feeding into the stream of western theological consciousness some of the most problematic myths that still linger in the ecclesiastical air we breathe.

It is my firm conviction that there is no way forward without an exhaustive audit of what we have been saying about original sin, grace, sexuality and so many issues such as those mentioned summarily above. Who will identify and nominate the questions for consideration and direct the resources to address them? For me the answer is clear; it must be the People of God loud, clear and unhindered. What resources need to be applied to this task? Whatever resources will be deemed to be necessary, modern scholarship has much to offer and the talk of possible E Conferences and such like is promising. Any move to censor the voice of scholarship in order to protect the sensibilities of ‘God’s little people’ should be treated for what it is, a diabolical temptation!

So far we can take heart from the efforts employed to structure and promote the Year of Grace that is to begin on Pentecost Sunday. The use of helpful technology and people to organize structures is clearly evident. What is not so encouraging is the emphasis that shone through in the initial video presentations. Was I alone in thinking there was an intention to try to move forward without tackling some of the challenging questions? Was there a smell of ‘peace at any price’ when that is too high a price to pay in this instance? Were there signs of an attempt to move forward in faith without the necessary pain and death that have always accompanied sorties into questions of ‘Grace’? Dietrich Bonhoeffer would have us recall that there is no such thing as cheap grace!

If this sounds like a call to arms then that is what it is. There is more than enough wisdom and understanding out there to usher us into a new era. Languishing in a crippling malaise we are challenged to look for the prophets and call them forward with all the encouragement we can muster.

Maybe this Year of Grace comes to us as a second best but it has about it signs of the Spirit breathing. The task for all of us who care is to make sure the Spirit is not stifled!

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What better call could there be for us than that we dedicate the year to ponder the amazing gift that is grace? That surely is our very raison d’être as the People of God. Like so many precious realities of our Christian life, grace has been buried deep in fields of human thought and imagery over the years and now challenges us to find its reality anew in our times.

In a monumental work on Grace, Piet Fransen prophetically chose to present his insights with a story something like this…

A girl was born to a single mother who gave her up at birth; her foster home was dysfunctional and she grew up in a world without love. Consequently she was always fighting to find space and security. She was blind to beauty, unable to trust and had nothing to look forward to.

She was living life at a lower level than what a human is meant to live. She sought her pleasure and relief in following her basic instincts and desires. In her world starved of love, there was more darkness than light, more death than life. Her appearance betrayed her experience; she felt worthless and unwanted,
and presented herself as such.

Living nearby was a young man who had been raised in the midst of loving parents, brothers and sisters. He understood the world as embraced by a loving God who invited him to join in bringing life and beauty to all about him. His vision saw beyond appearances to possibility. His experience led him to trust and have faith in a benevolent and caring providence. He had space in his heart to enjoy, to care and to share.

One morning the miracle happened, the two met. Her pain and deprivation struck him but he could see beyond the exterior to a latent beauty within. His heart opened to embrace her seeing in her a place of possibility. He wanted to connect with her and give her life as he had been given!

At first his overtures were rejected as just another attempt to use her for his own ends; she had no other experience.

Slowly his persistence wore through her protective surface to the embers of a dream that still smouldered within. Slowly in his presence her vision began to change and she started to experience herself differently. She started to have some space to receive into. Beauty began to come to her and as she grasped it she was caught up by its drive to expand. Slowly she became capable of love.

There would be many falls; time and again she would have to start anew and act ‘as if’ she lived in a world bathed in beauty, in life and in love. Always, it was as she began again to act ‘as if’ that she would find out again that it was. Eventually her faith and hope flowered into a degree of love that would allow her to so open up and give herself that she could begin to find herself in another.

A true story! Yes; and it is an example of a force that has come amongst us and continues to draw us into its transforming power. That force has many names! It is love, it is truth and beauty, it is the touch of God as Father, Son and Spirit and it is Jesus too; and in all of this it is Grace.

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The rule of law substituted for the law of love is in reality a pandering to our human weakness.

‘I was brought up in a Church which cherished the will and intellect. We had a theology which was saturated with reason and law, and even now we are expected to submit our mind and will in obedience to authority.

All this made affinity with love somewhat difficult.

Not that love does not need reason, will, discipline and rationality; but in fact the roots of love were learned in our childhood when feelings were predominant and the main means of conveying affection to us. We are steeped in the signals of symbols of feelings, and we cannot be effective lovers without a major use of feelings.’

—Fr Joseph Rheinberger, DD.
'THE NEW EVANGELISATION' AND THE NEW ECCLESIAL MOVEMENTS

Reflections on an Emerging Scene

DANIEL ANG

In October 2010, Pope Benedict XVI established the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelisation as a dicastery of the Roman Curia in his motu proprio Ubicunque et Semper.¹ The move signalled the continuing significance of ‘the new evangelisation’ in the mind of the pontiff, an expression which has come to stand for, among other themes, a renewed commitment to ‘re-make the Christian fabric of ecclesial community itself.’² Of course, the ‘new evangelisation’ was a central theme of Benedict’s predecessor, John Paul II, and the late pope’s beatification in May 2011, together with the establishment of the new curial department and an upcoming Synod on the subject, have served only to strengthen the momentum of this missionary impulse.³

The intent of this article is to shed light on the theological principles that underpin the promotion of the new evangelisation and to examine the new ecclesial movements as principal agents of this concern. It will be argued that the prominence of the ecclesial movements at the forefront of the Church’s evangelising mission, or at least their conscious claim of this task, invites study of their relation to the local church and their pastoral practice. It will be noted that while the ecclesial movements express, quite positively, the charismatic and universal dimensions of the Church’s life, their practical insertion into the life of particular churches, that is, dioceses, has been problematic. The tendency of some groups to absolutise their own religious experience and evangelical approach can, it is intimated, obscure the genuine catholicity or breadth of the Church’s mission. These comments hope to contribute towards discussion of the new evangelisation and the promise and challenge of ecclesial movements within that project, ahead of the Ordinary General Assembly in October 2012, ‘The New Evangelisation for the Transmission of the Christian Faith.’

 Origins of the ‘New Evangelisation’

The first appearance of the ‘new evangelisation’ in magisterial teaching can be traced to John Paul II’s 1990 encyclical, Redemptoris Missio.⁴ Promulgated on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council’s missionary decree Ad Gentes, and building on the mission of the laity as affirmed in Apostolicam Actuositatem and Paul VI’s Evangelii Nuntiandi, the encyclical situates a new missionary impulse within the context of changing ecclesio-cultural realities.⁵

Distinct from though related to the universal mission ad gentes, the ‘new evangelisation’ is directed specifically toward those traditionally Christian nations to whom the Gospel is known but whose faith nevertheless lacks fervour and genuine witness in life. John Paul II writes,

... there is an intermediate situation, particularly in countries with ancient Christian roots, and occasionally in the younger Churches as
well, where entire groups of the baptised have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel. In this case what is needed is a ‘new evangelisation’ or a ‘re-evangelisation’.6

As such, the stated goal is the reappropriation of the Gospel in those cultural contexts which have known Christ, accepted him and then rejected him. The new evangelisation, as it appears in Redemptoris Missio, seeks the (re)conversion of those peoples who have ceased to practice their faith ‘while continuing to live in a culture which in large part has absorbed gospel principles and values.’7 There is evidence that the primary audience that John Paul II had in mind for this reanimation was Western Europe.8

It is also in Redemptoris Missio that John Paul II singles out the emerging ‘ecclesial movements’ as a particular expression and instrument of this renewed missionary endeavour:

I call to mind, as a new development occurring in many churches in recent times, the rapid growth of ‘ecclesial movements’ filled with missionary dynamism. When these movements humbly seek to become part of the life of local churches and are welcomed by bishops and priests within diocesan and parish structures, they represent a true gift of God both for new evangelisation and for missionary activity properly so-called. I therefore recommend that they be spread, and that they be used to give fresh energy, especially among young people, to the Christian life and to evangelisation, within a pluralistic view of the ways in which Christians can associate and express themselves.9

Indeed, John Paul II’s encouragement and support of such movements as Opus Dei, the Neocatechumenal Way, the Focolare Movement, and Catholic Charismatic Renewal—all predominantly lay but typically including clerical and religious members enjoined by the charisma of a founder—was to be a central mark of his pontificate and evangelical concern to the end.10 In his 2001 Apostolic Letter Novo Millennio Ineunte, John Paul II further affirmed the new ecclesial movements as a manifestation of the dynamism of the Spirit renewing the life of the Church from within, ‘a vitality that is God’s gift and a true ‘springtime of the Spirit.’”11 It is to the particular promise and challenge of these movements, formally affirmed as ‘a true gift’ for the new evangelisation, which we now turn.

The New Ecclesial Movements

It is clear from the foregoing papal statements that the advance of the new evangelisation and the growth of the new ecclesial movements have been closely aligned, albeit not identical. The renewed evangelical mission of the Church ad extra, particularly in the so-called ‘First World,’ presupposes the constant interior renewal of the Church itself, a task to which the new ecclesial movements offer themselves. Indeed, conscious of ‘fatigue’ in many Christian communities and the danger this presents to the proclamation of and instruction in the faith, the lineamenta for the forthcoming synod commends the ‘newness and vitality’ which the ecclesial movements bring to the life of the Church.12

An awareness of the potential of the movements in this regard has driven institutional support of the movements’ activities, resulting in growth that has been no less than extraordinary. There are an estimated one million members of the Neocatechumenal Way around the world in more than 20,000 small communities while the Catholic Charismatic Renewal claims a presence in some 220 coun-

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tries and contact with over 120 million Catholics. The close affiliation of the movements with the new evangelisation is also reflected in the newly-formed Pontifical Council which includes among its consultors the vicar-general of Opus Dei, Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz, the president of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation, Fr Julian Carrion, and the co-initiator of the Neocatechumenal Way, Kiko Arguello.

It can be said that the increasing presence of the ecclesial movements amidst the local churches expresses, quite positively, a renewed imagination about the possibilities of Christian life and community. As Hanna affirms, the movements incarnate central aspects of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, most especially a renewed baptismal appreciation, an avid sense of the universal call to holiness, and a related and intense missionary zeal.

The movements can also be interpreted as continuous with the Council in their expression of the charismatic dimension of the Church’s mystery, a dynamic element that was fruitfully recovered at the Council through a return to the pneumatology of St Paul. Lumen Gentium, for instance, affirmed the bestowal by the Holy Spirit of ‘different hierarchic and charismatic gifts’ (LG 4), given for the building up of the Church (LG 12), and directed toward a saving mission in the world (LG 30-31). The vigorous lay apostolic activity at the heart of the new ecclesial movements coheres well with these themes.

However, while reflecting the renewed spiritual consciousness nurtured by the Council’s teachings, particularly among the laity, the practical integration of the new ecclesial movements into existing ecclesial structures and culture has been anything but straightforward. It is notable that the Second Vatican Council, while acknowledging the Spirit’s guidance by ‘different hierarchic and charismatic gifts,’ did not further develop the relationship between these charismatic and institutional aspects. Systematic reflection of this kind may have been advantageous, particularly in light of the discord that has since arisen between a number of movements and the parochial structures of the diocese. The most recent instance is the tension between the Neocatechumenal Way and the Catholic bishops of Japan, a situation which will be considered.

Given the prominence of the new ecclesial movements in dioceses around the world, and their self-understanding as ‘agents of the new evangelisation,’ the difficulties related to their insertion in the local church call for reflection. Indeed, John Paul II himself, while affirming the new movements as a ‘providential response’ to an increasingly secular milieu, also raised the challenges that the movements face in their journey toward ‘ecclesial maturity.’ In particular, he stressed the need for the new ecclesial movements to submit to the discernment of competent ecclesiastical authorities, namely the bishops, if the authenticity of their charism was to be safeguarded. Commentators have also raised the need of inculturation as an ongoing issue for some movements.

Before examining specific examples of such difficulties, however, it is helpful to consider the thought of Joseph Ratzinger on the ecclesial movements for his analysis as Cardinal-Prefect, and then interventions as pope, raise important questions regarding their accountability and influence. The pastoral practice and potentially political character of the movements is indeed significant as the promotion of a new evangelisation gains both momentum and gravitas in theology as well as in pastoral planning and practice.

**Benedict XVI on the New Ecclesial Movements**

Benedict XVI’s overall support of the new ecclesial movements, which he has affirmed as ‘signs of hope,’ can be interpreted not only in the light of the legacy of his predecessor but also in relation to his previous analysis of their ecclesial significance as Prefect of the
Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. In an important 1998 article, ‘The Theological Locus of Ecclesial Movements,’ Ratzinger draws parallels between the new ecclesial movements and the irruption of monasticism that surfaced as early as the third century. While the apostolic thrust of the new movements clearly differs from the contemplative character of monasticism, they nevertheless share, Ratzinger points out, an intense desire to live the vita evanglica, that is, to allow the Gospel to shape the whole of one’s life.

Perhaps the most interesting congruence identified by Ratzinger is that while monasticism did not develop as a separate institution alongside the normal Church, its communities were, all the same, ‘obliged to accept the fact that the movement to follow Christ radically cannot be completely merged with the local church.’ He thus concludes, ‘So much is clear: the monastic movement creates a new centre of life that does not abolish the local ecclesial structure of the post-apostolic Church, yet does not completely coincide with it, but is active within it as a vitalising force.’ In the same way, the new ecclesial movements are brought forward as a vital expression of the Spirit that cannot simply be aligned or contained within traditional diocesan structures.

Another pertinent aspect of Ratzinger’s analysis is that the new ecclesial movements, like monasticism, are affirmed as a group by which the ‘universalistic’ aspect of the Church’s nature and mission is reinvigorated and reaffirmed, and so a force that serves, in this way, ‘the spiritual vitality and truth of the local churches.’ In other words, the spiritual potency and tensive ecclesial location of the new movements—stretching beyond but nevertheless active within the local church—works to resist an absolutisation of local ecclesial structures. For Ratzinger, the movements work against any one-sided emphasis on the particular at the expense of the essential universality of the Church. It is in their distinct trans-local organisation that the new ecclesial movements are, in principle, fruitful aids toward the ongoing integration and complementarity of the charismatic and institutional within the Church.

**Pastoral Challenges**

However, as in many aspects of ecclesial life, the pastoral reality has not always lived up to the theological promise outlined and very real difficulties have emerged in the relation between various ecclesial movements and local churches. In the case of the Neocatechumenal Way, the Japanese experience is particularly striking.

