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The Development of the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines (1985)*
And the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics (1997)*: Model of Inculturation

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The Development of the *National Catechetical Directory for
The Philippines (1985)* and the *Catechism for Filipino
Catholics (1997)*: Model of Inculturation

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This dissertation examines the development of the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (1985) and the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (1997) as an entry point into the complex issues involved in inculturating catechesis. The study's immediate aims are to investigate what prepared the ground for the creation of the Philippine catechism and directory; to analyze the theological issues encountered throughout the texts' development; and to describe the vision and principles governing both documents. The larger, overall purpose is to draw out implications for understanding catechesis and its inculturation today.

Post-Vatican II catechetical renewal in the Philippines began to take shape in the 1950s and '60s as a result of the Second Vatican Council's call for *aggiornamento*, the influx of new ideas from the worldwide catechetical movement, and various developments in the local ecclesial scene. One tangible result of this renewal is the shift from the long-established trend of importing catechetical texts from abroad, to the creation of more local, inculturated materials. The development of both the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* and the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* offers a glimpse into the process of inculturating catechesis and brings to light its challenges. In analyzing the texts' drafts and dossiers, this study uncovers differing theological tendencies and inherent tensions

within both inculturation and catechesis as the major sources of conflict in the approval process. In describing and articulating the documents' vision and principles, this study finds the notion of integration to be the leitmotif and central theme. The dissertation concludes by summarizing the foregoing research and highlighting the following lessons drawn from this history: first, faith can be distinguished from its expression, and plurality in expressions is not necessarily tantamount to relativism. Second, communicating faith's objective (*fides quae*) and subjective (*fides qua*) dimensions require a delicate balancing act in which fundamental theology plays a necessary role.

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INTRODUCTION

This study documents the history of the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (1985) and the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (1997),¹ the first official, locally produced, catechetical texts for the Philippines in the post-Vatican II era. As signposts of catechetical renewal in the Philippines and as updated tools for evangelization, the NCDP and CFC contain key priorities of the Philippine Church's catechetical ministry and reflect new developments in catechesis, evangelization, and theology since the Second Vatican Council. As the first national catechism to be approved by the Holy See after the promulgation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in 1992,² the CFC and its creation offer an insight into the use of the CCC as a "point of reference" in creating local catechisms.³ This dissertation studies the development of the NCDP and CFC (1978-1997) and uses it as a lens with which to view catechetical history in the Philippines, and as an entry point into the complex issues involved in the processes of catechesis and inculturation.

¹ Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (formerly Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Religious Instruction), *Maturing in Christian Faith National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (Pasay City, Philippines: Daughters of St. Paul, 1985); Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education, *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (Manila: ECCCE / Word and Life Publications, 1997). Hereafter referred to as NCDP and CFC, respectively.

² Congregation for the Clergy, *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1992). Hereafter referred to as CCC.

³ John Paul II, "Fidei Depositum Apostolic Constitution on the Publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* Prepared following the Second Vatican Council," http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_19921011_fidei-depositum_en.html (accessed 29 September 2009).

The significance of the NCDP and CFC in the Philippine context is magnified by the fact that previous to their creation, no catechetical texts existed in the country that engage Philippine culture in an explicit manner. In the 1990s, the following four catechetical texts were in use in the country: the *Baltimore Catechism*, the two-volume *Apostolate Family's Catechism*, by Rev. Lawrence Lovasik, S.V.D., *Basic Christian Doctrine* by Rev. Jesús María Cavanna, C.M., the *Question and Answer Catechism* by Rev. Marciano M. Guzman and Rev. Mario M. Castillo.⁴ Among these texts, only the *Apostolate Family's Catechism* (Philippine edition) makes an attempt to refer to the Philippine context by cross-referencing quotes from the documents of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines. Even then, it is essentially a text composed for the American audience, having been published by the Apostolate for Family Consecration based in Bloomingdale, Ohio. Cavanna's *Basic Christian Doctrine*, first published in 1979, updated in 1982 and 1986 as well as the *Question and Answer Catechism* published in 1983 do not engage the Philippine context either, and lack official character since both texts are authored by individuals. Finally, the *Baltimore Catechism*, its new editions and revisions notwithstanding, is a text whose adequacy for the contemporary Philippine scene is questionable.

A further look into catechetical history confirms that most catechetical texts used in the Philippines were imports from abroad. Soon after the arrival of Spanish colonizers and

⁴ Lawrence Lovasik, *Apostolate Family's Catechism* (Bloomingdale, OH: Apostolate for Family Consecration, 1993); Marciano M. Guzman and Mario M. Castillo, *Question and Answer Catechism* (Manila: Sinag-Tala, 1983); Jesús María Cavanna, *Basic Christian Doctrine From Sacred Scripture and Church Teaching for Our Times: A Brief Biblical Catholic Catechism for Adults* (Manila: St. Paul Publications, 1979), second ed. (Quezon City, Philippines: Vera-Reyes, 1982), and *Basic Christian Doctrine: Adapted to the New Code of Canon Law, with 21 Supplements of Theological and Pastoral Notes*, revised and enlarged third ed. (Manila: Carmelo and Bauermann, 1986). The use of these catechisms in the Philippines is mentioned in Salvatore Putzu, "Post-Approval Prospects and Challenges," *Docete* 19 (July-September 1997): 33. Publication data for the *Baltimore Catechism* was not provided or referred to in this article.

missionaries in 1521, and the establishment of a permanent Spanish settlement in 1565, two catechisms were published in 1593 by the Dominicans in Manila, the *Doctrina christiana en lengua española y tagala* (“Christian doctrine in Spanish and Tagalog”) and the *Doctrina christiana en letra y lengua china* (“Christian doctrine in Chinese letters and language”).⁵

These works hold a place of honor in Philippine culture and history as the first books printed in the Philippines. For three centuries, the Tagalog *Doctrina* and many other catechisms that the Spanish missionaries published played a key role in evangelization during Spanish colonial times. During the period of American colonization (1898-1944), the introduction of the separation of church and state, and the American educational system drastically changed the personnel, status, and role of the Catholic Church in Philippine society. Although belatedly, catechetical materials in English eventually made their way to the country.⁶

The centuries-long trend of importing catechetical texts from abroad began to shift only in the 1950s and ‘60s, through the worldwide catechetical movement and the publications of the *East Asian Pastoral Institute* (EAPI) founded by the Austrian Jesuit Johannes Hofinger in 1955.⁷ These publications made the fruits of the catechetical

⁵ It is not known which of the two *doctrinas* was printed first. For more information on the two texts, see the facsimile of the Tagalog *doctrina* and the introductory essay in Edwin Wolf 2nd, *Doctrina Christiana The First Book Printed in the Philippines* (Philadelphia: Edward Stern and Co., 1947).