In January 2011, the president of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Japan (CBCJ) called for priests and lay men and women to assist in confronting the purported ‘damage’ caused by the presence and activities of the Way which has maintained communities in Japanese dioceses since the 1970s. The president of the Bishops’ Conference, the Jesuit Archbishop of Osaka, Leo Jun Ikenaga, stated plainly, ‘In those places touched by the Neocatechumenal Way, there has been rampant confusion, conflict, division, and chaos.’ The bishops’ concerns related to the Way’s custom of celebrating separate liturgies within the parish, an apparent lack of ecclesial accountability, and a distinct culture within the Way, grounded in the spirituality of their founder, Kiko, which has been found to be at great variance with the normal procedure of parish life. The appeal for the assistance of the clergy and laity in the address of the Way came after the Japanese episcopal conference appealed to Pope Benedict to have the movement removed from their dioceses. It was a request that was formally denied.

It is noteworthy that this has not been the only instance in which new ecclesial movements have sought affirmation from Rome when their ministry has been thwarted or gone unrecognised by a local bishop. In 1988, *The Tablet* reported tensions between members of the Italian episcopacy, including the Arch-
bishop of Milan, Cardinal Martini, and Communion and Liberation over the movement’s formation program, including the character of their instruction in Catholic social doctrine. In this instance, the Cielini, as members of Communion and Liberation are also known, obtained support from John Paul II who is purported to have reproved the president of the Italian Bishops’ Conference for their lack of enthusiasm for the movement.

These incidents bear out Ratzinger’s identification of the ‘universalistic’ dimension of the new ecclesial movements in a particular way. It is clear that there often exists a strong and direct affiliation between the new ecclesial movements and the papacy. This is evident not only in the case of the Neocatechumenal Way in Japan but also in the situation of Opus Dei which in 1982 was given the status of a ‘personal prelature’ by John Paul II.

While Ratzinger himself affirms this complementarity, between the ‘universal ecclesial realities’ of the movements and the Petrine office as ‘bishop for the whole Church,’ such a ‘symphony,’ as Ratzinger puts it, can cast the movements with a particular type of authority, undeniably political in character, in the midst of the local church. The relative autonomy of the new ecclesial movements from parochial structures can, if oversight is not suitably exercised, lead to groups making absolute their own religious experience, to the exclusion of other forms of Christian discipleship, catechesis and mission. Alert to the danger, Hanna observes ‘a close alliance between a centralised papacy and international movements can breed an ‘elitist arrogance’ in the movements and undermine the Church’s collegial and episcopal structure which is according to our faith jure divino.’

It is clear in the Japanese case that the often immediate, and perhaps politically expedient, relation between the new ecclesial movements and the papacy can have material consequences for the authority of local bishops in the pastoral care of their dioceses. Furthermore, it can be recognised that any tendency toward exclusivity, absolutisation, or divisive pastoral practice among the ecclesial movements in the context of local churches has the potential to obscure, or even hinder, the reception of ‘the new evangelisation’ more broadly, as an imperative project for all the baptised rather than simply a few.


dential Remarks

Historical experience has surfaced both the promise and ongoing tensions which lie at the heart of the new ecclesial movements as a distinct presence within the local church. As prominent claimants of ‘the new evangelisation’ to date, and an undoubted presence in its future expression, the questions concerning the integration of the movements with parochial structures and the character of their pastoral practice remain pertinent. The particular Petrine orientation of a number of the movements, which can be engaged as a source of ecclesiastical status or power, dovetails with a theological emphasis on the ontological and temporal priority of the universal church over the particular as expressed in the writings of Ratzinger.

It must be said that if the historical effect of the new ecclesial movements is not to contradict their original meaning, sensitivity is called forth to the essential ‘catholicity’ of the Church’s evangelising mission. This ‘inclusive’ and ‘expansive’ breadth, as Dulles describes it, calls for the creative reception and mutuality of both the universal and particular in the Church’s life, as well as the charismatic and institutional. Applied to the evangelising mission of the Church, a spirit and practice of exchange and complementarity between the new ecclesial movements and the structures and culture of the local church will prove vital, particularly as the theme of ‘the new evangelisation’ comes to greater clarity in magisterial thought and, it is hoped, ever more urgent and dynamic expression in Catholic life.

As the lineamenta for the forthcoming
Synod on the New Evangelisation points out, with acumen, ‘Perhaps…the problem of unfruitfulness in evangelisation and catechesis today can be seen as an ecclesiological problem which concerns the Church’s capacity, more or less, of becoming a real community, a true fraternity and a living body …’

It could be intimated that our awareness of the ‘catholicity’ of God’s own life, a presence that cannot be limited to any one historical form or exhausted by a single missionary practice, will be essential to the realisation of such a vibrant community and the future flourishing of its evangelising mission.

**NOTES**


2 Ibid. The original citation is Christifideles Laici 34.


6 Redemptoris Missio 33.

7 Redemptoris Missio 37.

8 Rymarz cites the testimony of John Paul II’s private secretary, Stanisław Dziwisz, who confirms, ‘The idea [of the new evangelisation] came to him when he noticed—especially during trips—that there was an urgent need to reinvigorate Churches in old Christian countries. He thought this was particularly true of Europe.’ See Richard M. Rymarz, ‘The New Evangelisation: A Look at the Growing Range of Reference,’ Compass Theological Review 44/2 (2010), 24; original reference, Stanisław Dziwisz A Life with Karol: My Forty-Year Friendship with the Man Who Became Pope, (New York: Doubleday, 2008), 159.

9 Redemptoris Missio 72.

10 The precise definition and range of an ‘ecclesial movement’ remains somewhat elastic. While Opus Dei is, in canonical terms, a ‘personal prelature’ and resists the description as an ‘ecclesial movement,’ it is where the Church most often includes them. The same applies to Catholic Charismatic Renewal which does not trace its lineage from an individual founder but is, nevertheless, usually included among the movements. In a letter to the World Congress of Ecclesial Movements in May 1998, John Paul II defined a movement, in general terms, as ‘a concrete ecclesial entity, in which primarily lay people participate, with an itinerary of faith and Christian testimony that founds its own pedagogical method on a charism given to the person of the founder in determined circumstances and modes.’ See John Paul II, ‘Movements in the Church,’ Laity Today (1999), 18.


12 Lineamenta, ‘The New Evangelisation for the
Transmission of the Catholic Faith,' 15.
14 Tony Hanna, New Ecclesial Movements, (Strathfield: St Pauls Publications, 2006), 265 and passim.
15 It is notable that some Latin American commentators have interpreted the implementation of ‘the new evangelisation’ as discontinuous with the reforms of Vatican II, reading it as a partial break with some progressive currents unleashed by the Second Vatican Council and a conservative redeployment of others, as a ‘resurgent conservatism’ and even a ‘romanization’ of post-Vatican II innovations, an attempt to absorb some reformist elements in ways that do not challenge the power structure within the church, while disqualifying others as too ideological or reductive.’ See Anna L. Peterson and Manuel A. Vasquez, ‘The New Evangelization in Latin American Perspective,’ Cross Currents 48/3 (1998): 311-329.
17 Ibid.
20 Joseph Ratzinger, ‘The Theological Locus of Ecclesial Movements,’ Communio 25 (Fall 1998), 492.
21 Ibid., 492.
22 Ibid., 493.
23 Ibid., 493.
24 Ibid., 493.
25 This is a theme taken up by Ratzinger in his much publicised debate with Cardinal Walter Kasper. For an overview of this debate, see Kilian McDonnell, ‘The Ratzinger/Kasper Debate: The Universal Church and Local Churches,’ Theological Studies 63 (2002): 227-250.
27 It is significant that similar concerns about the Way have been expressed by bishops and clergy around the world, including in the French diocese of Nancy where the parish of Pulnoy-Cervelle became the centre of conflict in 1992, the Clifton diocese in the UK which, in 1994, ordered an inquiry that concluded the presence of the Way in its parishes was ‘completely divisive and destructive’ and in Jerusalem where the Latin patriarch, Michel Sabbah, reproved Neocatechumenal communities in 2007 for their suspect liturgical practice and their resistance to inculturation. For details of the Clifton Enquiry, see Hanna, New Ecclesial Movements, 62-72. Strong criticisms of the movements can also be found in Gordon Urquhart, The Pope’s Armada, (New York, Prometheus, 1999) and Luca Diotallevi, ‘Catholicism on the way to Sectarianism? An Old Hypothesis for New Problems,’ Concilium 3 (2003): 107-121.
29 Robert Moynihan, ‘Valiant for God, the New Movements I,’ The Tablet (20 February, 1988), 8.
31 Ratzinger, ‘The Theological Locus of Ecclesial Movements,’ fn. 20, 499.
32 Hanna, New Ecclesial Movements, 261.
LAITY AND CHURCH
In the Documents of the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences

PETER N.V. HAI

In the years since the Second Vatican Council, especially after the promulgation in 1972 of Paul VI’s Apostolic Letter Ministeria Quaedam, inviting episcopal conferences to request the establishment of new ministries from the Holy See, lay apostolic activity has flourished in the Church. National conferences of bishops have also issued numerous statements in support of lay ministries.

In Asia, at the ‘Asian Colloquium on Ministries in the Church’ in 1977 the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences (hereafter FABC) listed more than forty types of lay ministries and predicted that more ministries would emerge in response to the needs of particular communities. Nine years later, in 1986, the Catholic bishops of Asia devoted an entire Fourth Plenary Assembly to examine the question of the vocation and mission of lay people in the Church and in the world of Asia.

For the Asian bishops, lay people qua Asian Christians are as integral to the Church as the clergy. Hence, the source of their vision for lay responsibility can be found in their understanding of the life, nature, and purpose of the Church. Indeed, their theology of the laity reflected a particular ecclesiology that had been discussed in detail at the Third Plenary Assembly in 1982, under the theme of ‘The Church—A Community of Faith in Asia.’

This paper will first review the development of the FABC’s ecclesiology and its theology of the laity. It will then conclude with a comparative summary of these two theologies under the themes of vocation, mission, theological development, and methodology.

* * *

The FABC’s Theology of the Church

Back in the mid-1970s the Catholic bishops of Asia foresaw that, by the turn of the 20th century, an estimated 60% of the world population would live in Asia. It was also evident that Asia would remain the least Christian continent in numerical terms. Therefore, in their view, it was imperative that Asian Churches discover their own vocation and become ‘genuine Christian communities in Asia—Asian in their way of thinking, praying, living, communicating their own Christ-experience to others.’

Later, the FABC revisited this theme at the Third Plenary Assembly, this time providing a fuller treatment of the subject by reflecting on the nature and structures of the Church, in particular the local Church and basic ecclesial communities. For the Asian bishops, the Church is a community of faith in Asia, ‘a community realizing its communion and mission in its own being and life, and in relation to other communities.’ At its deepest level, the Church is ‘a communion rooted in the life of the Trinity,’ and essentially ‘a sacrament of the loving self-communication of God’ and the graced response of redeemed people in faith, hope and charity.

Throughout their discourse on the imperatives of the Church in Asia, the Asian bishops emphasise the Christological, pneumatological, and Trinitarian basis of their ecclesiology. First, they encourage Asian theologians to develop a cosmic Christology of harmony, because such a Christology will engender a cosmic ecclesiology that moves beyond its institutional attention ‘to understand the Church essentially as a centrifugal Church, open to the whole universe and present in and for the
universe.'\textsuperscript{11} Second, their ecclesiology espouses Vatican II’s teaching on the Church as community of believers filled with the living Spirit,\textsuperscript{12} and stresses that the Spirit is the church’s life principle.\textsuperscript{13} For the FABC, the mission of the Spirit is inseparable from that of the Father and the Son: the Spirit makes Christians one by incorporating them into the one body of Christ and leads them to the kingdom of God.\textsuperscript{15} The church, according to the FABC, is a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{16} It is essentially ‘a communication which flows out of the communication of the Trinity.’\textsuperscript{17} Its mission, affirms the FABC, is the missio Dei,\textsuperscript{18} the very mission of the Trinity. We note that the christological and pneumatological basis of the FABC’s ecclesiology discussed above underlines its contextual character,\textsuperscript{19} by a constant reference to the Gospel and an emphasis on the social context,\textsuperscript{20} coupled with a reading of the signs of the times discerned as promptings and movements of the Holy Spirit. The trinitarian dimension, on the other hand, highlights its relational aspect by stressing the theme of the church as a community of faith rooted in the perfect communion of the three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

After the Third Plenary Assembly in 1982, the FABC increasingly turned its attention toward promoting a new way of being Church in Asia,\textsuperscript{21} which is expressed by four ecclesiological dimensions: Church as communion-in-mission,\textsuperscript{22} as community of dialogue and solidarity,\textsuperscript{23} as basic ecclesial communities,\textsuperscript{24} and as community of disciples.\textsuperscript{25} Discipleship, declared the FABC, ‘is a new paradigm for understanding the Church.’\textsuperscript{26} This concept of discipleship is premised on the intertwined ideas of trinitarian communion, fellowship with other believers, solidarity with all peoples, mission as service to life, and ‘mission as sacrament of peace and harmony.’\textsuperscript{27}

While the Asian bishops already called for an in-depth study of the theology of harmony in the Asian context in 1984,\textsuperscript{28} only in 1995 did they develop the initial contours of a theology of harmony, and also ‘an ecclesiology of harmony’ by a triple theological process: first, by reading the ongoing conflicts and growing disharmony in Asian societies as signs of the times, and taking stock of the various attempts at promoting harmony; second, by reflecting on the meaning of harmony in Asian cultures, philosophies, and religions as well as in the Bible and Church traditions; third, by rereading the Gospels to discover ‘a Cosmic Christology of harmony,’ and crafting a theology and spirituality of harmony as the basis for an active commitment to harmony and rationale for Asian collaboration.\textsuperscript{29} From this ‘vision of Christ as the sacrament of new harmony’ the FABC proposed the metaphors of the Church as the ‘Sacrament of Harmony’ and as ‘the Servant-Sacrament of Harmony.’\textsuperscript{30} These images originate from two of Vatican II’s ecclesiological models: the Church as the sacrament of unity and the Church as ‘servant of the Kingdom.’\textsuperscript{31} We note that these metaphors are already implied in the bishops’ basic understanding of the Church as a community of faith in Asia, as communion-in-mission, and as community of discipleship.

For the Asian bishops, evangelisation is the primary task and the highest priority for the church,\textsuperscript{32} whose purpose is to build up the kingdom of God.\textsuperscript{33} Its mission is directed to the world,\textsuperscript{34} and its mode ‘a triple dialogue of life’ with the cultures, the religions, and the poor,\textsuperscript{35} with a focus on the promotion of social justice.\textsuperscript{36} Therefore, lay people must continue ‘to share zealously in the mission of the Church as a leaven in the world and as a sign of the Reign of God.’\textsuperscript{37}
The FABC’s Theology of the Laity

Indeed, this theme was explored in depth at the Fourth Plenary Assembly on the vocation and mission of lay people in the Church and in the world of Asia.38 First, for the FABC, lay people first and foremost are Asian Christians, a contextual reality and constitutive part of the Church, the faithful, the disciples of Christ, the people of God, and the believing community. Their identity is based on the baptismal, common priesthood of life, characterised by the Asian secularity. Their calling is intimately bound to the vocation of local Churches where all Asian Christians are called to a contextualised communion by being committed to Jesus the Liberator and to live the priesthood of life in a communion of integral liberation. Their mission and ministries are essentially Christ-centred, kingdom-focused, world-oriented, liberative, and dialogical as they endeavour to actualise the priestly, prophetic, and pastoral functions in their faith response to the challenges of Asia. For the FABC, the entire people of God are priestly, and their common priesthood of life, which has its origins in Christ himself, is more real and inclusive than the ministerial priesthood of the clergy. Mission is the purpose of ministries, and evangelisation is the highest priority of mission.39 Proclamation is the centre and primary element of evangelisation,40 and the ultimate goal of evangelisation is to build up the kingdom of God by a triple dialogue with the religions, cultures and the poor of Asia.41

Consistent with the contextual orientation of their theology, the Asian bishops have endeavoured to remain faithful to the Gospel, the tradition, and the teachings of Vatican II,42 and at the same time, maintained creativity in adapting these teachings to the situations in Asia. Their theology also has a markedly relational approach. Indeed, for the FABC, underlying the articulation of the vocation and mission of lay people is their relationship with Christ and their role vis-à-vis the Church and the world.43 Lay people and the entire Christian community are called to a communion with Jesus the Liberator, a communion of committed disciples working for the liberation of Asia, which is rooted in the realities of Asia and in solidarity with the peoples of Asia.

A striking feature of the FABC’s theology of the laity is that there has been a fundamental continuity and a gradual progression in this theology since 1970, the inception date of the FABC,44 which displays a high degree of consistency and integration, coupled with discernible elements of growth.45 Indeed, this contextual theology, developed in response to the challenges of Asian societies, has increasingly been manifested by an orientation to the world, a more regional contextualisation of the role of lay people, a move towards their empowerment and greater autonomy, a focus on their integral formation, and an emphasis on a deeper and more engaging spirituality of discipleship and harmony.

Ecclesiological Foundations of the FABC’s Theology of the Laity

The figure below aims to highlight the correlation between the Asian bishops’ ecclesiology and their theology of the laity. This correlation is important in two ways. First, the bishops of Asia do not emphasise the institutional, clerical or juridical aspect of the Church. This point is not merely terminological; it is substantive. For the issues at stake in defining the role of the laity in the Asian Church are neither exhausted nor chiefly determined by their relationship to the Church as institution, as clergy, and as hierarchy. Our argument is that to correctly understand the FABC’s view of the role of the laity one has to restate the question in terms of its fuller understanding of the Church, as in ‘the role of lay people in the Church as a community of faith in Asia,’ ‘the role of lay people in the Church as communion in mission,’ ‘the role of lay people in the Church as dialogue and solidarity,’ ‘the role of lay people in the Church as disciple-community,’ ‘the role of lay people in the Church as basic ecclesial communities,’ and ‘the role of lay people in the Church as sacrament of peace and harmony.’ In any of these consid-
erations the role of the laity ceases to be reduced to a mere discussion of their specific role, rights, and responsibilities as compared to those of the clergy and hierarchy. Lay people are no longer pitted against the clergy and their mutual relationship is not one that is driven by opposition and tension. Secondly, as lay people are defined as Asian Christians—a term that includes the clergy—in the Church viewed primarily as a community of faith in Asia, the role of the laity and the role of the Church are closely integrated.

### Ecclesiological Foundations of the FABC’s Theology of the Laity: A Comparative Summary

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<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Theology of the Laity</th>
<th>Ecclesiology</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Vocation</strong></td>
<td>The laity, as Asian Christians, are called to a communion with Jesus and a communion of liberation</td>
<td>The Church, as a community of faith in Asia, is called to a communion with the Triune God and a discipleship in the Gospel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong></td>
<td>1. Contextual: faithful to Vatican II and adapting to the Asian context&lt;br&gt;2. Relational: triple relationship with Christ, the Church, and the world</td>
<td>1. Contextual: faithful to the living presence of Christ (Christological), and attentive to the signs of the times discerned as promptings of the Holy Spirit (Pneumatological)&lt;br&gt;2. Relational: Trinitarian</td>
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As a summary the table here presented contains only generalisations, and at times the pieces do not nicely fit. However, it hopes to offer a theological spectrum that can assist in the appreciation of the Asian bishops’ theology of the laity and their ecclesiology. This figure shows that there is a surprising convergence in both content and structure between their theologies of the laity and of the Church. It underlines the mutual influence of these theological endeavours: the bishops’ treatment of the vocation and mission of lay people is based on their ecclesiology, which, in turn, reflects a theological insight and a contextual sensibility that is sharpened by their investigation into the role of the laity as Asian Christians.

For the FABC, not only faith, but faith, hope, and love are the Christian experience and the starting point for theology. In this sense, theology is not merely an endeavour to understand the faith, but also a concrete realisation of the Christian hope and love, in short, a praxis; that is, it seeks not just to understand, but to transform. The Church, as a communion-in-mission, a community of dialogue and solidarity, a disciple-community, and a sacrament of peace and harmony, is not only a community of faith, but is also a community of faith, hope, and charity in Asia. This community in turn is concretised and historically realised in basic ecclesial communities, the seedbed of a Church totally geared to the evangelising mission. As such, the FABC’s theologies of the laity and of the Church together offer one of the best examples of contextualising the theology of Vatican II.

**Conclusion**

This paper has provided a comparative analysis of the FABC’s theologies of the Church and of the laity under four categories of vocation, mission, development, and methodology. It demonstrates that there is a convergence of thought between these two theologies, highlighting their interaction and suggesting that the Church and the laity share in the same mission. Indeed, when Pius XII first lent the Church’s authority to the exalted dignity of the laity by declaring in 1946 that lay people are the Church, he formally brought to an end to a theological and pastoral tendency to treat them as merely passive members of the Church. Over the next fifty years, inspired by Vatican II’s constitutions *Lumen Gentium, Gaudium et Spes*, and in particular the degree *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the theology of the laity took on a new course. In the hands of the Catholic bishops of Asia it is intimately linked to their contextual ecclesiology and unifies their teaching on the Church’s evangelising mission with such deep insights as the triple dialogue of life and basic ecclesial communities. In fact, the Asian bishops have scarcely issued an official statement where the theme of evangelisation did not dominate. It is the basis of their entire theology, which places particular emphasis on the role of the laity as Asian Christians in carrying out the Church’s mission in the world. In the FABC’s rich ecclesiology, lay people are the principal agents of the Church’s redemptive mission in the world. They are not the bridge in the world; they are the Church in the world.
NOTES


2 According to Peter Hebblethwaite, by granting episcopal conferences the ‘freedom to experiment’ this Apostolic Letter had led to a ‘ministry explosion’ in the 1980s. See Paul VI: The First Modern Pope (London: Fount Paperbacks, 1994) 599.


5 FABC IV, ‘The Vocation and Mission of the Laity in the Church and in the World of Asia,’ FAPA Vol. 1, 177-98.

6 Louis Bouyer remarks that ‘to rediscover the true significance, the true role of the laity, it must be studied in the concrete life of the Church, where the laity are articulated with the apostolic ministry.’ See The Church of God: Body of Christ and Temple of the Spirit (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1982) 408.

7 FABC III, FAPA Vol. 1, 49-65.

8 ACMC, arts. 13, 14i, FAPA Vol. 1, 69-70.

9 FABC III, art. 5, FAPA Vol. 1, 55.

10 Ibid., art. 7.1, FAPA Vol. 1, 56.

11 TAC, ‘Asian Christian Perspectives on Harmony,’ art. 5.2.4, FAPA Vol. 3, 294.


13 FABC III, art. 15, FAPA Vol. 1, 60.

14 BIRA IV/3, arts. 10-11, FAPA Vol. 1, 260.

15 FABC III, arts. 7.2, 15, FAPA Vol. 1, 56, 60; BIRA IV/3, art. 13, FAPA Vol. 1, 260.

16 Ibid., art. 6, FAPA Vol. 1, 55.

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20 For the FABC, the statement that ‘the context determines the Church’s mission,’ is an important principle of the new way of being Church. See OESC, ‘A Renewed Catechesis for Asia: Towards the Year 2000 and Beyond,’ FAPA Vol. 2, 31.


23 BIRA IV/12, art. 48, FAPA Vol. 1, 332; OEIA, ‘Consultation on Christian Presence among Muslims in Asia,’ art. 4, FAPA Vol. 1, 166; OESC, ‘Dialogue between Faith and Cultures in Asia: Towards Integral Human and Social Development,’ art. 25, FAPA Vol. 2, 25; BIMA 1, art. 11, FAPA Vol. 1, 94; BISA I, art. 2, FAPA Vol. 1, 199; BISA V, arts. 6, 12-14, FAPA Vol. 1, 218–9; BISA VI, arts. 3, 8-9, FAPA Vol. 1, 223, 225; BISA VII, arts. 20-21, FAPA Vol. 1, 233; FABC V, arts. 2.3.3–2.3.4, FAPA Vol. 1, 278; FABC VI, arts. 3, 14.2, 15, FAPA Vol. 2, 2, 8, 10; FABC VII, arts. I.A.8, III, FAPA Vol. 3, 4, 8.

24 OHD, ‘Walking Humbly, Acting Justly, Loving Tenderly in Asia,’ art. 7, FAPA Vol. 2, 44;


26 TAC, ‘Being Church in Asia: Journeying with the Spirit into Fuller Life,’ art. 51, FAPA Vol. 2, 226.

27 FABC VI, art. 14.2, FAPA Vol. 2, 8; TAC, ‘Asian Christian Perspectives on Harmony,’ art. 3.3.3.1, FAPA Vol. 3, 274.

28 BIRA IV/1, art. 13, FAPA Vol. 1, 249.


30 Ibid., arts. 5.2.5-5.2.6, FAPA Vol. 3, 294-5. It is of note that the heading of section 3.3.3.1 is ‘The Church as Communion: Sacrament of Harmony.’ Ibid., 273.

31 Ibid., art. 5.2.6, FAPA Vol. 3, 295.


33 FABC IV, art. 4.4.4, FAPA Vol. 1, 193; FABC V, arts. 1.7, 2.3.9, 4.1, FAPA Vol. 1, 275, 279, 282; BIRA IV/2, arts. 8.1–8.2, FAPA Vol. 1, 252; BILA III, art. 12.2, FAPA Vol. 1, 245.

34 FABC III, art. 17.1, FAPA Vol. 1, 60; FABC V, art. 3, FAPA Vol. 1, 279–81; FABC VII, art. III, FAPA Vol. 3, 8; BILA III, art. 13.4, FAPA Vol. 1, 245.

35 FABC I, arts. 12–24, FAPA Vol. 1, 14–6; FABC III, art. 17.1, 17.4, FAPA Vol. 1, 60–1; FABC V, arts. 4.1-4.2, FAPA Vol. 1, 282; FABC VI, arts. 3, 15, FAPA Vol. 2, 2, 10; FABC VII, art. I.A.8, III, FAPA Vol. 3, 4, 8. We coined the term ‘a triple dialogue of life’ to better reflect the FABC’s view of the triple dialogue and its emphasis on the dialogue of life. These two concepts were often used in the same train of thought in their statements; see BIMA I, arts. 5, 9–12, FAPA Vol. 1, 94–5; BISA VI, art. 10, FAPA Vol. 1, 225.


37 FABC IV, art. 2.4, FAPA Vol. 1, 179.

38 For a detailed treatment of this subject see Peter N.V. Hai, ‘Features of the FABC’s Theology of the Laity,’ East Asian Pastoral Review, 47:1 (2010).
Trust in the Lord, who will not fail those whom he has called, the church in Asia joyfully makes her pilgrim way into the third millennium. Her only joy is that which comes from sharing with the multitude of Asia’s peoples the immense gift which she herself received — the love of Jesus the Savior. Her one ambition is to continue his mission of service and love, so that all Asians ‘may have life and have it abundantly’ (Jn. 10:10). (John-Paul II, Ecclesia in Asia, no. 50)

The Church’s faith in Jesus is a gift received and a gift to be shared; it is the greatest gift which the Church can offer to Asia. Sharing the truth of Jesus Christ with others is the solemn duty of all who have received the gift of faith. (Idem, no. 10)
WHAT’S IN A CHRISTIAN NAME?

VINCENT HUNT

ADOLESCENT CATHOLICS have been leaving the Church in the West in alarming numbers for several decades. The present danger is that we may accept this wholesale departure as inescapable if not normal, and try to carry on more or less as before. The departure of one person from the Church is a serious matter; the departure of the great majority of adolescents over four decades is a very serious matter indeed. And it must be said that, very welcome as it is, the recently-arrived Catholic immigrants are, only superficially do they take the place of those who have left. The apparent lack of a sense of crisis in most of those who have departed, and the lack of great concern on the part of the Church at large, suggest that we are not dealing with a purely youth-related problem, but with a weakness in the life of the Church. In particular it challenges us to review our understanding and practice of Church communion. I shall suggest that important developments in our culture invite this, and try to indicate where the path of progress lies.

The Dignity of Each Person

The fact is that the exodus of youth from the Church coincided with a very significant, if quiet, social change, the shift of attention to the individual person as such. The point comes through very clearly by referring to an investigation by the Irish Government into the administration of orphanages and similar institutions in the republic. Various abuses and shortcomings were set out in the report. But probably more insightful than anything in the report itself was a photograph in a Dublin paper of the vast dining-room in Artane Industrial School, one of the institutions under scrutiny, with tables, table settings and chairs in perfect uniformity and order. It made its point because our sensibilities have changed. We recognise now that order and uniformity are ill-adapted to the welfare of young people. Sixty years ago the Artane system was regarded as standard, if not a model. Since then society has fortunately come to pay much more attention to the particular unique person. The Irish institutions, and indeed the Irish Government, were tardy in recognising this.