⁶ For example, see the following catechetical works of Louis LaRavoire Morrow, secretary to the Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines, Msgr. Guillermo Piani: *Ang Aking Catecismo, Unang Aklat* (Manila: The Catholic Truth Society, 1938). This text is a Tagalog translation of “My Catechism, Book One.” Other books in Morrow’s “My Religion Series” were published in the Philippines, such as *My Bible History* in Tagalog and Tiruray and *My Catholic Faith: A Manual of Religion* (Kenosha, WI: My Mission House, 1949). This last text states on its copyright page, “all material from ‘A Catechism of Christian Doctrine,’ Revised Edition of the Baltimore Catechism.” The author has not been able to locate further evidence on the details surrounding the introduction of the Baltimore Catechism to the Philippines.

⁷ In 1955, Hofinger founded the *Institute of Missionary Apologetics*, later renamed the *East Asian Pastoral Institute* (EAPI) in 1961. Hofinger’s successor and fellow Jesuit Jose Maria Calle, spearheaded the production of catechetical modules for the parish setting under the *Christian Communities Program*.

movement accessible to a local audience, one of which is the thrust toward inculturating catechesis. By this time, the *Episcopal Commission for Education and Religious Instruction* (ECERI) had been in existence for sixteen years. As the education arm of the *Catholic Welfare Organization*, the forerunner of the *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines* (CBCP), ECERI was poised to take the lead in directing and coordinating efforts in Catholic education and catechesis at the national level.

The more immediate story of the NCDP and CFC's creation began in 1975, when former Auxiliary Bishop of Manila, now Archbishop of Caceres Leonardo Z. Legaspi assumed ECERI's chairmanship. In 1977, he commissioned a nationwide survey of the catechetical ministry, and in 1978, began recruiting members for the committee that was to draft the NCDP. After completion of the directory's first draft in 1982, ECERI began to make plans for a national catechism. In 1983, a schema for the "Catholic Faith Catechism" was presented to the National Catechism Committee by the future general editor of the catechism, Rev. Joseph L. Roche, S.J.

When the NCDP was published in 1985, it was considered "the most important document the CBCP has issued since 1945."⁸ When the CFC was published in 1997, it was the first national catechism to gain approval from the Holy See since the promulgation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in 1992. As milestones in catechetical history, the NCDP and CFC's specific contributions to the Church's catechetical ministry and the academic field of catechetics have yet to be explored. This dissertation aims to respond to this need in several ways. First, this study investigates what prepared the ground for the creation of these

⁸ Leonardo Z. Legaspi, "The Growth of the Catechetical Ministry in the Philippines," *Docete* 9 (July-September 1986): 3.

two texts by situating their development within catechetical history in Philippines and post-Vatican II shifts in catechesis and inculturation. Second, this dissertation sheds light on basic theological issues encountered in communicating the faith and inculturating catechesis in its analysis of the NCDP and CFC's creation, redaction, and approval by the Holy See. Third, this paper describes the NCDP and CFC's distinctive catechetical approach as one that places priority on "lived faith," and inculturates by articulating "the common teaching of the church in view of its direct impact on Filipinos' living out their Catholic faith."⁹

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter One provides a broad sketch of the Philippines' evangelization and catechesis against the backdrop of a general overview of Philippine culture and history. Traditional historiography, especially Church histories, relate the entrance of Christianity to the Philippines and since then, the changing role and place of the Church in society vis-à-vis different colonial regimes, and the independent Philippine republic. Using key documents of the Second Vatican Council, the Synods, and the Holy See, Chapter Two discusses developments in catechesis since Vatican II, such as the focus on catechesis as a ministry of the Word, adult catechesis, organic and systematic catechesis that is centered on Christ and the Trinity, and finally, the approval of the proposal for a universal catechism. Chapter Three examines the Church's adoption of inculturation as a theological term and the subsequent discussions on its various aspects. As in Chapter Two, this chapter's main sources are key documents from Vatican II, the Synods, and the Holy See. Particular focus is given to the conversations on inculturation opened up by the Extraordinary Synod of 1985, and the acknowledgment of these issues in the final text of the

⁹ Joseph L. Roche, "The Theological Concept of the CFC," *Docete* 26 (January-March 2003): 20.

CCC. With the general concepts of catechesis and inculturation, already in the background, Chapter Four explores the immediate context in which the NCDP and CFC were conceived (1965-1985). This period is marked by the reception of the Second Vatican Council in the Philippines, manifested by renewal in the Church's liturgy, social apostolate, and catechetical ministry, and finally, the holding of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines in 1992. During this time, the need for integral evangelization was emphasized, a thrust which is also evident in the NCDP and CFC. Chapter Five describes the NCDP and CFC's creation: their drafting, editing, criticism, and final approval using the drafts and dossiers prepared for their critique, as well as letters, meetings, and published accounts of the works-in-progress. The difficulties encountered in the creation of these two texts are indicative of unresolved issues fundamental to catechesis and inculturation. The importance of an adequate grasp of the objective and subjective dimensions of revelation, faith, and the deposit of faith emerged as the real points of contention underlying the debates on the directory's and catechism's doctrinal content. Then, the chapter summarizes and evaluates the final texts of the NCDP and CFC according to their own aims. For the NCDP, the goal is to offer "practical guidelines regarding the essentials in catechetical background, content, methodology . . ." in the Philippines and present catechetical context (NCDP Preface, E.). For the CFC, the purpose is to provide a text that implements NCDP directives; that is, "focused on the essentials, Filipino and experiential, Catholic, and practical" (CFC 10-15). Finally, the Conclusion provides a summary of the study, draws implications and future avenues for research.

CHAPTER ONE

PHILIPPINE CATECHESIS IN CONTEXT: AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

This chapter's sketch of Philippine history and culture provides a foundation for understanding the challenges faced by the Church in its tasks of evangelization and catechesis. Philippine geography, ethnic make-up, and cultural values introduce this chapter. Then major events in Philippine history are used as backdrops against which evangelization and catechesis during the different eras are described. First, historians' accounts of the Spanish conquest and the arrival of Christianity beginning in 1521 allow us to glimpse what Philippine Catholicism looked like in the first three centuries of its existence. Various missionary records reveal unique and enduring challenges faced in catechizing, such as the use of vernaculars, lack of personnel and the constant need for improving catechetical materials and methods. Second, the emergence of a national identity distinct from that of Spain, the Philippine revolution of 1896, and the adoption of democracy under American rule resulted in a radical change in the Catholic Church's status and identity within broader Philippine society. This shift, together with the larger socio-economic and cultural transformations of this period, posed new problems for catechetical instruction. Third, the Second World War, the socio-economic policies surrounding the final granting of independence in 1946, the rise of a dictator and the coincidence of his authoritarian rule with the Second Vatican Council, and the central role that the Church leadership played in ending

the Marcos dictatorship in 1986, all made an impact on the Philippine Church's self-understanding, priorities and consequently, on her content and means of catechesis. Since this dissertation's particular focus is on the development of the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (1985) and the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (1997),¹ critical events and the immediate years surrounding these documents' creation will be treated in depth in subsequent chapters. Nevertheless, this general introduction to the Philippines from the point of view of catechetical history serves as basis for a broader understanding of the NCDP and CFC.