We can appreciate the significance of the change only if we remember how deeply and widely entrenched the old system was in the Western world. It dates back to Plato, who laid the foundations of social thinking there. He saw society in functional terms; each person had a role which harmonised with the roles of others, so that the whole functioned smoothly. He considered justice to be a mark of the whole of society and not something due to the individual. The individual person as such did not enter his calculations; still less did the idea that the recognition of the individual might challenge imposed order and uniformity. Until well into the last century, society was substantially ordered according to role and status, and communication between members of different grades both structured and restricted. When Charles Dickens came to providing for Oliver Twist the just outcome he deserved, he found the basis for this, not in personal rights as such, but in the refined family to which he really belonged and from which he had inherited his gentle but tough disposition. There is no ‘redemption’ for the other associates of Fagin, even for Nancy who is the real hero of the story.
Today titles are widely replaced by personal names. The work and the needs of the individual child gain a recognition previously unknown. Privacy has become a major and sensitive issue. The change in general attitude has become unmistakable. It is important to notice here that we are not merely dealing with the working out of the principles of the American and French revolutions. The dictum of John Stuart Mill, ‘Each one to count as one, and no one to count as more than one;’ crystallised the social vision of the revolutions. This was admirably followed in the Artane system. One suspects that the more contemplative approach to the human person fostered especially by some Jewish writers—Emmanuel Levinas spoke of the epiphany of the face, while Martin Buber analysed the I-Thou relationship—had much more direct influence. With these went striking images of individual women, children and men, frightened and helpless, in regions of war and famine, spread through the world by the new electronic media.

**Personal Identity within the Communion of the Church**

We have to confess that the Church has not been in the forefront of this development. She has indeed adhered to the principle of the dignity of the person, but concern for order and stability has at times gained precedence over the demands of dignity. Thus we had the anomaly in some Catholic colleges of the staff-members being forbidden to address the students by their Christian names. This is highly relevant to our topic. For the spirit and practice of communion at both the liturgical and social levels in the Church are crucial in the Christian formation of young and old. The foundations of this are laid in Baptism when the candidate receives a new name to mark the radical difference their entry into the Church makes.

It goes without saying that it is the person as such that is the subject of faith, and member of the communion of the Church. The ‘heart’ is the corresponding biblical expression. There the person is alone with God and hears God’s voice addressed to them. It is the centre of personal life, in particular, the centre from which the person enters into relationships with others. Crucial in all personal life is the awareness of self that is present in and accompanies all the activity of the person. The awareness of who one really is, of one’s identity, and how it is to be expressed, is the foundation of all spiritual and personal life; it is the guiding factor in the whole of the person’s existence. In all this other people play an essential role. Only through my meeting with other people do I enter into an awareness of myself; the face of the mother reflects to the child a sense of self that is confirmed through the personal name. Through interchange with others a person deepens and expands their sense of identity.

This leads to an understanding of the nature and role of the Baptismal name. It identifies this person among others in the communion of the Church. And in the Church the notion of communion, that bond that relates us intimately with the persons of the Trinity and with one another, is to be taken seriously. The Catholic Catechism affirms that it is the deepest vocation of the Church. Sharing in the Eucharist is of course, of quite special importance in this regard. Fr. De Lubac, one of the great theologians of Vatican II, explains that the faithful who communicate enter an agreement to share life in peace. Baptism is...
the individual’s port of entry into the interpersonal Church-world. It is the baptised, graced person that bears the name; so the name relates to the whole person in the whole of that person’s existence. The name enshrines the person in linguistic form so that in it she recognises self and is, in turn, recognised by others; it is a unique means of access by others while participating in the dignity of the person. Sharing in the life of the Church, centrally in the Eucharist, but also in its wider life and mission, brings growth in awareness of Christian identity. Recognition by other members of the Church plays a vital part in that growth.

The Fostering of Christian Growth

On entering the Church the newcomer commits self to the faith, the worship and the discipline of the Church; this commitment is implicitly accepted. But the task of nurturing the person in the faith and nurturing the faith in the person is entrusted to and accepted by the Church, immediately, the local Church. The welcoming of the new member must not be a mere formality or confined to the time of the Baptism. It is the whole atmosphere and ethos of the Church that must be welcoming, an atmosphere and ethos conducive to their maturing in Christ. There are no strangers in the Church of Christ. Through the Christian name the person is identified and recognised. From these will flow courtesy, respect, companionship, and the help needed for full growth in the faith.

We readily recognise that a well-conducted RCIA programme corresponds largely to this vision. But this leaves the question of how those baptised in infancy are to be provided for. It is important that we think of these substantially along the same lines as those in an RCIA programme. We need to pay particular attention to the fact that in every adolescent there is a struggle going on to find self, a search that can indeed be perverted; there is a complex relationship with God that needs to be brought out into the open for acceptance and encouragement. Only the person who is known and trusted as a genuine friend can expect to have access there. That person needs to bring Christian wisdom and sensitivity to the task. The adoption of the soul-friend of the Celtic tradition would enable and encourage the adolescent to think aloud and frankly on the challenges of the faith as they experience them and to receive friendly counsel.

When the binding force of the Friday abstinence was modified, the objection was wisely raised, apart from participation in the Sunday Eucharist, there was scarcely any practice that marked Catholics in our society. Even the Eucharistic obligation often receives an accommodating interpretation. So the adolescent has few occasions on which they can express publicly their Catholic identity and give witness to it. The more lenient approach to Friday abstinence, while intended to make it easier to practice the faith, has in fact made it more difficult. Another factor has had a doubtful influence as well. When most Catholics were baptised soon after birth there was a relatively strong awareness that their Baptismal name was their name. This was reinforced when a saint’s name was adopted. As the sacrament has come to be postponed for long periods after birth the child is well established in their name as a secular name before Baptism.

The Crucial Role of Witness

When the Emmaus disciples recognised Jesus in the breaking of bread they hurried back to the infant Church in Jerusalem to tell them what had happened on the road and how they had witnessed the Risen Lord. The others told them how Jesus had appeared to Simon. This mutual exchange shows witness at work within the Church; the exchange of faith experiences is a sort of life-blood. There is a sincerity that is the hallmark of truthfulness about what one personally knows and can vouch for through witness. It bears the imprint of the Holy Spirit.
The martyr is recognised as the primary witness in the Church. Witness has evidently a special importance in the consolidation and development of the faith in the young. The living expression of faith that is involved gives insight into the functioning of faith, and encourages the wavering.

Witness then is not only a way of coming to know the faith but the way that harmonises with the nature of the Church. It is, however, in tension with, and at times in conflict with, another method held in very high esteem in our culture, the one considered by many as the only secure way of reaching knowledge of any kind, scientific method. For an appreciation of the scope and distinctive virtue of each of these and of the harmony between them is vital in the educational effort. For there is no real conflict.

Scientific method is well represented in the incident in Plato’s dialogue, the Meno, in which Socrates is showing how it is possible to grow in knowledge. He calls a slave-boy who is presumed to be devoid of all mathematical knowledge, and through a few deft questions leads him through a simple question in arithmetic. Success is based on the following of the right method, and this is open to all, slave and free alike. The paradigm of knowledge is mathematical knowledge, though empirical data in mathematical form will later prove to be all-important. What have no place in this method are the interests, the commitments or personal qualities of the enquirer. Of its nature it is detached and impartial, and free from any personal mark of the person using the method. The fruits of this method cannot be questioned; we enjoy them every moment of the day.

This very evident success makes us expect psychological problems in maintaining the validity and crucial importance of witness in its own quite special sphere. In an appropriate, if commonplace, phrase, the person who witnesses shares self. The whole person, with interests, commitments and distinctive personality, comes into play to a greater or lesser degree. Most teachers of religion spontaneously share themselves and their own faith in this way as they go about their work. And rational considerations of many kinds have their place in opening up the implications of the faith. But the fact is that education in religion is incorporated into a school programme based on the Platonic model.

The dominant model inevitably colours the mind-set, attitudes and expectations of the students, particularly when the problem is not clearly set before them. Some have seen the answer in the complete incorporation of religious education into the school programme, with its own course material, contact hours and rigorous examination. On the other hand to make no firm demands in terms of the school programme seems bound to lead inevitably to it being trivialised.

Made in God’s Image

Traditionally the question of proving God’s existence was regarded as one of showing the inadequacy of the world we know without reference to a Creator. Little was said of the existential impact of the answer, especially of a negative answer, for the enquirer. It was as though life could continue substantially as before whether God existed or not.

A very different way of dealing with the issue is to be found in Albert Camus’ novel, The Outsider. There the implications of the non-existence of God are taken much more seriously at the existential level and questions of great interest to us are brought to light. It is, indeed, a novel, and for this reason demands interpretation. There are no personal names in the book; the hero is simply Meursault, his family name. Camus’ general contention is that nothing is of importance. This radically undermines any concern with the question of God or with anything else; Camus seeks to convey this in novel form.

Meursault goes to the vigil and burial of his mother at a rest-home. But he is completely uninvolved and uninterested. Then we find that
the well-arranged obsequies are no more than a charade; there is no reference to the woman being buried; nothing that would set it apart as her funeral. Clearly Camus is conveying that society suppresses the individual person as such and in doing so deprives life of all significance.

But there is a surprising twist which seems to modify this position considerably. In the prison in which Meursault was being held, the line of visitors was kept at a distance of ten paces from the line of prisoners during visiting time. The result was a shouting competition in which no real communication was possible. But the mother of a young prisoner and her son simply looked at one another during the period of visiting; at the end the boy simply said, ‘Au revoir, Maman.’ This was certainly not devoid of significance. The message is clearly that life can be significant if a person is willing to live on the margins of society and preserve genuine human relationships. This is the way back to a belief in God.

Camus’ novel is of course a cautionary tale. It tells of the emptiness of life when the individual person is ignored. It is relatedness to God and to others that lends significance to our lives, for it is through this that we are made in God’s likeness. This is the foundation of the communion of the Church, and of the importance of the Christian name. The growing affirmation of the person is not only a preparation for belief in God, but an affirmation of love; and where love is dwelling God is dwelling. As we have seen, to affirm the individual is to affirm their relatedness to others. Love has many forms and can be very complex in its functioning. There is a grammar of human relationships which governs our social lives, integrates them and preserves their dignity.

As we would expect, these authentic modes of love figure large in the Gospels. Thanksgiving is foundational for an appreciation of what life offers. Trust, fidelity and the making and keeping of promises, bond people in growing relationships. Through compassion we positively accept one another as sharing the same human condition and being in need of salvation; forgiveness and the healing of relationships flows from compassion. All these at once relate person to person and person in a special way to God.

Our world is more and more dependent on complex systems that lead to ever greater social control. As well, some of the most powerful forces in economics and the media are very happy to manipulate customers, to provide escapist entertainment, and to neutralise searching criticism. What results is the sort of order and uniformity that seem essential for the survival of our world. The problem that the young Catholic must contend with is how to live in this world while being faithful in following the star represented by their Baptismal name.

An interview of a journalist with Bl. Mother Theresa of Calcutta throws some useful light on the problem. The journalist objected that merely lifting up dying individuals from the city streets did not even begin to deal with the entrenched poverty in the city and the vast numbers to be provided for. Her reply was, ‘I take each person in need and do what I can for them.’

She and the journalist were not concerned about the same thing. He saw the big picture and wondered how food, clothing and shelter can be provided for all these people in a rational and efficient way. That was an issue that needed to be dealt with urgently. Mother Theresa saw the face of the dying person; she felt called, indeed compelled, to show recognition and respect even when it was ‘too late’. But we can draw from Camus that the first must be animated by the second. Otherwise it becomes a complex of empty forms.

There is no substitute for people loving one another. The inspiration provided by Mother Theresa lives on.
CENTRIPETAL
AND CENTRIFUGAL

Mapping Theological Understandings of Christ’s Real Presence in the Eucharist

GAVIN BROWN

In a thought-provoking article entitled ‘There’s more to the Real Presence than the Eucharist,’ Mark Francis argues strongly that ‘we risk impoverishing our rich tradition by an exclusive focus on Christ’s presence under the appearance of bread and wine.’ ‘We need to be as passionately convinced,’ Francis asserts, ‘of the presence of Christ in those ‘around the altar’ as we are of Christ’s presence in the eucharistic elements’1 Francis’s piece is wholly typical of good post-Vatican II sacramental theology: an attempt to remind Catholics that Christ’s presence in the eucharistic celebration is multifaceted—Christ is present in the bread and wine and the gathered congregation.

My concern in this paper, however, is not simply to reiterate Francis’s key points but, rather, to ‘map’ how scholars have theologised about Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist. For example, a close reading of Francis’s piece reveals two modes of explanation or discursive trajectories. The first, which I have termed centripetal, describes a mode of explanation centred upon a univocal understanding. This trajectory is precisely that ‘exclusive focus on Christ’s presence under the appearance of bread and wine.’ To describe it as centripetal is to say that it discursively moves to a singular point of focus and this singularity is constitutive of the discourse itself. But one can also identify a centrifugal trajectory in Francis’s assertion that Christ is present also in the gathered congregation. By centrifugal I mean a mode of explanation which is predicated on multiplicity, moving outward to embrace many different concepts. The metaphor is particularly apt when considering how Christ’s real presence in the sharing of bread and wine has been centrifugally interpreted in a variety of broader and wide-ranging contexts.

My paper will proceed by exploring the centripetal trajectory first, since it represents the immediate pre-Vatican II legacy on Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist. I will then explore the nature of the centrifugal trajectory, with reference to the work of some key theologians. By way of conclusion, I will return to Francis’s article in an effort to clarify the overwhelming preference for the centrifugal trajectory in recent theologising about Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist.

A Centripetal Trajectory

The centripetal trajectory is first discernible during the ninth century, though it is possible to argue that cultural antecedents were already operative from the fourth.2 From this time, historians and theologians point to a growing rift between two previously complementary notions: symbol and reality. To speak of a symbol in the ancient and early medieval world was to speak simultaneously of the reality which it signified. Indeed, symbols were not thought of as merely ‘pointers’ to some reality; rather, they participated in the reality signified.3 Such an understanding relied upon a platonic cosmology: the world of the sense-perceptible—images, symbols and figures—
participants in the real world—the world of ideal forms—without at the same time being identical with it. This platonic cosmology provided a framework for early church fathers to speak of the presence of Christ as a spiritual reality disclosed through the sacramental signs or symbols of bread and wine. In his commentary on Psalm 98, Augustine, for example, had Jesus say,

Understand what I have said spiritually. You will not eat this body which you see, nor will you drink the blood that will be shed by those who will crucify me. A sacrament is what I have given to you: understood spiritually, it will give you life. Even if it is necessary to celebrate visibly, it should be understood invisibly.