Geography and Cultural Values

The Philippines is an archipelago in Southeast Asia comprised of three major land groupings, Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, and 7,107 islands in total. The population of approximately 90 million is divided into the following major ethnic groups: 91.5% Christian Malay, 4% Muslim Malay, 1.5% Chinese, and 3% other.² Since 1987, the official languages in the country have been English and Filipino,³ the latter being largely based on Tagalog. There are at least eight major languages spoken in the country, Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano, Hiligaynon or Ilonggo, Bicol, Waray, Pampango, and Pangasinense, and seventy-six or so

¹ Hereafter referred to as NCDP and CFC, respectively.

² Republic of the Philippines, "General Information," http://www.gov.ph/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=200020&Itemid=26 (accessed 13 July 2009).

³ The official languages of the Philippines have changed as many times as the nation's Constitution has been rewritten. The 1899 Constitution stipulates Spanish, the 1935 Constitution, names English and Spanish, the 1973 Constitution, states English and "Pilipino," not "Filipino" are the official languages. Though both "Pilipino" and "Filipino" are largely based on Tagalog, there are differences in the alphabet, spelling, and accepted pronunciation. Finally, the 1987 Constitution names Filipino as the national language, but English and Filipino are both considered official languages of communication and instruction. Ibid.

other languages and over 500 dialects.⁴ According to the 2000 census, religious affiliation in the country remains largely Roman Catholic at 80.9% of the population. Breakdown of membership in the other religions are as follows: Muslim 5%, Evangelical 2.8%, *Iglesia ni Cristo* 2.3%, *Aglipayan* 2%, other Christian 4.5%, Other 1.8%.⁵

Some outstanding cultural values cluster around Filipinos' personalism, which "attaches great importance to closeness of reciprocal ties, loyalty to persons, family and kinship obligation and smoothness of interpersonal relations."⁶ Of the many forms of reciprocity, *utang na loob* (Tagalog for "debt of gratitude") is particularly important; that is Filipinos are expected to be aware of their obligations to those from whom they receive favors and should repay them in an acceptable manner."⁷ Corollaries to *utang na loob* are *hiya* and *amor propio*. *Hiya*, "the universal social sanction that regulates the give and take of reciprocity and, in general, all social behavior" may be translated as "shame" or "a sense of social propriety."⁸ Closely linked to this is *amor propio*, "a sense of self-respect, self-

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Factbook: Republic of the Philippines," <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rp.html> (accessed July 13, 2009). In addition to these figures, .6% are unspecified, and .1% are atheistic. Two indigenous groups mentioned in the census are the *Aglipayans* and the *Iglesia ni Cristo*. The *Aglipayan* church was founded by Gregorio Aglipay in 1902 and is very similar to the mainline Protestant churches in terms of teaching. The *Iglesia ni Cristo* (Tagalog for "Church of Christ") was founded in 1914 by Felix Manalo, who claimed to be the last prophet, and for his church to be the one true Church of Christ.

⁶ NCDP 27.

⁷ Mary Racelis Hollnsteiner, "Reciprocity as a Filipino Value," in *Society, Culture, and the Filipino Introductory Readings in Sociology and Anthropology* (Quezon City, Philippines: Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University, 1975), 88.

⁸ Ibid., 90.

esteem, or of personal pride.”⁹ This usually means that Filipinos are “highly sensitive to personal affront,”¹⁰ and pressure is strong to save face if one’s *amor propio* is hurt. Underlying these values is the stress on *pakikisama*, “getting along with others”¹¹ or solidarity, which is reflective of the fundamental group-centeredness among Filipinos.

Another grouping of values pertain to Filipinos’ basic stance towards the transcendent. Even before Spanish colonization, Filipinos were already characterized by “their deep religiosity and consciousness of the holy be it within themselves or surrounding them.”¹² This “spirit-orientedness, and openness to the transcendent”¹³ is reflected in various ways. For example, even in this scientific age, “Filipinos continue to invoke the spirits in various undertakings, especially in faith-healings and exorcisms.”¹⁴ This deep-seated awareness also makes an impact on Filipinos’ view of their personal responsibility vis-à-vis the transcendent. The *bahala na* attitude, a kind of “optimistic fatalism,” is variously interpreted as a “false trust in Providence,”¹⁵ a “psychological cushion against failure and disappointment,”¹⁶ and more positively, “ultimate confidence and trust in God.”¹⁷

⁹ Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education, *New National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (Manila: Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines, 2007), paragraph 41. Hereafter referred to as New NCDP with paragraph number.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ New NCDP 42.

¹² Francisco Demetrio, *Encyclopedia of Philippine Folk Beliefs and Customs* (Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines: Xavier University Press, 1991), xi., cited in New NCDP 46.

¹³ CFC 1469

¹⁴ CFC 43

¹⁵ Vitaliano Gorospe, “Christian Renewal of Filipino Values,” in Jaime Bulatao and Vitaliano R. Gorospe, *Split-Level Christianity and Christian Renewal of Filipino Values* (Manila / Quezon City, Philippines: UST Press and Ateneo de Manila University, 1966), 43.

¹⁶ New NCDP 49.

While this paints the picture of a traditional, perhaps largely rural Philippine culture still “steeped in faith,” the rapid changes brought about by urbanization, globalization, the influence of mass media and new media are quickly transforming the cultural landscape. If anything, today, the cultural issues facing catechists are more complex due to the “emerging global and postmodern culture”¹⁸ in the country.

This geography, cultural values, and traits all play out in the history of the Philippines, and contribute to the formation of the identity of the Filipino. As the next section shows, the history of the Philippine nation is so intertwined with the history of the Church, a situation that lasts to this day. This brings to bear the importance to catechists of understanding this past in light of their ministry.

Christianity Comes to the Philippines

The large Roman Catholic population is rooted in the country’s history as a colony of Spain. The Spaniards and their religion came to the Philippines in the general context of exploration, colonization, and crusade that characterized the 15th and 16th centuries in the Iberian Peninsula. However, the more immediate reason for the coming of the Spaniards and the Portuguese to Southeast Asia was the race for control of the spice trade, which Portugal was poised to lead after Vasco da Gama’s discovery of the route to India via the Cape of Good Hope in 1498. From India, the Portuguese made their way to various islands

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Daniel Patrick Huang, “Emerging Global, Postmodern Culture in the Philippines,” *Landas* 13, no. 1 (1999): 50-52.

in Southeast Asia, especially the so-called “Spice Islands,” the Moluccas. Spain began their navigational exploits later, and discovered the Antilles, America, and the Philippines in 1521.¹⁹ To legitimize their claims to new territory, the two world powers at the time would look to the Pope for the issuance of Papal bulls, the most important of which was the *Inter Caetara* promulgated by Pope Alexander VI in 1493. This document decreed the division of Spain and Portugal’s spheres of influence, and the preaching of the Catholic faith among the inhabitants of the newly discovered islands. It is clear then that this expansion was not just motivated by possible economic gain but a complex combination of economic, political and religious factors.