What is also noteworthy about Augustine’s conception of Christ’s presence is its more corporate sense: building upon a strong premise of the Eucharist as an ecclesial reality, Augustine could also write, ‘If you received well, you are what you have received; for the Apostle says, ‘we many are one bread, one body’...You have been made the bread which is the body of Christ. And in like manner unity is signified.’ It is evident here that early understandings of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist were actually centrifugal in nature.

From the ninth century, however, this complementarity of symbol and reality began gradually to unravel. Historians cite a number of complex reasons for this development; however, Frank Senn suggests that the medieval period witnessed the occlusion of a platonic worldview in favour of a more ‘empiricist’ approach to reality. He writes,

In the world of late antiquity and in the early Middle Ages, people lived ‘not in a world of visible facts but rather in a world of symbols.’ The symbolic pointed to and participated in the unseen spiritual reality; but in the worldview of the Western Middle Ages there was a desire to see reality. It was an empirical worldview. It was not such a giant step to the next position: that what is visible—that is, what can be demonstrated or documented—is what is really real.

In the context of this empiricism, theological disputes arose over the ‘reality’ of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist. Famous disputes between Paschasius Radbertus and Ratramnus of Corbie Abbey in the ninth century and Berengar of Tours with Lanfranc of Canterbury in the eleventh suggested clearly that the language of symbol was no longer thought adequate to express the true reality of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist.

In tandem with this was another critical development: according to Henri de Lubac, whereas the patristic period had associated the body of Christ with the church, theologians in the Middle Ages started associating the body of Christ fundamentally with the consecrated elements of the bread and wine. This association allowed the full ecclesiological dimensions of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist to be subsumed beneath an objectified presence centred upon the eucharistic species.

Accordingly, by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, theological interest over Christ’s presence in the Eucharist evinced a dominant centripetal trajectory: the chief questions were how is Christ really present within the bread and wine? How does this change occur? Strictly speaking, it is only with the loss of, or distrust of, symbolic language that the very term Real Presence emerges within ecclesiastical discourse of the early-to-mid medieval period: to speak of a ‘real’ presence was to assert something supposedly more real than a ‘symbolic’ presence.

But how was the ‘real presence’ of Christ in the consecrated bread and wine to be adequately explained? The distrust of symbolic discourse resulted in the emergence of more
‘scientific’ or ‘metaphysical’ explanatory regimes, which in turn reinforced the centripetal focus on the presence of Christ in the consecrated elements. What become known as transubstantiation initially represented only one of a number of theories. But transubstantiation emerged as the preferred explanation, and was given official recognition at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 and subsequently included in canon 2 of the Council of Trent’s Decree concerning the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist.

Perhaps one of the most widely misunderstood terms in Christian theology (even against some stiff competition—the Trinity comes to mind!), transubstantiation was an attempt to underpin the reality of Christ’s presence in the bread and wine—a ‘substantial’ not a physical presence which was only discernible through faith—without falling into realist crudities or transgressing the freedom and imposibility of the risen and glorified body of Christ.

Importantly, even at the Council of Trent, which was principally concerned to defend the truths of the faith, transubstantiation was not equated doctrinally with belief in the real presence; rather, it was considered a ‘most apt’ form of explanation. Broken off from trinitarian, pneumatological and ecclesiological considerations, post-Tridentine eucharistic theology concerned itself principally with explaining how the real presence of Christ in the eucharistic species was related to the sacrificial dimensions of the Eucharist.

Arising out of the divorce between symbol and reality, then, the centripetal trajectory associated the real presence with Christ’s ‘substantial’ presence in the consecrated elements of the bread and wine. In doing so, it underscored an objectified sense of the real presence, particularly centred upon the host which became the object of so much extra-liturgical eucharistic devotion. This centripetal trajectory naturally underscored the preeminent role of the priest in the liturgy—he alone had the power to consecrate the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. And ever since the theological controversies of the ninth and eleventh centuries, but especially after the Reformation, belief in the real presence (and the accompanying notion of transubstantiation) operated as a marker of Catholic orthodoxy and allegiance until the post-Vatican II period.

However, at least since the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, theologising about the real presence has followed another trajectory.

A Centrifugal Trajectory

The modern origins of a centrifugal trajectory in the theologising of the real presence are not to be found with sacramental theology but, rather, with ecclesiology. Though the image of the Church as the ‘body of Christ’ is an ancient one (going back to the letters of Paul), by the High Middle Ages it had become subsumed beneath the dominant model of the church as a hierarchical society. It first resurfaced in the nineteenth-century work of Johann Adam Mohler who, in turn, influenced luminaries of the ‘Roman school of theology’ such as Giovanni Perrone, Carlo Passaglia, Klemens Schrader, Johann Baptist Franzelin and Matthias Joseph Scheeben. For Mohler, the Church was a living and organic reality which incorporated all members into the body of Christ. In the words of Edward Hahnenberg, Mohler argued that the church was ‘not just the bearer of the mystery of faith, but is itself an aspect of this mystery’.

The idea of the church as the body of Christ won papal recognition with Pius XII’s encyclicals Mystici Corporis and Mediator Dei, published in 1943 and 1947 respectively. ‘By reason of their baptism’, Pius XII declared in Mediator Dei, ‘Christians are in the Mystical Body and become by a common title members of Christ the Priest.’ The Church as the ‘Mystical Body of Christ’ thereafter became the dominant ecclesiological model until the Second Vatican Council.

As this ecclesiology progressively develop-
oped in the mid-to-late twentieth century, it concomitantly exercised a profound influence upon sacramental theology, principally through the work of Edward Schillebeeckx and Karl Rahner. In their different ways, both argued that sacraments were not ‘things’ or mechanical dispensers of ‘grace’ but existential encounters with the very person of Christ, who was the ‘primordial sacrament’, ‘the sacrament of the encounter with God.’ And so the church represented ‘the sacrament of the risen Christ.’ Within the church’s sacramental system—that is, within the context of the entire worshipping community—one encountered not a thing, but a person.

Explaining the ‘how’ of such an encounter led both Schillebeeckx and Rahner to place great emphasis on the sacraments as symbolic actions. Indeed, in such a personalist approach to the sacraments, both suggested that symbolic mediation was the necessary human condition for such an encounter (hence the incarnation), since we are by our very nature symbol-making and symbol-participant beings. Furthermore, both affirmed that sacraments as symbolic actions not only pointed to the graced reality of Christ but also made this reality present in the very act of signifying it. These profound theological insights exercised a decisive influence in moving theological understandings of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist along what I have termed a centrifugal trajectory.

In the first place, once theologians began conceptualising the church as a corporate reality predicated on the person of Christ—the body of Christ—it no longer made sense to locate his presence purely within an object, the consecrated elements. Christ was now understood as present in multiple ways. In its groundbreaking document on the liturgy, Sacrosanctum Concilium, the Second Vatican Council drew attention to four modes of Christ’s presence:

To accomplish so great a work Christ is always present in his Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations. He is present in the Sacrifice of the Mass not only in the person of his minister, ‘the same now offering, through the ministry of priests, who formerly offered himself on the cross, but especially in the Eucharistic species...He is present in his word since he himself speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the Church. Lastly, he is present when the Church prays and sings, for he has promised ‘where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them’ (Mt. 18:20).

To speak of Christ’s presence in four ways, however, is not to assert four undifferentiated modalities of presence; within the eucharistic celebration, they are differently expressed but nevertheless form a unity. So, according to Schillebeeckx, ‘the Eucharistic presence is thus no longer isolated. We no long say, ‘Christ is there,’ without asking for whom he is present.’ Fundamentally, then, Christ’s presence in the Eucharist is a ‘presence for,’ that is, centred upon relationships within the gathered body of Christ. Frank O’Loughlin sums this up nicely when he suggests, ‘We need to see each mode of presence within the context of Christ’s relationship to his disciples being gathered into the communion of his Church which is becoming his Body.’

In the second place, a centrifugal trajectory in theological thinking has pushed the conceptualisation of Christ’s real presence well beyond the immediate liturgical context. In a symbolic and personalist approach to the sacraments, the real presence of Christ is not a ‘thing’ but, rather, an experiential reality which calls us to be the body of Christ in the world. Theologians interested in drawing out the interconnectedness of liturgy and life stress that Christ’s presence must flow from the liturgy out into the world through the ‘members’ of his body. In the words of Brian Gleeson, ‘Eucharist means mission.’ Indeed, it is a mission arising out of a new eucharistic consciousness—that we really encounter Christ’s presence in our service to the poor and needy. For Gleeson, ‘until the second coming of Christ the most complete manifestation of the activ-
ity of Christ in the Eucharistic Assembly is our life-style afterwards, a life-style of service, of binding up wounds, of self-emptying love and sacrifice, according to the teaching and example of our Lord." 26

Some theologians have even begun to understand Christ’s presence flowing out of the Eucharist as the beginnings of a ‘cosmic’ re-vivification of life and reality. For Margaret Scott:

The Eucharist is also the sacrament of humanity, stretching St. Paul’s notion of Christ’s embodied eucharistic presence in the community to global presence...the corporate Body of Christ goes beyond its local embodiment to embrace nations, international communities, and the entire world in the thrust toward the ‘fullness of Christ’. 27

Teilhard de Chardin invites us to consider the body of Christ in its ‘fullest extension’: ‘over every living thing which is to spring up, to grow, to flower, to ripen during this day, say again the words: This is my Body.’ 28 And Michael Himes has even taken a notion better known for its centripetal resonances and cast it off into a centrifugal direction: for Himes, the Eucharist ‘is the first step in the transubstantiation of all of creation...the destiny of the universe.’ 29

A final word on this centrifugal trajectory is necessary, for insofar as it has allowed theologians to re-conceptualise Christ’s real presence as moving out into the world, it has also moved theologians to consider how the world flows back into the eucharistic liturgy. This is fundamental: if liturgy is to be authentic, if Christ’s presence within the gathered assembly is to be ‘real’, then it must be grounded in the recognised realities of a world which is both beautiful and terrible, a world of joys and suffering, a world of hope but also of pain, confusion, and disillusionment. Christ’s presence in the eucharistic liturgy is only ‘real’ to the extent that our liturgical actions are anchored in the ‘real world’.

Drawing upon Rahner’s notion of the ‘liturgy of the world’, Nathan Mitchell claims that ‘the primary liturgy through which Christians experience the Real Presence of God in Christ is nothing more or less than ‘the liturgy of the world’. It is to this liturgy, ‘smelling of death and sacrifice’, that all the Church’s ritual actions return...We arrive at Mystery, at Real Presence, at God, only by embracing the human with all its poignancy and terror.’ 30

Conclusion

Most contemporary theologians proceed via the centrifugal trajectory when theologising about Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist. As the preceding discussion has shown, this has undoubtedly enriched our understanding of this central article of the faith. However, we must not lose the key assumption upon which the centripetal trajectory was always predicated.

To make this point, I will return to Francis’s article quoted at the beginning of this paper. While I find myself agreeing wholeheartedly with Francis’s key assertions in his piece, I nevertheless have misgivings about his article’s title. What Francis is actually asserting would be better characterised as ‘there’s more to the Real Presence than the consecrated bread and wine’.

This is not a minor semantic quibble. If the centripetal trajectory served essentially to objectify Christ’s presence in the bread and wine—an approach which Francis rightly criticises—it nevertheless continues to remind us that the essential actions of the eucharistic celebration, Christ’s presence revealed in the sharing of bread and wine, remain the unifying symbol out of which the centrifugal trajectory proceeds. Surely the danger exists that we might regard Christ’s presence within the bread and wine as belonging to a different symbolic order than Christ’s presence in the ‘breaking’ of the Word or the gathered congregation. And so we might assert uncritically that ‘there’s more to the Real Presence than the Eucharist.’ This statement is not untrue per se, but it could be misleading. For it is pre-
cisely in the Eucharist itself that Christ’s multifaceted real presence is recognised. The centrifugal trajectory is not a movement from Eucharist to Word, congregation or even world, through some kind of transference in which the original eucharistic actions are dissolved, but, rather, a movement toward a eucharistic worldview which incorporates Word, congregation (or other Christians) and, indeed, the world. It remains, therefore, the principal lens through which Christ’s real presence is perceived.

No doubt my attempt to ‘map’ how the real presence has been a subject of theological discourse is open to fair criticism: does so simple a schema really do justice to the vast complexity of the matter? If some sort of definitive schema is being proposed, then I would say certainly not. However, the schema proposed in this paper is altogether heuristic rather than definitive. My aim has been to frame the contours of the discourse, but within such a frame the complexity and sometimes sheer opacity of this topic is quite evident, as the work of Herbert McCabe or Jean-Luc Marion on eucharistic presence reveals.31 Yet precisely because the centrifugal trajectory embraces multiplicity, those who continue to theologise about Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist are discovering ever new theological and philosophical horizons against which to test and deepen our original insights.32

NOTES

1 Mark Francis, ‘There’s more to the Real Presence than the Eucharist,’ U.S. Catholic 67 (June 2002): 30.
4 Ibid., 82.
6 Ibid., 41.
9 Henri du Lubac’s chief work on this development, entitled Corpus Mysticum, has not been translated into English. His ideas have been used in a range of other monographs. Most useful are Ernst H. Kantorowicz, The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957), 193-206 and William T. Cavanaugh, Torture and the Eucharist: Theology, Politics and the Body of Christ (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 207-220.
11 Moloney, The Eucharist, 55.
12 See Jones, Christ’s Eucharistic Presence, 72.
14 See Robert J. Daly, ‘Robert Bellarmine and Post-Tridentine Eucharistic Theology,’ in From
‘When I was younger I was rather severe. I said: the sacraments are sacraments of faith, and where faith does not exist, where the practice of faith does not exist, the sacrament cannot be conferred either... Then I too, with time, came to realise that we must follow, rather, the example of the Lord, who was very open even with people on the margins of Israel at that time. He was a Lord of mercy, open with sinners, welcoming them and letting them invite him to their dinners, drawing them into his communion.’

—Benedict XVI to the priests of Brixen in South Tyrol.
INTERCULTURALITY
AS PEDAGOGY

Challenges of Teaching and Learning Religion and Theology Beyond Borders

GEMMA TULUD CRUZ

Negotiating Otherness

‘Awareness of the other starts at the encounter of difference.’ At no time is this adage more discernible and verifiable, I believe, than in this day and age when diversity makes up the very fabric of societies, especially in the West. As could be seen in the issues and crises that plague multicultural and multireligious societies diversity definitely brings challenges. For some, especially for people who are relatively not exposed to those who are culturally or religiously different, it is discomfiting enough to sit beside the other on buses and trains or bump into them in markets or on the streets. How much more when the other is right in front of us (as professors) or right beside us (as classmates) in the classroom and in a religion or theology class at that?