Schumacher takes note of the close connection between the expulsion of the Moors²⁰ from Granada and the beginning of Spain’s worldwide expansion, both occurring in the same year, 1492. He asserts the following:

The combination of the struggle for power, for the glory of God, and for the glory of Spain, which animated the conquest of Granada, was to be a part of the conquest of America and the conquest of the Philippines . . . Under Fernando and Isabel’s successors, King Carlos I (the Emperor Charles V in Germany), and his son Felipe II (Philip II), the Hapsburg dynasty was to make Spain a world power . . . the leading military of Europe . . . the champion of Catholicism against the Protestant Reformation. For the 16th Century Spaniard, . . . Spain was God’s providential instrument for the salvation of Europe, the Indies, and of the world.²¹

¹⁹ John N. Schumacher, *Readings in Philippine Church History* (Quezon City, Philippines: Loyola School of Theology, 1987), 2.

²⁰ The term “Moor” or in Spanish, “Moro” comes from the ancient Mauri or Mauretania. The appellation refers to the Muslim Berbers of North Africa, and also other Muslims who went to Spain. It came to be used as a label for the Arabs who conquered Spain, then later became the term for Muslims in general. See Cesar Adib Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1999), 90 and 117.

²¹ Schumacher, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, 1.

The Spanish Church at the time was a leading force in the so-called Catholic Counter-reformation. The emergence of the religious orders such as the Society of Jesus under Ignatius of Loyola, the reform of Carmel under Theresa of Avila, and John of the Cross, brought to the Church incredible energy and a thrust toward renewal and missionary activity. A significant element that influenced the political and religious conquest of the islands was Spain's previous experience in the Americas, the launching ground for the Christian mission to the Philippines. Some missionaries who visited the Antilles, Mexico, and Peru were appalled at the bloodbath that accompanied Spain's conquest that they began to question Spain's right to be in those territories. The most significant of these figures was the Dominican Bartolome de las Casas, who advocated the protection of the natives against the abuses of the conquerors and questioned papal authority to endow temporal power to the King. The first missionaries who settled permanently in the Philippines were Augustinians originally based in Mexico. Given this previous assignment, they were very much aware of the rejection of the pope's grant of temporal power to the King and the increasing opposition to forcible methods used to convert the natives. Thus, it was a chastened group of conquerors, soldiers, and missionaries who came to the Philippines, having learned from the political and religious conflict in Spain over the Americas.²² In many other matters dealing with Spain's methods of political conquest and initial evangelization, the extensive influence of their earlier experience in the Americas is evident.

²² For an in-depth treatment of the debates, see J. Gayo Aragon, "The Controversy over Justification of Spanish Rule in the Philippines," in *Studies in Philippine Church History*, ed. Gerald Anderson (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), 3-21.

The key figure in the arrival of Christianity in the Philippines is Ferdinand Magellan, a distinguished Portuguese navigator who swore allegiance to Spain. Magellan landed on Samar, an island in the southeastern part of the Philippines on 16 March 1521. He set up camp here to nurse the sick members of the crew back to health. They then proceeded to the nearby island of Limasawa, where he encountered tribes with whom they traded. On 25 March 1521,²³ the first Mass was here where a cross was planted to signify Spanish setting-foot on this territory. A friendly chieftain then took Magellan to the highly fortified and densely populated town of Cebu to replenish their supplies.

Rajah Humabon, chieftain of Cebu, required Magellan to pay tribute which Magellan refused. Upon the mediation of an unnamed trader, war was averted and a blood compact ensued signifying peace. One week later, Humabon and his wife were baptized along with five hundred to eight hundred of their kinsmen. In the process, Magellan installed them as King and Queen, and stood as their godparent. A cross was erected in the middle of the square, and at a feast that evening, an exchange of presents ensued.

Among the gifts brought by the Spaniards were a cross, an image of our Lady, and the image of the *Santo Niño*, the Child Jesus. Although Spanish historical accounts state that of these presents, the queen had singled-out the image and she asked if she could keep it in place of her idols,²⁴ it is more likely that the image was simply venerated among the many other idols that were part of the animistic religion in place. These gods of the animistic

²³ The date is disputed among historians, some hold that the first mass was held on Easter Sunday, 31 March 1521.

²⁴ Rosa Tenazas, *The Santo Niño of Cebu* (Manila: Catholic Trade School, foreign distribution by the Cellar Book Shop, Detroit, 1965), 21-22.

religion were called *bathala*, and as the Spaniards who later came to Cebu discovered, so was the *Santo Niño* called *bathala*.²⁵

A warrior chieftain from the neighboring island of Mactan refused to acknowledge the newly acquired kingship of Humabon. A battle between the Spaniards and this chieftain's group led to the death of Magellan and many of his men. The rest of the Spanish troops were poisoned a few nights after, thus putting an end to Magellan's expedition and Spanish presence in the islands. Nevertheless, before this first phase of the Spanish presence came to an end, Magellan the navigator had already tried his hand at mission work and had modest success.²⁶

The Spanish Regime (1565-1896)

Several expeditions were sent to the islands,²⁷ but it was only forty years later that the Spaniards gained a permanent foothold. The ships led by Miguel Lopez de Legazpi landed in Cebu in April 1565, and were met with hostility. Legazpi's victory at this battle marked the beginning of Spain's three hundred year rule in the Philippines. The *Santo Niño* image was

²⁵ Today, the word *Bathala* is synonymous with *God* or *Lord*, but the commonly used word in the Filipino language is *Diyos*, from the Spanish *Dio*. Early Spanish historians defined *Bathala* as "false gods," whereas the American historian Ferdinand Blumentritt gives the following description: "This name of Sanskrit origin (*Batara*), was given to various gods of the Malay Filipinos. The ancient Tagalogs called their principal god *Badhala* or *Bathala may-kapal* (God the Creator)." Ibid., 54.

²⁶ See John Leddy Phelan, "Prebaptismal Instruction and the Administration of Baptism in the Philippines during the Sixteenth Century," in *Studies in Philippine Church History*, ed. Gerald Anderson (Ithaca: Cornell, 1969), 22-43.

²⁷ In 1545, the Villalobos expedition reached Samar and Leyte but were repelled by the natives immediately. It was Villalobos who named these islands "Las Islas Filipinas," after Philip II. Later on, this name was applied to the whole archipelago, extending from the Batanes islands in the North, to the Sulu archipelago, a group of islands at the country's southernmost tip.

later found amidst the ruins and was taken by the Spaniards as a divine sign of approval for their task of “christianizing and hispanizing.” By 1571, the Spaniards had gained greater control of the areas surrounding Manila, and the capital was moved here, replacing Cebu. Furthermore, though Cebu was more centrally located in the archipelago, Manila was a much more significant center of trade, even more than Sulu during that period.²⁸

Organized missionary work began once settlement became feasible. The Pope had transferred authority to the Spanish crown to oversee the church in its new colonies. The Spanish rulers thought it best that missionaries from the following religious orders be sent to the new colony: these were the Augustinians (1565), Discalced Franciscans (1578), Jesuits (1581), Dominicans (1587), and the Augustinian Recollects (1606).²⁹ Much later to arrive were the Fathers of San Juan de Dios (1641), the Vincentians (1862), the Capuchins (1886) and Benedictines (1895).³⁰ The first group of regular clergymen was an especially crucial factor in both evangelization and colonization. Along with the *encomenderos*³¹ and Spanish soldiers, these missionaries were the *indios*’ “most tangible link to the Spanish *imperio*.”³²

²⁸ William Larousse, *A Local Church Living in Dialogue: Muslim-Christian Relations in Mindanao-Sulu, Philippines 1965-2000* (Rome: Pontificia Editrice Gregoriana, 2001), 49. By the arrival of the Spaniards, the Sulu archipelago was already an Islamized trading center and seat of power called the Sultanate of Sulu.

²⁹ John Leddy Phelan, *The Hispanization of the Philippines, Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses 1565-1700* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1959), 32.

³⁰ Pablo Fernandez, *History of the Church in the Philippines (1521-1898)* (Manila: National Book Store, 1979), 27.

³¹ The *encomendero* was a Spanish tributary. By royal decree, he was given a portion of territory (*encomienda*), and the locals living on the territory would be required to pay tribute and in other cases, provide labor.

³² Vicente Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 19. The term *indio* was used by the Spaniards to refer to the natives of the Philippines as well, not just the native “indians” of their South American colonies.

Phelan's description of the situation was that the regulars felt themselves irreplaceable; especially in light of the constantly meager number of secular clergy.³³

This lack of personnel—both religious and military—was compounded by the geographical, political, and linguistic dispersal of the population. The sheer distance between the Philippines and Spain, and the fact that the country was conquered near the end of the Spanish empire prevented a huge influx of Spaniards.³⁴ Also, in comparison to Latin America, the Visayas and Luzon of the 16th century had neither empires nor central seats of power, only kinship units called *barangays*, as well as loose confederations of *barangays*. Thus, the job of consolidating the population fell to the hands of the conquerors and missionaries.

As a solution to the lack of personnel and the population's dispersal, the missionaries with the help of military forces, established *reducciones*.³⁵ These were central settlements where large groups of people were either enticed or coerced to transfer. In the Philippines, unlike Latin America, this process involved relatively less violence but also less success.³⁶ A further attempt at consolidation was the creation of the *cabecera-visita* complex. The *cabecera* (Spanish for “capital”), was envisioned to be the headquarters of the region; that is, where the parish church, convent, and school, were arranged in a grid surrounding a plaza.

³³ Phelan, *The Hispanization of the Philippines*, 33.

³⁴ Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism*, 19.

³⁵ The word *reduccion* comes from the Spanish verb *reducir*, meaning to reduce, or to translate. Rafael is of the view that the process of “translation” was also operative in the political sphere when the *barangay* system was “translated” into the Spanish pattern of resettlement. *Ibid.*, 90.

³⁶ This was due to farming practices that required them to be on the move and near their plots of land, raiding from the Muslim south, and opposition from *encomenderos*. See Phelan, *The Hispanization of the Philippines*, 41.

Those who remained outside the town were to be settled *bajo de la campana*, “within hearing of the church bells.”³⁷

Given the resistance to resettlement, the clergy constructed *visita* chapels which non-resident clergy would visit periodically. A measure taken to retain focus on the *cabeceras* was to ensure the elaborateness of the many festivities and celebrations held at the parish church. Some feasts, such as Holy Week, Christmas, and the town patron saint’s feast day, would last for several days. This led to the building of “Sunday houses,” temporary shelters during festivities, which later turned into permanent dwellings.³⁸ Gradually, this *cabecera-visita* pattern of settlement came to be etched in Philippine society.

Once a locality was conquered, tribute began to be collected. And just as conquest was justified by evangelization, the collection of tribute was legitimized by the provision of pastoral care by the *encomenderos* and missionaries. This “care” came in the form of teaching, catechesis, provision of credit, employment, and the like. According to Rafael, “tribute was at the nexus of Spanish authority and native submission.”³⁹ Its other forms; namely, *polo* (forced labor), *vandala* (imposition of production quotas), all attest to the underlying idea of patronage.

³⁷ Ibid., 48-49.

³⁸ Ibid., 47.

³⁹ Ibid., 161.

Catechesis and Inculturation during the Spanish Regime

It was customary during the Spanish times, to “repair on Sundays and days of obligation to the Church for the mass and sermon, before which the doctrine and catechism are recited.”⁴⁰ The missionaries selected catechists “of every age, sex and condition . . . mature men, women, or child catechists.”⁴¹ The mass was said in Latin, but variation occurred in the selection of language used for preaching.

The country’s first archbishop, Domingo de Salazar called for the First Synod of Manila in 1582. Amidst issues of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, the fledgling Church hierarchy took the official position of instructing the *indios* in their native languages and adopted a 1581 Tagalog catechism composed by Franciscan friar Juan de Plasencia.⁴² The first two books printed xylographically (by woodcut) in the country, are likely to be from this 1581 text. These two books were published in the early part of 1593, one entitled *Doctrina Christiana en lengua española y tagala* (Spanish for “Christian Doctrine in Spanish and Tagalog”) written in Tagalog and Spanish, probably of composite authorship, and the other, *Doctrina Christiana en lengua y letra china* (Spanish for “Christian Doctrine in Chinese”)

⁴⁰ Emma Blair and James Robertson, eds. *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898*, vol. 12 (Cleveland: Arthur Clark, 1903-1909), quoted in Fernandez, *History of the Church*, 138.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Edwin Wolf 2nd, *Doctrina Christiana The First Book Printed in the Philippines* (Philadelphia: Edward Stern and Co., 1947), 40. According to Wolf, Plasencia was helped by friars Miguel de Talavera and Juan de Oliver in his many Tagalog compositions. Wolf concludes that the 1593 *Doctrina* was printed from this 1581 Plasencia-Talavera-Oliver text. Based on my research, it is unclear whether this 1581 text exists to this day. Besides, Filipino Church historian Pablo Fernandez states, “There were already other catechisms in the other dialects of the Philippines. Composed by the other missionaries who had arrived before Fray Juan (de Plasencia), they had been written in the dialects of the regions where those early missionaries had worked.” Fernandez does not give examples or supply any evidence of these catechisms, so the present author cannot say more about “the first-ever catechism” in the country. Cf. Fernandez, 435.

written in Spanish and Chinese attributed to Dominican friar Juan Cobo.⁴³ Of the two works, only the Tagalog-Spanish work survives to this day.⁴⁴

The 1593 Tagalog *Doctrina* contains a syllabary including a Tagalog alphabet and pronunciation guide both in roman letters and the ancient Tagalog script called *baybayin*. The syllabary is followed by the Our Father, Ave Maria, Credo, Salve Regina, Articles of Faith, the Ten Commandments, the Commandments of the Church, the Sacraments of the Church, the seven mortal sins, fourteen works of charity, Confession, and the Question-and-Answer section. Each portion is rendered in Spanish, Tagalog (in Roman letters), and in the ancient Tagalog script. On the cover is a woodcut featuring St. Dominic in the foreground, carrying a book and a lily, and standing beneath a star. In the background are two buildings, hills, plants, and a tree. This image of St. Dominic is said to “differ vastly from contemporary Spanish and Mexican cuts of the same type. The clouds, for instance, are characteristically Chinese, and the buildings in the background more reminiscent of eastern temples than European churches.”⁴⁵ The oriental influence may be explained by the fact that a Chinese version was printed at the same time, also by the Dominican press in (Binondo) Manila, the first in the country.