Throughout the ages history tells us that religious and moral values are highly-sensitive territories, especially when these come wrapped in cultural embellishments. Such values certainly cannot be approached simply from a narrow curricular perspective, nor can they be reduced to the exotic gaze. So what challenges does a diverse classroom in theology and religious studies pose? What key issues ought to be paid attention to, for effective and meaningful learning to take place in a multicultural setting? I posit that two critical political processes sum up these challenges:

Politics of Identity

One of the very first things one has to contend with in multicultural settings is identity politics. Take, for instance, language. Whether it is in verbal or non-verbal form, communication (whether inside or outside the classroom) often suffers due to language difference. First of all one cannot or one finds it hard to talk to someone who does not speak or understand one’s language. In the case of international/exchange students or recently-arrived immigrants even if they speak or understand the host country’s language or the medium of instruction in the classroom, differences or inadequacies in translations could not just bog down the discussion but also create misunderstanding.

I still remember, for example, my first day of class in my very first class for my doctoral studies in the Netherlands. At one point the Dutch professor asked if the class understood what he said. The class responded positively but then he repeated what he just explained and asked again if we understood. We were, at first, puzzled not just because of the repetition but also because the professor seemed at a loss. Things became clear for us, however, when he particularly asked my Sri Lankan classmate (also a new doctoral student) if he understood and my classmate, in typical Sri Lankan fashion, moved his head from side to side to indicate that he understood. But in the Dutch (and more common) view moving one’s head from side to side does not really mean ‘yes.’ It means ‘no’ or ‘not really.’ So the professor, now looking really perplexed, asked my Sri Lankan classmate again: ‘Do you under-
stand?’ My classmate, now looking confused why the professor keeps asking him if he understood, fortunately also verbally expressed his affirmative response this time, saying ‘Yes!.’ The professor then said ‘But you were shaking your head?’ Luckily one of the Asian students quickly told the professor that, that is a gesture for ‘yes’ in the Sri Lankan context.

There are other important language-related problems that could arise in a multicultural classroom, particularly when it comes to facility or fluency in the language. A case in point is the medium of instruction. Without question, students and teachers must not just know the basics in the medium of instruction but be fluent in it for effective and meaningful learning to take place.

When I was teaching at a university in Chicago I once had an exchange student from Poland, for instance, who had difficulty coping with the class because of language problems, to the point that she regularly consulted her Polish-English dictionary. My husband who used to teach in an international seminary, also in Chicago, even talks of having Chinese students who literally bring their language translator gadgets in the classroom. Oftentimes these are the very same students who will rarely participate in class discussion because they are not confident and/or fluent in the language of instruction and will also probably submit papers with poor quality because their knowledge of the language is limited.

Last but not the least accent also poses certain challenges. When I was teaching in a highly-diverse university in the United States with a lot of international students, I had to deal with all kinds of accents in speaking English from the English with an American accent to Spanglish (English with a Spanish accent) to English with various Asian and European accents. Once I had an exchange student from Bulgaria whose accent was quite thick I decided to regularly engage him in a conversation outside the classroom (especially during the earlier part of the semester) so my ears could get use to English with a Bulgarian accent. Of course, my students would also have to contend with my English (with its Filipino accent) but fortunately I have not had problems along this line.

Contextual issues, particularly those that have to do with political, economic, and religious background as well as issues that have to do with gender, class, and race also figure in the challenges that stem from identity politics. Let me illustrate these with examples from my own experience studying Theology and living in a multicultural and interdenominational setting in the Netherlands. There is the female Protestant pastor who complained of not being included in the roster of celebrants for the daily religious service in the house because she is a Methodist and/or she is a woman (The house is made up mostly of Catholic nuns and priests and we had a Catholic priest as a rector). It was also quite enlightening to see Asian and African priests and pastors from predominantly patriarchal societies struggle to live without the usual comforts and deference accorded to priests in Third World countries, e.g. having someone to do their laundry or cook their food. Cooking is usually the one chore these student priests find most challenging so we used to joke around the house that cooking is the unwritten unit in the curriculum.

**Politics of Epistemology**

Epistemological differences also considerably account for daunting challenges in culturally...
diverse religion and theology classes. Epistemology, as we all know, asks the hard questions: What is knowledge? How is knowledge acquired? What do people know? How do we know what we know? Different cultures arguably vary in the perception and production of knowledge and in analyzing its relationship with concepts like truth, belief, and justification. American theologian Elizabeth Johnson provides a good example of this in her book *Quest for the Living God*. In her discussion of the Hispanic image of God as ‘Accompanying God of fiesta’ Johnson argues that this image largely stems from the sociocentric-organic culture among Hispanics, which is different from the mainstream Euro-American culture that is considered to be more ego-centric contractual.¹

Epistemological differences can be explosive as this has ramifications on some of the foundational aspects of religious or theological education. Differences in intellectual styles and the cultural value accorded to these intellectual styles will have an impact when it comes to determining the nature and scope of what constitutes sound or better scholarship. There could be conflicts on research paradigms or research methodologies.

Differences in learning and writing styles could also minimize the effectiveness of the learning process and diminish the breadth and depth and, consequently, the quality of the scholarship. Arguably, there is no apolitical scholarship. Scholarly practices are inscribed in power relations. At an international conference on intercultural communication, for instance, a Hispanic participant who was then a graduate student at a renowned American university shared how he and his fellow minority students complained that, with the exception of a book by Gustavo Gutierrez, the reading list is composed of the works of ‘dead white dudes’ or Euro-American scholars.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty eloquently does a critique of this discursive nature of scholarship in ‘Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship in Colonial Discourses.’ Mohanty posits that there is a certain mode of appropriation and codification of ‘scholarship’ and ‘knowledge’ about women in the Third World by particular analytic categories which take as their referent feminist interests as they have been articulated in the U.S. and Western Europe.² She goes on to say that this is one of the effects of the implicit assumption of ‘the West’ (in all its complexities and contradictions) as the primary referent in theory and praxis.³

Dutch theologian Frans Wijsen affirms this by pointing out that theological hermeneutics, indeed, largely remains a Western enterprise or that it is chiefly dominated by the Western philosophical tradition. At the same time Wijsen says this tradition is increasingly challenged by non-Western philosophers.

He summarizes the ‘North-South Dialogue’ toward intercultural hermeneutics in four points: (1) In classical hermeneutics the aim is ultimately to understand oneself. It is an individualistic enterprise. The non-Western hermeneutics has a communitarian approach; (2) Classical hermeneutics is focused on harmonization. Intercultural hermeneutics recognizes differentiation. The other as a stranger is to be done justice. (3) Classical hermeneutics is seen as instrumental: the reader takes possession of the text, makes the text his/her own property. Intercultural hermeneutics is relational. And; (4) classical hermeneutics is based on a propositional understanding of truth; intercultural hermeneutics is based on an existential understanding of truth.⁴

Walter J. Hollenweger gives a concrete example of these power dynamics in scholarship in an article titled ‘Intercultural Theology,’ where he contends that if Kosuke Koyama, one of the most creative theologians from Asia, were to present one of his books to any of the European universities, ‘he would surely have failed because his understanding of scholarship and consistency clashes with that of the European-American.’⁵

On the other hand, it also becomes prob-
First of all, contextuality is a precondition for interculturality. In a religious education or theology classroom this means accepting the fact that there are different ways of understanding and forging a relationship with the sacred and that insisting on our ways and imposing our religio-cultural practices is tantamount to a form of control of memory and history. Interculturality requires that we do not fear the scandal of theorizing and making affirmations on cultural worldviews or practices that are devalued by or contradict the dominant consciousness. Interculturality does more than pay lip service to diversity. It celebrates otherness with a steadfast refusal to conflate diverse experiences into a false synthesis.

To be interculturally competent in a diverse religion and theology class, therefore, means not just learning about a group’s cultural and religious beliefs or special days but also using or engaging these in various classroom activities or discussions in careful, purposeful, and meaningful ways. This means taking care not to make minority students, especially those who have little or no contact to their or their parents’ homelands as ‘representatives’ or ‘experts’ of their ancestral cultures. In theological settings this also implies not automatically assuming or making minority as well as international students the experts or spokespersons of their group’s contextual theologies.

The following reflective recollection by Puerto Rican-American theologian M.T. Davila, in a response she delivered at the Catholic Theological Society of America, illustrates this cultural trap:

As a Puerto Rican woman doing a Master in Theological Studies at the Boston University School of Theology, I was asked repeatedly what I thought of liberation theology. I was both resentful and jealous that my white male colleagues were more versed in Latin American theologies than I was. Second, I found it offensive that they assumed that the Puerto Rican feminist would, of course, be well acquainted with the liberation movement. I did not want anyone else telling me what field I was supposed to be good at or interested in or, worse
yet, that I owed it to ‘my people’ to become their theological spokesperson.8

Building or creating an intercultural classroom also means making sure cultures, especially the other’s culture, are not made to appear ‘exotic.’ In other words, it entails developing sustained and integrated approaches, perspectives and activities so the engagement of the various cultures does not look artificial or forced.

Secondly, interculturality involves sensitivity to the encounter, whether positive or negative, superficial or deep, between and among cultures. To teach and do theology the intercultural way, for instance, means attending to ‘the interaction and juxtaposition, as well as tension and resistance when two or more cultures are brought together sometimes organically and sometimes through violent means.’9

Kathleen Talvacchia, a former professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York, writes in Critical Minds and Discerning Hearts: A Spirituality of Multicultural Teaching that in multicultural teaching contexts, teachers must bring not just an understanding of individual persons in their own giftedness and limitations but also an understanding of the dynamics of social hegemonies. Talvacchia goes on to say that ‘a stance of perceptive attentiveness that embraces self-knowledge in community, solidarity, and compassion helps form the self-awareness, empathetic sensitivity, political consciousness, and social consciousness necessary for teaching in racial, cultural, gender, and class diversity.’10 In the first place different cultures and identities are not isolated but intertwined with one another. This much is true not just due to colonialism, continuing missionary activities, or the cultural hegemony of the West but more so because of the global cultural integration that is happening side by side with the globalization of religion, politics, and economics.

For the professor, being interculturally competent then entails seeing culture beyond language and literature or cuisine, customs, and traditions but as connected or imbricated with other critical facets of people’s identities such as gender, class, and race. Moreover, it means understanding and engaging culture as a site of struggle that is embedded in the messiness of contemporary history, politics, and economics. As Asian-American theologian Kwok Pui-Lan posits authentic intercultural hermeneutics should heighten not only cross-cultural sensitivity but also underscore the relation between cultural-religious production and socio-economic formation.11 It would then be good for teachers to discover, for example, not only WHY certain students like to start or include stories, poems, or songs in their papers but also be alert to WHAT stories, poems, or songs they are putting.

Clearly, interculturality is about constructing an approach to teaching and learning that promotes mutual understanding and living together. To practice interculturality is to recognize diversity as richness so much so that dialogue becomes a way of life12. But as Hans-Georg Ziebertz argues in his book Religious Education in a Plural Western Society religious education in diversity must, ultimately, be an education in freedom. Ziebertz contends it is not enough to simply affirm plurality as a matter of principle. He argues that effective religious education in a diverse context is also about giving students, especially young people, the skills of differentiation. They should, according to Ziebertz, perceive difference and learn to understand and judge it, and, through the process of discussion, they should also be able to consolidate or revise their own position. Moreover, Ziebertz cautions teachers about adopting and teaching an anything goes attitude and challenges the ‘laziness’ of relativistic compromises. It is important, Ziebertz says, that teachers are prepared to engage in argumentative debate and to not shy away from factual conflict.

As far as Ziebertz is concerned religious education in a plural society must not just provide concrete instructions on how to act, but it
should also examine the plural religious-ideological environment, establish a concept of communication that understands communication as an educative method, and help in developing principles and criteria for a concrete form of judging.¹³

To be interculturally competent as educators then means being able to negotiate the interstice or the in-between places. Interstitial integrity or the refusal to rest in one place and make constricting either/or decisions¹⁴ is a fundamental attitude of intercultural persons. It provides the ground on which people who live amidst cultural plurality are able to deal with, examine, and recognize differences. By negotiating the interstice, educators do not only become critically aware of and sensitive to different culture-based religious expressions, viewpoints, and practices that they can use or engage in the teaching and learning process. In doing so, educators directly or indirectly show students that this is simply the way to live in this day and age of shrinking spaces, in this one global village, where education would inevitably also have to be about and toward global citizenship.

ENDNOTES

1 A socio-centric organic culture regards a group, primarily the family, as the unit of society and the individual’s identity is tied to this group while the Euro-American culture, i.e., egocentric, prioritizes the individual over the group. Elizabeth Johnson, Quest for the Living God (New York: Continuum, 2008), 143, 147-147.


4 Frans Wijsen, ‘Intercultural Theology and the Mission of the Church,’ http://www.sedos.org/english/wijsen.htm accessed March 6, 2012...


7 Florentino Horne, for example, points at the problem with theologians who form their theology in Europe and come to rural Philippines and try to make the Philippines Europe. Horne regards this as imperial theology. As quoted in Leonardo Mercado, Filipino Popular Devotions: The Interior Dialogue Between Traditional Religion and Christianity (Manila, Phils: Logos Publications, 2000), 71.


THINK GLOBALLY,  
ACT LOCALLY 

Course And Immersion To Cambodia 

JOE DIMECH

CEO SYDNEY AND Caritas Australia are working in partnership to provide a thirty-hour course (evenings and Saturdays) each year for a small group of seven teachers and support staff on development, aid and Catholic Social Teaching.

I was fortunate enough to be accepted into the Think Globally, Act Locally: Course And Immersion To Cambodia in 2011 with the coursework taking place during the second half of 2011 and the in-country ten day Immersion Experience in January 2012.

A post-immersion Lived Response took place in March 2012. The thirty-hour course explored current philosophies on aid and development, Catholic Social Teaching and the work of Caritas Australia.

Our group was comprised of seven primary and secondary teachers, two Caritas staff, Jane Woolford (Group Leader Education Team) and Julie Vass (Global Education Adviser NSW & ACT) and Christine Hingerty Head of New Evangelisation, Catholic Education Office Sydney.

One of the outcomes of the program was to talk to schools and parishes about the work of Caritas during Lent. This provided a great opportunity to share our first-hand experiences of the development projects that have been put into place in Cambodia and to communicate to students, parents and parishioners the positive effects of the Project Compassion campaign by citing real life examples of sustained long term development with local partners in Cambodia.

In Cambodia, Caritas Australia is known as Australian Catholic Relief/Caritas Australia (ACR/CA). In 2010/2011 ACR worked with seven local Cambodian partners. These groups implemented eight projects in Cambodia with the financial support of more than 500,000 dollars from the Australian Catholic community. Projects ranged from Food Security, Sustainable Agriculture, Basic Health, Water and Sanitation and HIV/AIDS education.

Our Immersion group was led by Lay Sothy, Leader of ACR. We visited a range of rural and urban projects across Cambodia.

Project Compassion is one of Australia’s largest humanitarian fundraisers. It brings thousands of Australians into solidarity with the world’s poor as well as providing disaster relief. The 2012 Project Compassion theme ‘If you want Peace, work for Justice’ (from Pope Paul VI) offers a message of hope that remains as powerful as ever...together we can help the poor regain their human dignity.

Cambodia Synopsis

Cambodia is still recovering from the Khmer Rouge’s brief but destructive reign (1975-1979). During the genocide a third of the Cambodian population (2 million) were killed and the economy, infrastructure and social structures were left in tatters. Part of our experience included visiting the Toul Sleng Genocide Museum and the Killing Fields at Choeung Ek.

Key Facts

• Nearly half of the population (13.5 million) is under 20 yrs old.
• The life expectancy is 62 years.
• 61% of the population have access to safe drinking water.
• Almost 50% of Cambodian children suffer from chronic malnutrition.
• Although 75% of Cambodian children attend primary school, less than half complete
it and only 24% of boys and 21% of girls graduate to secondary school.
• The average Cambodian living in poverty survives on US$2/day.

Summary of the Local Partners and Projects we Visited

The first local partner we visited was Youth For Peace. YFP offers a safe after-school centre where students are educated in peace, leadership, conflict resolution and life skills such as sewing, silk screen printing and gardening. The students’ handicrafts are sold at the local markets and they are taught financial management. YFP supports the poorest of the poor children in Phnom Penh; those who could be targeted for exploitation or child trafficking.

Village in Kampong Chhnang

The village elders of Kampong Chhnang welcomed us in their multi-purpose space and gave us a dollar for dollar breakdown of how money from ACR was spent over the year. We asked them how the money spent made their lives better. They told us that they made rugs and baskets to sell at the markets, built an open-sided community meeting space, replaced thatched roofs with zinc ones and set money aside to care for the elderly. They wanted to know why people in Australia would send money to them and help them. Our answer was that it was part of our practice as Catholics to help the poor and that the Project Compassion campaign during Lent was a very big event in our churches and schools.

Maryknoll Bridges of Hope

The Maryknoll Bridges of Hope supports orphaned children living with HIV/AIDS. They target the poorest of the poor on the outskirts of Phnom Penh; orphaned children with no immediate family. They support these children by providing medication and HIV/AIDS education, school education and dormitory style living quarters. The ‘house mothers and fathers’ told us that the children have every chance of living productive lives into adulthood and that through the support of Caritas they offer hope and raise the dignity of these children.

Remote School Pursat Province:

Australia is often called the Lucky Country. The situation is quite different in Cambodia. 75% of Cambodian children attend primary school. This is much less in remote parts of the country. ACR, with the support of Caritas Australia, built a remote school in Pursat Province. The school is nothing more than a concrete slab with a tin roof divided into two rooms. On the day of our visit around forty-five children sat in one of the rooms. Their ages ranged from five to fifteen years of age. ACR supplies the children with a uniform, exercise books and a school bag. They demonstrated their knowledge of the Khmer language and mathematics. Compared to ‘western standards of education’, the school lacked all the mod cons we expect in Australia. This school only has blackboards, is open to the elements and has no electricity, yet the villagers see it as the cornerstone of their community as their children have access to an education—a basic human right.

EPDO Duck Raising Project: Remote Pursat Province

Money from Project Compassion is distributed to a wide variety of local Cambodian partners and is spent on many varied projects. We visited the EPDO Duck Raising Project in Pursat Province. Here a farmer is supported in duck raising. In 2010 floods washed away...
his modest wooden house and now he lives with his daughter’s family of twelve people and supports them by raising ducks. He collects seventy eggs a day, rides three kilometres with the eggs on a bicycle to the market and makes US$10/day. He also supplements his income with market gardening. As Catholics we believe that everybody has the right to work and be paid a just wage for their labour.

**Economic Justice: Remote Pursat Province**

In Pursat Province we visited a remote village that had benefitted greatly from support from Project Compassion. Women play an important role in economic activity as many of the men work away from their families or have died from HIV. One mother we visited has multiple income streams; vegetable growing, fish farming, chicken and duck raising. Caritas does not see itself as a charity supporting individuals; rather they work with communities for long term development bringing economic justice and lifting up the lives of the people they support. She told us with great pride how her family has benefitted from her multiple income streams and that they have been empowered to make the daily decisions that affect their lives.

**Cow Bank**

This simple scheme provides a family with a cow. Once the cow produces a calf they pass the cow on to another family and keep the calf for milk and for labour on their farm. Caritas supports this initiative as it is a concrete example of the Catholic social teaching of *subsidiarity* whereby people at the grassroots make their own decisions about their lives.

**Solidarity**

Simple agricultural technologies such as fish gates, canals and water pumps allow for greater productivity, generate income and provide solidarity amongst communities. Our brief stop by a canal provided an opportunity to share in the communal activity of catching fish for the evening meal. It was interesting to note the men ‘doing the work’ and the women ‘organising’ from the canal bank. We later learned that the canal fish gates are the social centres of the village as they are places to get all the latest gossip.

**In Conclusion**

Although I experienced the extreme poverty of urban and rural Cambodia for ten short days and gained an insight into the atrocities of the Pol Pot regime, I came away with a great sense of hope for the future. A hope that was realised in the partners we met and in the scores of Cambodians whose lives have been touched and improved by the work of Caritas through ACR and their local partners.

The immersion was a truly humbling experience on many levels. Our group bonded early and shared new understandings and personal reflections throughout the journey over the thirty hours of coursework and the in-country immersion. Our daily de-briefing took place both formally through communal prayer and journal writing led by Chris, July and Jane and informally over a drink or in the mini bus. We were given ample downtime as well for sightseeing and a lot of processing took place in the markets on in the back of a tuk tuk.

I was fortunate to stop over in Singapore after the immersion to take time to be by myself, but found it hard when confronted with overt wealth and the success driven culture given that it was Chinese Lunar New Year. I was presented with the opportunity of driving either a Lamborghini Gallardo or a Ferrari Spyder around the Singapore Formula One track. My conscience weighed up the option of accepting this fleeting and frivolous fifteen-minute thrill ride or considering the CSTs that by now had been integrated into my being; my faith life and outlook on the world. I decided in front of the two cars to channel the money I would have spent on burnt rubber to a deeper financial commitment to Project Compassion this year. My Immersion experience had one other unexpected outcome; trebling my school’s Project Compassion donation for 2012.
BOOK REVIEWS


Botthian and Amphian: De La Salle Brothers in Australia 1864-1867 is a major work. It places the story of the Brothers of the Christian Schools within the context of the local and regional histories of the communities served by these men during the nineteenth century. The study has an international setting too with an investigation of the mission of Jean Baptiste De La Salle, and the later expansion beyond Europe to North America, India and Singapore. Schools in Calcutta and Agra were to be the link between Singapore and the fledging foundation in the Swan River colony later known as Western Australia. While eventually (1906) the De La Salle Brothers opened a school in Armidale, NSW, it was to be another ninety years after Botthian’s departure before the Brothers finally established a school in ‘the West’ despite ongoing efforts by Bishops Griver and Gibney to re-establish a foundation in colonial times.

Printed by Transprint Corporation, Quezon City, Philippines, the standards achieved in this hard back edition of 344 pages, illustrated volume, reflect well upon both the author and the printer. It has a comprehensive bibliography, index, list of contents, appendices, tables and maps and presented in a clear font. The maps and illustrations are of particular relevance as the volume is targeted at an international readership as well as a national one, while even many Western Australians would not be aware of the singular contribution made by two De La Salle Brothers in Perth and Fremantle in the 1860s. The Brothers, Botthian and Amphian, were domiciled with Bishop Griver and the priests and travelled out to their separate schools. In 1950 Michael Mannix of Wembley then ninety eight, could recall being taught by these men who also developed the Catholic Young Men’s Society and supported the fledgling St Vincent de Paul Society.

The title of the book conveys the thrust of the story which also embraces far flung schools in the northern and the southern hemispheres. The dust cover created by a member of the Institute in the Philippines, links the main protagonist, Botthian Schneider to the origins of the Order and its approval by Benedict X111 in 1725 of Jean Baptiste De La Salle and his outreach to the marginalised.

Through the research, analysis and interpretation provided by the author in this study, the reader gains a sense of mission of two particular men endeavouring to live out their commitment to the Institute; but doing so proactively and not as mere neophytes. Br Rory has brought his material together in a compelling narrative. The reader meets those men as the Brothers, or those others who had been appointed priests or bishops. The reader is not being restricted to an analysis of the institutional church without regard for the human frailties, strengths or social attitudes relevant to the times.

The authoritarianism, unacceptable now, that permeated the Catholic hierarchy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and impacted upon the management of the convents and monasteries according to the strictures of Canon Law and each Congregation’s Constitution, is placed in context. The pressure for adaptation to better meet the needs of pioneering conditions whether in America, the Orient or in Australia as faced both by local bishops their clergy and the Brothers, is well examined by the author. The absorbing narrative loses none of its pace in meeting this test. Archival material is used very effectively and author research unearthed a number of documents pivotal to a more complete understanding of several issues within the Institute’s rich
international history with a focus on colonial conditions in Western Australia.

In drawing on public and private archives and collections for photographic material, the author has provided an engaging pictorial record of the era, including previously unpublished photographs and sketches.

The sacrifices and the initiative shown by these resolute men are well captured in the resources marshalled by the author, and give the reader a strong sense of conditions of the time. The sandy stretches designated as streets that led towards the Bishop’s ‘palace’ where one classroom was located are captured as is the Fremantle Presbytery (demolished 1915) where Brother Amphian was thought to have taught and then later visited to offer weekend catechetical lessons.

A long standing member of the De La Salle Brothers and successful classroom practitioner, Br Rory Higgins, a Master’s graduate from the University of Sydney, lives in the Philippines where he is Novice master for the Brothers’ region of Asia and the Pacific.

The author has consulted archives nationally and internationally as well as communities of De La Salle Brothers during this research, and the readers of this fascinating volume will be pleased with the final result. Sr Frances Stibi phvm from the Archdiocesan Archives of Perth, and archivists from New Norcia, the Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers, and the State Library are among those whose generous involvement has been identified by Br Rory. The formal acknowledgements express a ready appreciation for the local support given in the preparation of this book which brings together many aspects of history.

—Clement Mulcahy, Past President, Royal Western Australian Historical Society

(This book can be purchased from The De La Salle Brothers Provincial Office at the cost of $45.00 (no GST). Orders can be placed via fax: 0297956400, phone: 0297956400 and email admin@delasalle.org.au. It is also available at The Record for $49.00.)


This is an important sequel to the highly regarded This Is What We Said (February 2010) and Walk With Us (August 2011).

Between June and August 2011 the Australian Government conducted Stronger Futures Consultations in Northern Territory communities with the stated purpose of finding out what worked and what didn’t work under the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER) - commonly called the Intervention— which started in 2007.

This book is presented in a most accessible and attractive format with highlights of quotations taken from ten consultations which were independently recorded. Beautifully illustrated, this hard-backed book gives voice to the views of Aboriginal people living under the Intervention.

Mainstream media has given much commentary to the controversial laws under which Aboriginal Peoples in the Northern Territory now live. In this book we hear the true voices of Aboriginal people calling out to be heard. Each page speaks volumes about their frustration and despair at the failure of Government to listen.

Every quotation contains a clear expression of the participants’ thoughtful responses to the issues faced by their communities. The reader cannot fail to be moved by the deep commitment of the community members who gave their time yet again to engage in consultations with the government. This commitment was given despite the betrayal of having their voices ignored in previous consultations such as were documented in This Is What We Said.

Though these quotations are short they provide insights into the cumulative impact of the NTER laws from 2007. The responses are presented under various topics such as feelings about the consultations, requests for the return of control over communities, support for homelands and the importance of education, including the restoration of bilingual pro-
grammes. Also addressed are job losses, confusion about the constant change of government policies, lack of promised housing, the unaffordability of healthy fresh food and as well, the fact that 80% of Homelands were ‘dry’ before the Intervention started.

Within these quotations are carefully considered, locally-based solutions which could be easily implemented. These solutions should be genuinely considered by the Government—if only they were ‘really’ listening. ‘Are we going to be heard?...’[referring to the previous round of consultations] It just went in here [pointing to right ear] here [pointing to left ear] and blew it out, the wind blew it out.’

One cannot fail to notice that the solutions offered by Aboriginal people are consistent with the articles of the United Nations Declaration expressed its support on 3 April 2009.

The introduction to this book gives an overview of the strength of the most constant recurring themes during the consultations; the demand for community control to be returned to the people and for the right to self-determination to be re-established. Ironically these are not referred to in the published Government’s Consultation Report. Similarly the desire for the return of bilingual learning programmes to Northern Territory schools, repeatedly called for during the consultations, hardly gets a mention in the Government Report.

What makes this book so unique is that it is based on the only recordings of the 2011 consultations. This book is essential reading for every citizen in Australia. It provides the opportunity to listen to this country’s First Peoples’ authentic voices which often fail to reach the mainstream media. These voices deserve to be heard and respected.

Full transcripts of the quotations can be found on the ‘concerned Australians’ website. The prequels are also highly recommended and further information about them is at: www.concernedaustralians.com.au.

—Sabine Kacha

*     *     *

I would like to congratulate ‘concerned Australians’ for putting this book together. It is so hard to hear the voices. The Government—and the Media—cherry pick what is put out in the public domain. There are very few spaces where Aboriginal voices are heard talking about their experiences. This book is so important as it enables us all to question what our Government is telling us. We don’t have to hear it through filters we can hear straight from the people themselves. If you want to read the full transcripts they are on the concerned Australians website.

I might add that Tracker is another excellent avenue for hearing Aboriginal voices. It has very quickly established itself as a quality publication which fills a much needed gap for thorough and thoughtful journalism on Aboriginal issues.

—Graeme Mundine, Executive Officer, Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, Sydney Archdiocese, at the Sydney Book Launch.