⁴³ Wolf, 6.

⁴⁴ The only surviving copy is housed in the Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. This copy’s facsimile was published by the Edward Stern and Co. in Philadelphia, 1947.

⁴⁵ Wolf cites a letter dated 20 June 1593 written by Governor General of the Philippines Dasmariñas to King Philip II of Spain in which he states, “Sire, in the name of Your Majesty, I have for this once, because of the existing great need, granted a license for the printing of the *Doctrinas Christianas*, herewith enclosed—one in the Tagalog language, which is the native and best of these islands, and the other in Chinese—from which I hope great benefits will result in the conversion and instruction of the peoples of both nations and because the lands of the Indies are on a larger scale in everything and things more expensive, I have set the price of them at four *reales* a piece until Your Majesty is pleased to decree in full what is to be done.” Wolf, 6.

Another recently studied *Doctrina Cristiana* is a manuscript attributed to Fray Juan de Oliver, a close associate of Plasencia, and composed sometime between 1582 and 1591.⁴⁶ The handwritten text presents the same prayers included in the 1593 text but in a slightly different order. It omits the confession and question-and-answer portions, but includes lengthy commentary and expositions. The effort at adaptation is already evident not only in the use of the vernacular, but also in his attempts to use the Tagalogs' everyday realities to explain the faith. For example, he uses a typical bamboo house and its various parts to describe Christian cosmology,⁴⁷ and compares a person who does not know God to a "rudderless boat" that thrashes about the sea, in no particular direction.⁴⁸

Many other catechisms were published in the Philippines' native languages within a relatively short period of time. The catechisms by Bellarmine and Ripalda spread quickly throughout the Philippines.⁴⁹ Astete's *Doctrina cristiana y documentos de crianza* (1599) appeared in bilingual Spanish-Cebuano edition with additional questions and answers.⁵⁰ The

⁴⁶ Jose M. Cruz, ed. *Declaracion de la Doctrina Christiana en Idioma Tagalog ni Fray Juan de Oliver, O.F.M.* (Quezon City, Philippines: Pulong Sources for Philippine Studies, Ateneo de Manila University, 1995).

⁴⁷ Rene B. Javellana, "Imagined Villagescape as a Metaphor for Heavenly Realities," in *Declaracion de la Doctrina Christiana en Idioma Tagalog ni Fray Juan de Oliver, O.F.M.*, 189-208.

⁴⁸ Ibid., xxiii.

⁴⁹ Fernandez, 437. Bellarmine's catechism appeared in Visayan in 1610, Bicolano in 1647, Tagalog in 1717, and Pampango in 1728. Ripalda's catechism was translated into Tagalog in 1666 by Luis de Amezquita and published under the title, *Catechismo libro Bagong Pinagpapalagmnan nang dilan pangadyi, at maiclit Casaysayan nang aral Christiano*. The latter work is mentioned in Luis Resines, *Catecismos de Astete y Ripalda* (Madrid, 1987), 5.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 440.

catechism authored by Canon Mazo of the Cathedral of Valladolid, as well as the texts attributed to Pius V and Clement VIII are also found in various languages of the country.⁵¹

Other catechisms in the vernaculars are the following: an Ibanag catechism in 1583, a (lost) 16th century Bicol catechism, and another one dated 1647, a Pampango catechism in 1621, a Zambal catechism in 1654, a Pangasinan catechism of unclear publication date, a fourth edition of which appeared in 1874, an Ilocano catechism's fourth edition which appeared in 1765, a Gaddang catechism in 1823, an Isinay catechism reprinted all the way to 1876, an Ivatan catechism of uncertain date, but was reissued in 1890, a Visayan catechism in 1637. This list only covers the works of the Dominicans and the Augustinians in the native dialects. Fernandez also mentions the catechisms in the vernacular produced by the Jesuits, among them, texts in the native tongues of the indigenous tribes of the Tiruray, Maguindanao, Mandaya, Bagobo, Mamanuas, Tagabili, Bukidnons, and so forth.⁵²

Aside from translating catechisms, another means of initial evangelization and attempts at “inculturation” was the replacement of pagan rituals by Christian ones. These involved blessing grain about to be sown, using prayers and holy water and baptism as a cure

⁵¹ Ibid., 437. The catechism attributed to Pius V and Clement VIII was translated into Tagalog sometime before 1681. The catechism of Canon Mazo was translated into Pangasinan in 1893, and in Gaddang sometime after 1823.

⁵² Fernandez, 442. The origins and authorship of these catechisms are unclear. Fernandez states, “The subject has so far been overlooked, although it was through these writings that the Faith was transmitted to the Filipino people. It is important to analyze these writings because they indicate both the specific truths that were explained to the people and the norms of conduct they were made to follow, as well as the method followed in teaching them to become Christians. Time and resources, unfortunately, do not allow us to undertake such an ambitious task at the moment, and all we can do is try presenting a catalogue or survey of what can serve as a basis for future research into the subject.” Ibid., 435.

for illnesses.⁵³ The replacement of amulets to ward off evil spirits by relics and the *Agnus Dei*, a small wax disc with an imprint of the Lamb of God blessed by the Pope, was also common. The same can be said of the *anitos* (carved wood or stone images of deities) with images of various saints, Mary, and crucifixes. Such practices may have been tolerated by the missionaries, but according to Phelan, their texts betray the view that Christianity was for them, utterly new and in no way “continuous” with the pagan religion. Similarities were viewed not only as coincidental, but also as the result of “diabolical mimicry.”⁵⁴ As such, the missionaries exerted every effort to stamp out traces of the old religions that were at odds with Christianity. These included ritual drinking, polygamy, and ritual healings, among others.⁵⁵ But such was not the view when it came to language. The Spaniards generally subscribed to the idea of the translatability of catechisms and other religious texts into the local language, with the exception of the Latin Vulgate, the rite of the Latin Mass, and several untranslatable words. Examples of such words are *Dios* (God), *Espiritu Santo* (Holy Spirit), *Jesucristo* (Jesus Christ), *infierno* (hell). These were kept in Spanish or Latin and became part of Tagalog and other native languages.