*     *     *

The Government seems to have its head in the sand over this Stronger Futures legislation. They received over 450 submissions to the Senate Community Affairs committee’s inquiry into the Bills. The majority of submissions, which included Aboriginal peoples and organisations, community groups, Churches, human rights groups, welfare groups and individuals, rejected the Bills. More than 35,000 people have signed the Stand for Freedom petition. Other Traditional owners have also made strong statements. Yet the Government is ignoring all this informed opposition and is pushing through its own agenda. [...] They need to throw out this flawed legislation and instead commit to real partnership with Aboriginal peoples to develop sustainable solutions.

—Media Statement, Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, Sydney Archdiocese
The following is a brief overview of the Liturgy of the Word for major celebrations proclaimed in the Sunday Liturgies between July and October 2012, from the Thirteenth to the Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time of Year B. Please feel free to use or adapt these reflections, with the customary acknowledgement of source.

The readings over this period are indeed exceptional. We move through this period of the liturgical year, Ordinary Time, without interruption. There are no feasts or other celebrations that interrupt the flow of Ordinary Time readings in the main from Mark’s gospel though there is an exceptional insertion from John 6, as we shall see below.

A few things are noteworthy about the readings over these months.

**The First Readings** encompass a broad range of literary styles and genres from the First Testament. In the opening Sundays of July, the prophets—those stalwart and faithful Israelites who seek to remind their people of their commitment to the Torah—dominate. Their reminder occurs not without its resistance from the prophet’s audience, an observation clear from Amos 7 on July 15 (OT 15) and echoed in Isaiah for OT 23 and 24 (September 9 and 16). Our selection of first readings also allows us to hear from the genre of wisdom literature, writings from the 3rd and 2nd centuries BCE that seek to offer insights into day-to-day living, but which also reveal something of the inner depth of God’s life reflected among people open to God (OT 25, September 23).

Of particular significance is the powerful *Genesis* reading of OT 27 (October 7). The poetic magic of this reading invites us to reconsider that goodness of creation and the divine plan infused into the human person through God’s creative activity. The connection of this reading with the gospel of the day (Mk 10:2-16) could lead the preacher into a meditation on the value of community life, a theme first established in the *Genesis* story (with a further note on this gospel selection added below).

**The Second Reading** draws from the letter tradition of the Second Testament. These semi-continuous readings in this time of the year are first taken from the *Letter to the Ephesians*. While the letter has been attributed to Paul it is now generally accepted that it was authored by a disciple of Paul writing in Paul’s name. The selection that we read over Ordinary Time (Eph 1-5) accentuates the role of Jesus in God’s plan and our call for union that comes through baptism. The cosmic portrait of Jesus and his relationship to the church community are especially emphatic. *James* is a second letter that we will hear (OT 22 to OT 26). This is probably a very early writing in the NT, some scholars suggest the earliest, addressed to Jewish followers of Jesus, perhaps in the 40s. It encourages practi...
cal religious response to the poorer members of the community. *Hebrews* is a second letter tradition addressed to Jewish followers of Jesus, perhaps living in Rome, and completes our selection of second readings over October. *Hebrews* borrows from familiar Jewish worship practices and customs to reveal the importance of Jesus’ ministry and his connection to the Israelite traditions with which the letter’s readers would have been familiar.

**The Gospel:** We continue with our reading of Mark’s Gospel (chapters 6 to 10). It is interesting to note how the narrative flow of Mark is interrupted by the introduction of Jn 6 over OT 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21 (July 29-August 26). Jn 6 reflects on the centrality of Jesus to the human quest for wisdom, guidance and nourishment. He is truly God’s ‘bread from heaven.’

There are three points from Mark that are worthy of further comment.

First, the two gospels for September 9 (OT 23-Mk 7:31-37) and October 28 (OT 30-Mk 10:46-52) have blindness and healing as their themes. These two stories form a frame around the intervening section in Mark’s narrative outline concerned about discipleship. The ability to see is an issue in Mark’s Jesus household, symbolised through the disciples, as it is with us today. We, like the disciples, need healing to deeply see what is going on around us and how Jesus invites us to accompany him through what befalls us.

Second, the gospel of September 16 (Mk 8:27-35) raises the central question that links the whole of Mk. This is the question addressed to the disciples and every subsequent generation of Jesus followers: ‘Who do you say I am?’ How we respond to this question today in our respective faith communities and from the context of our lives determines how we are Jesus’ disciples.

Third, the gospel selection for October 7 (Mk 10:2-16) needs to be carefully interpreted. Our contemporary understanding and experience of divorce was not the experience of the ancient world or of Mark. Rather than being an indictment on those who divorce, the gospel encourages reflection on those who bring about divorce and upon those victims of the Roman divorce process. These would be the ‘little ones’ of Mark’s Jesus household. They, like the children whom Jesus takes into his arms and blesses, need special pastoral care.

**PART TWO: NOTES ON THE READINGS**

**July 1—Ordinary Time 13:** *Wis 1:13-15; 2:23-24.* God’s creative presence gives life and goodness. *2 Cor 8:7,9,13-15.* Paul encourages sharing for others in need, in the spirit of Jesus. *Mk 5:21-43.* Two intertwined stories about women healed and the faith that brings about that healing. **Theme—God’s Presence.** This theme follows naturally from the theme of the readings from last Sunday. Jesus is the revealer of God’s healing presence that restores and brings into community. Our liturgy allows a celebration of that presence still powerfully active in this community.

**July 8—Ordinary Time 14:** *Ez 2:2-5.* God promises to send a prophet to the exiled people. *2 Cor 12:7-10.* Paul’s ‘thorn in the flesh’ becomes his means of faith in God in his weakness. *Mk 6:1-6.* Jesus is portrayed as God’s prophet rejected by his hometown. **Theme—The Prophetic tradition.** The role and importance of the prophet has always been acknowledged in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The prophet, exemplified in Mark’s portrait of Jesus, is one who speaks the truth, reveals God’s activity in human history and community, and experiences rejection. Who might be such prophets today in our local community?

**July 15—Ordinary Time 15:** *Amos 7:12-15.* Amos is the reluctant prophet urged to do God’s bidding, despite criticism from Israel’s religious leaders. *Eph 1:3-14.* A wonderful hymn summarizing Christ’s role in creation, and God’s desire to bring us into communion, to ‘adopt’ us. *Mk 6:7-13.* The disciples are sent on mission to preach the Gospel. Resistance to the message will be expected. **Theme—Being a Prophet.** Continuing the theme from last week, the readings offer an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of baptism, as a call to be a prophet. Resistance, even rejection, are expected. This resistance can come from many quarters, even from ourselves revealed in our lack of confidence or distrust of the divine call addressed to us per-
sonally. The readings offer an encouraging word in our struggle to be faithful disciples.

**July 22—Ordinary Time 16**: Jer 23:1-6. God promises the people new and faithful shepherds, and especially a future king who will reign with wisdom. Eph 2:13-18. Jesus is celebrated as the source of social, political and religious unity. Mk 6:30-34. Jesus shows concern for his disciples and compassion on the crowds who seem sheepish. **Theme—God shepherds us.** The image of a shepherding God is so vital for us today. What are the implications for a community who really believes in the active presence of such a God?

**July 29—Ordinary Time 17**: 2 Kings 4:42-44. The prophet Elijah takes a few loaves, gives them to his servant, to satisfy the hunger of a large number of people. Eph 4:1-6. The writer urges unity within the Jesus household. The source of such a bond of peace comes from God’s Spirit. Jn 6:1-15. Jesus feeds a hungry crowd. **Theme—God feeds our hungers.** God desires to nourish us in our life’s journey. What are the struggles and difficulties that we face and invite us to open ourselves to this God who seeks to address our deepest needs? How do we seek to be nourished?

**August 5—Ordinary Time 18**: Ex 16:2-4, 12-15, 31. God feeds the hungry Israelites in the Sinai desert. Eph 4:17, 20-24. We are encouraged to live clothed in Jesus, filled with holiness. Jn 6:24-35. Like the nourishment that comes from wisdom or the Torah, Jesus is God’s authentic (“true”) food from heaven for humanity’s nourishment. **Theme—Our hungers: What we desire and hunger for, God seeks to address. What are our hungers? How would we like God to respond? What are the deepest desires of those you know? How are these revealed? How are they a sign of God’s presence?**

**August 12—Ordinary Time 19**: 1 King 19:4-8. The exhausted prophet awaits death, but God revives him with food and drink to journey forward to Mt Horeb. Eph 4:30-5:2. We are exhorted to open ourselves to God’s Spirit, live with kindness and forgiveness, and to imitate God. Jn 6:41-51. Jesus is God’s sustenance for our journey. He is the living bread from heaven. **Theme—Our sustaining God:** Themes of the first reading and gospel underscore God’s desire to sustain us in our spiritual journey. Examples of exhaustion abound; the desire for ‘living bread’ is planted deep within our being. How can our communities identify this desire, and the expression of God’s sustaining presence?

**August 19—Ordinary Time 20**: Prov 9:1-6. The quest for true spiritual wisdom is ancient; wisdom (‘Sophia’) invites us to ‘lay aside immaturity and walk in the way of insight.’ Eph 5:15-20. We are encouraged to live by wisdom with an awareness of God. Jn 6:51-58. Jesus is the true source of Wisdom offered through communion with his flesh and blood. **Theme—True Wisdom: A way of life filled with wisdom is essential.** We look for wisdom in diverse ways (technology; study; economics, prayer, conversation, community…). Jesus seeks to offer us true wisdom; he is from God; eucharistic communion with him promises life forever.

**August 26—Ordinary Time 21**: Josh 24:1-2, 15-17, 18. Before entering into Canaan, Joshua challenges the people to commit themselves to their ancestral God. Eph 4:32-5:2, 21-32. The writer offers advice on how to live religiously as God’s true household. A cautionary word: If this reading is proclaimed it must be reflected upon in the light of the ancient ‘household codes’ to which the writer adds mutual submission. The preacher must be sensitive to the patriarchal nature of the text, not reinforce female submission and appreciate the original cultural and social conditioning behind this text! Jn 6:53, 60-69. Faced with the implications of the realistic language of eating Jesus’ flesh and drinking his blood, some of his disciples turn away. The Twelve remain faithful. **Theme—Centrality of God and Jesus.** The statement of the disciples in Jn 6:68 (‘Lord, to whom can we go?’) captures the essence of the Christian journey: our focus is on Jesus, the heart and meaning of true life, who reveals loving care of us, especially in times of struggle.

**September 2—Ordinary Time 22**: Dn 4:1-2, 6-8. Moses encourages the Israelites to live faithfully to God’s commandments and thus display wisdom and discernment to the peoples. James 1:17-18, 21-22, 27. A fine summary of essential truths for authentic living: generosity, openness to God’s word that leads to action, and concludes with a radical definition of ‘religion.’ Mk 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23. Mk’s Jesus defines true religious living, one that is centered in the heart. **Theme—Authentic Religious Living:** Whether people show up at church or not, everyone wants to be authentic in themselves and live in harmony with others. Today’s readings offer a wealth of insights for reflecting on authentic religious living. What resides in our hearts, and our relationship with Jesus are essential (Mk). These are expressed in the ways we are with others (James).
September 16—Ordinary Time 24: Is 50:4-9. A song of God’s servant, faithful yet persecuted, who seeks justice against his persecutors. James 2:14-18. Faith implies loving and caring actions towards others. Mk 8:27-35. This is the centre of Mk’s gospel: Who is Jesus for us? He is God’s anointed one who will suffer, be persecuted and die. Theme—Suffering. Those close to God (the servant in Is; Jesus in Mk) suffer. Fidelity to God is not without its struggles. How do members of this community show faithful living in the midst of life’s struggles and suffering?

September 23—Ordinary Time 25: Wis 2:12-20. The kind, virtuous person will often be targeted and victimized. James 3:16-4:3. The writer calls for communal and personal peace. The task of peacemaking is essential. Mk 9:30-37. The disciples miss the point of Jesus’ teaching—the little ones are the models of true discipleship, not those who seek social importance. Theme—Hospitality: Openness to the most insignificant in our world, church and daily lives lays the ground for a profound openness to God. Local examples might help to show how this could be an attainable discipleship quality.

September 30—Ordinary Time 26: Num 11:16-29. God’s spirit of prophecy rests on the most unexpected. Moses affirms this. James 5:1-6. The writer criticizes the use of wealth and the way the wealthy disregard the poor. Mk 9:38-48. Jesus acknowledges those who are unexpected disciples. Discipleship takes unusual commitment. Theme—God’s Action: The praise from Moses and Jesus for those who follow (God or Jesus) in the most unexpected ways confirms that God can act outside the ordinary. How does such unexpected discipleship reveal itself in our world or local faith community?

October 7—Ordinary Time 27: Gen 2: 7, 8, 18-24. The creation of the ‘earthling’ (‘Adam’) leads to the creation of the human community—ultimately God’s act. Heb 2:9-11. Jesus is exalted by God and in solidarity with us. Mk 10:2-16. Jesus teaches about those who have been excluded through divorce. Jesus protects these and ‘little children’. Theme—Community: God’s vision for inclusivity and unity, especially between men and women becomes the basis for Christian community life. How is this divine vision expressed in our local faith community?

October 14—Ordinary Time 28: Wis 7:7-11. The search for true wisdom is the focus of prayer. Wisdom is a rich, life sustaining gift. Heb 4:12-13. God’s Word is powerful, acts, reveals and is affective. Mk 10:17-30. Jesus teaches the heart of true religious life—not to be confused with wealth. Freedom from wealth is a gift. Theme—Wisdom: The attachment to wealth and power today is revealed in many stories of business and politics. Jesus’ call, bound up with the search for Wisdom, is for a spirit of personal freedom that is neither bought nor manipulated. Freedom is ultimately God’s gift.

October 21—Ordinary Time 29: Isaiah 53:4, 10-11. This song of God’s servant affirms how life and light come from anguish and suffering. Heb 4:14-16. Jesus can sympathize with us in our suffering and weakness. Mk 10:35-45. Discipleship is based on service, not power or prestige—a dilemma even for today’s leaders. Theme—Service: Servant leadership may be difficult to define but it is very active in the community around us. Examples abound of selfless service, not often noticed or celebrated.

October 28—Ordinary Time 30: Jer 31:7-9. God promises to console, heal and liberate a disconsolate people. Heb 5:1-6. Jesus was appointed as High Priest by God. He knows us and loves us in our weakness. Mk 10:46-52. This is a wonderful story of liberation of a potential disciple. The community (the ‘they’ of the story) have the power to oppress or liberate. Theme—Community Power: The story of Bartimeo reveals the power of community to encourage or block liberation and discipleship. Through its action God heals and frees. How is that happening among us?

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