Another interesting example of inculturation and catechesis during this period was the *Pasyon*, a narrative, didactic poem on the life, passion, death, and resurrection of Christ. The most well-known of these works was the 18th century anonymous Tagalog manuscript, the *Casaysayan nang Pasiong Mahal ni Jesucristong Panginoon Natin na Sucat Ipag-alab nang*

⁵³ Schumacher, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, 76.

⁵⁴ Phelan, *Hispanization of the Philippines*, 53.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 72-84.

Puso nang Sinomang Babasa,⁵⁶ based on an earlier Tagalog work by Gaspar Aquino de Belen, *Ang Mahal na Passion ni Jesucristong Panginoon Natin na Tola*, published in 1703 or 1704.⁵⁷ Memorized, sung, and chanted (“*pabasa*”) during Holy Week, funeral wakes, and serving as a loose script for the *sinakulo*, or passion play,⁵⁸ the *pasyon* was a major source for catechetical formation in the Philippines, especially in Tagalog-speaking regions, in the eighteenth to nineteenth century.⁵⁹

The many complaints raised by political and church authorities about the *pasyon* and its chanting (the *pabasa*) attest to the popularity and influence these had among the people. Many priests criticized the *pasyon*’s doctrinal errors⁶⁰ and contents “full of fables which they (the *indios*) like very much because they emphasize the marvelous, something which they especially enjoy.”⁶¹ Others complained that the *pabasa* was being used as an occasion for

⁵⁶ Roughly, the title reads, “The Account of the Blessed Passion of Jesus Christ our Lord That Sets on Fire the Hearts of Those Who Read It.” The term *Casaysayan* is Tagalog for “account,” “story,” or “history,” although it can also refer to “explanation” or “teaching.” For an authoritative history of the text, see Rene B. Javellana, *Casaysayan ng Pasion Mahal ni Jesucristong Panginoon Natin na Sucat Ipag-alab nang Puso nang Sinomang Babasa. With an Introduction, Annotations, and Translation of the 1882 Edition* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1988).

⁵⁷ Rene B. Javellana, *Mahal na Passion ni Jesu Christong Panginoon Natin na Tola ni Gaspar Aquino de Belen* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1990). The title literally reads, “The Blessed/Holy Passion of Jesus Christ Our Lord in Verse” (my translation).

⁵⁸ “Sinakulo” is the Tagalog form of the Spanish *cenaculo* or cenacle, the upper room where the apostles gathered for the Last Supper. This passion play made use of the *pasyon* as a loose script.

⁵⁹ That the *pasyon*’s significance extended beyond the catechetical or devotional is argued brilliantly by Reynaldo Ileto, *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840-1910* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1979). This work is a history of the Philippine revolution “from below.” Ileto asserts that the *Pasyon* took on the role of a “social epic” that provided the language with which the masses articulated the desire for liberation. The “sequel” to this work is the book by John N. Schumacher, *A Revolutionary Clergy: The Filipino Clergy and the Nationalist Movement 1850-1903* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1981) which argues that the Philippine revolution, beginning in the Tagalog regions, was spread to the rest of the country by the native clergy.

⁶⁰ Javellana, *Casaysayan*, 7.

⁶¹ Schumacher, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, 179.

young lover's trysts, for drinking, and for causing all sorts of "disorders and squabbles,"⁶² and "has been converted into a carnival amusement, or to speak more plainly, into a pretext for the most scandalous vices."⁶³

At best, Spanish attitudes toward the ongoing process of inculturation and the success of their catechetical efforts were ambiguous. The rapidity by which Christianity spread in the Philippines is well-noted by historians, but at the same time, "from the viewpoint of the Spanish clergy, the 'Philippinization' of Catholicism departed too often from the norms laid down by the church."⁶⁴ In missionary accounts, the clergy's general enthusiasm about the way in which the natives, particularly the Tagalogs, took to the sacraments is well documented. At the same time, the missionaries wonder why in spite of the eagerness for liturgy, "they still seem to be incapable of 'sounding the depths of its mysteries'."⁶⁵ These and other examples point to a significant underlying problem, which this Franciscan manual for parish priests documents:

There is no doubt at all in my mind that if a statistical survey were made, the Philippines could show a proportionately greater number of people who know the catechism than Europe. But it is no less certain that the general run of *Indios* learn their catechism parrotwise, without real understanding, and without even a grasp of the literal meaning of the words.⁶⁶

⁶² Javellana, *Casaysayan*, 8. This phrase is a quote from a letter dated 13 November 1844 by Archbishop Segui to Governor-General Claveria to ask for help in quelling the abuses related to the *pabasa*. These two figures were the highest ranking officials of the Church and the colonial government at the time.

⁶³ Iletto, 20.

⁶⁴ Phelan, *Hispanization of the Philippines*, 84.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁶⁶ Schumacher, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, 237.

This scenario is blamed on many factors, such as neglect and incapacity on the part of the clergy on the one hand, and the ignorance and recalcitrance of the *indios*, on the other. A Jesuit complains that the catechism is not made sufficiently “practical,”⁶⁷ and the Spanish governor general, Primo de Rivera, no less, complains that the natives’ “religious beliefs are confined, in practice, to the observance of the outward practices imposed by Catholicism, and do not, as a general rule, make any deeper impression.”⁶⁸

A crucial issue compounding these problems is that the number of priests, whether native or Spaniard, never caught up with the increasing population of Christians.⁶⁹ This problem with personnel was not just a matter of sheer numbers, but was also characterized by a lack of cooperation, coordination, and later, outright animosity within the ranks of the clergy themselves. Political conflicts beginning in the late 18th century resulted in greater control of regular clergy by bishops. The tension escalated to the wresting of parishes originally handled by Spanish friars to the handful of Spanish secular priests in the colony, and to a hastily prepared native secular clergy. These conditions further degraded religious education among the natives, and caused much contempt between the Spanish regulars and the largely native secular clergy.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 237-238.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ See Horacio De la Costa, “The Development of the Native Clergy in the Philippines,” in *Studies in Philippine Church History*, ed. Gerald Anderson, 65-104. De la Costa identifies three main causes retarding the formation of a native clergy: first, “the primitive condition of society, which had first to be raised to that level of cultural maturity required before it could provide suitable aspirants to the Catholic priesthood;” second, “the framework of the *patronato* . . . which provided no suitable room for a native clergy even when the mission was ready for it. And third was the conciliar and synodal legislation of Spanish America, extended without modification to the Philippines, legislation which, while it effectively prevented the ordination of unworthy candidates, did so by excluding even the worthy from the priesthood.” Ibid., 77-78.

Collapse of the Colony: Nationalism and Revolution

In Spain, authorities soon realized that the native secular clergy was “politically unreliable”⁷⁰ so the friars returned to the colony in the mid-19th century, taking over former parishes, even those that never belonged to them. In the intervening decades, a “Filipino” identity, distinct from that of “Mother Spain” had already begun to emerge and was passed on to the next generation. This new identity was cultivated in the *mestizo* middle class formed by the agricultural boom. This growing social class was taught by Filipino secular priests and influenced by Enlightenment ideas and the filtering of liberalism to the educated class. Comprised of the likes of national hero, Jose Rizal, these Filipino nationalists led movements that called for increasing the rights and liberties of those in the Philippines vis-à-vis Spain. Alongside “reform” movements, armed uprisings led by revolutionaries such as Andres Bonifacio, grew in scale and number, and culminated in the Philippine Revolution of 1896. Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, installed a revolutionary government that ended with their exile in Hong Kong, and a peace treaty struck with the remainder of the Spaniards in 1897. It was into this context of an “unfinished” revolution that the Americans arrived in 1898.

The American Regime (1898-1946)

American involvement in the ongoing Philippine revolution was the direct result of the Spanish-American war over Cuba that began in April 1898. When relations between Spain and the U.S. broke down over trade and failed diplomacy with Cuba, Commodore

⁷⁰ Ibid.

George Dewey arrived in Manila Bay to annihilate the smaller and less-armed Spanish fleet. Emilio Aguinaldo, president-in-exile of the revolutionary government, returned to Manila on 19 May 1898 aboard the American fleet. Controversy surrounds the deal made between Aguinaldo and Dewey, but certainly, the Americans did not recognize the new Philippine government headed by Aguinaldo.

At the Treaty of Paris in December 1898, Spain agreed to cede the Philippines to the U.S. for \$20 million, and equal commercial rights for ten years. In the meantime, Aguinaldo had established a dictatorial government on 24 May 1898 and declared the independence of a new Philippine republic on June 12th. War broke out between the U.S. and the Philippines, total damage of which, it is said, reached “genocidal ferocity.”⁷¹ U.S. President McKinley believed that this was largely a Tagalog rebellion, not touching the rest of the islands; and second, that Filipinos were unfit for self-governance. Hence, under a policy of “benevolent assimilation,”⁷² the Philippines became a colony of the U.S. under tutelage for eventual independence.

Under American rule, rapid change occurred in many sectors of society. One of the most significant transformations was the adoption of democracy and the consequent

⁷¹ Vicente Rafael, *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2000), 10.

⁷² Benevolent assimilation was the rhetoric adopted by President McKinley to justify colonization. The “‘earnest and paramount aim’ of the colonizer’ was that of ‘winning the confidence, respect, and affection’ of the colonized. . . . Neither exploitative nor enslaving, colonization entailed the cultivation of ‘the felicity and perfection of the Philippine people’ thought the ‘uninterrupted devotion’ to those ‘noble ideas which constitute the higher civilization of mankind.’” Rafael, *White Love*, 21. [In this quote, Rafael cites Adjutant General of the Army, *Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1902), 2:859; *Report of the Philippine Commission to the President* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1900-1901), 1:3-4.]

separation of Church and state. New economic policies led to an agricultural boom; however, these tied the Philippine economy so closely to that of the U.S., and ensured the security of an oligarchy that dominated business and government.⁷³ Furthermore, the influx of American manufactured goods prevented further industrialization and redistribution of wealth in the country. Ironically, even with the establishment of democracy and modernization through agricultural progress, many aspects of Philippine life remained feudal.

Alongside the political and economic transformations came the introduction of a system of public education styled after the American system. The impact of these educational policies was far-reaching. First, English became the medium of instruction and *lingua franca* in the islands. In contrast to Castilian, the language of political, economic, and religious elites during the Spanish regime, the English language was widely adopted by Filipinos who attended the public schools. Second, American teachers assigned to the islands soon became the common Filipino's conduit to "Americanization" and these teachers were mostly Protestant.⁷⁴ A third effect was that separation of Church and state was initially interpreted to mean that religious education could not be provided at public schools. Later, this was revised to include an allowance for religious education twice a week, but to little avail. This was due to the fact that almost no one could teach the Catholic religion in

⁷³ Jose S. Arcilla, *Recent Philippine History* (Quezon City, Philippines: Office of Research and Publications Ateneo de Manila University, 1990), 54.

⁷⁴ "With the change of governments at the turn of the century, the friar was no longer the center of town life. The teacher, especially the American teacher in the first years of the American government, had taken his place." Ibid., 50.

English. Those who would have been qualified to provide catechesis were formed and schooled in seminaries where Spanish was still the primary medium of communication.⁷⁵

The Church's Transition during the American Regime

Catholicism and Spain were so strongly identified, that it became difficult to reconcile nationalism with the faith. The withdrawal of Spanish bishops and priests from their dioceses, and the occupation by military troops of Church buildings and seminaries during the war between the Philippines and Spain dealt a big blow to the Church. The closure of seminaries meant no ordinations were being held, further decreasing the number of Catholic priests. Along with the drop in personnel, the schism led by Gregorio Aglipay attracted increasing numbers.⁷⁶ American Protestant missionaries started arriving, dividing up the country into "mission areas" as the Spaniards did in the 16th Century.⁷⁷ Masonry, influential among the political elite, also further threatened the position of Catholicism in the country.

⁷⁵ John N. Schumacher, "A Hispanicized Clergy in an Americanized Country," in *Chapters in Philippine Church History*, ed. Anne C. Kwantes, (Mandaluyong City, Philippines: OMF Literature, 2001), 245.

⁷⁶ The Aglipayan Schism resulted in the creation of the Aglipayan church, also known as *La Iglesia Filipina Independiente* ("The Philippine Independent Church"). Its leader, Gregorio Aglipay was the chaplain of troops under Aguinaldo. Though membership was purportedly in the millions during the revolution, this figure dropped significantly in the next two decades. Today, Aglipayans are a tiny minority at 2% of the total population.

⁷⁷ Schumacher, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, 313-14. In a "comity agreement" of 1901, the American Protestant missionaries named this mission, "The Evangelical Union of the Philippine Islands." Manila was declared open to evangelizing by all churches. The Methodists got Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales, Nueva Ecija, and Pangasinan. The Presbyterian Mission got Rizal, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Camarines North and South, Albay, Sorsogon. The United Brethren got La Union, Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte. Division of the islands within Panay and Negros were to be agreed upon by the Presbyterians and Baptists. This division was revised a year later, with the addition of more northern Luzon provinces, and Visayan islands.

These threats were expressed in the Spanish *Catecismo Mayor* published in Manila in 1919.⁷⁸ Written under the auspices of Irish Archbishop of Manila Michael O'Doherty, and with the blessing of Pope Pius X, it contains standard questions, but with explicit mention of Protestant and Aglipayan ministers.⁷⁹ That a Spanish catechism was “newly published” in 1919, almost two decades into the American regime, reveals that the Spanish language still held sway in the Catholic Church. Writing in 1926, O'Doherty describes the dire language problem of the Church in the Philippines in a passionate rant:

Because of their ignorance of the English language, native priests were looked down upon by the rising generation . . . On the other hand, Protestant parsons were always welcome; they could instruct in the *learned* language. . . . Could this situation of affairs have been averted? Yes—by the coming of American priests in numbers proportionate to that of the American Protestant ministers . . . But what was actually the case? Religious Orders from almost all the countries of Europe answered the call for volunteers, entered the Islands, endeavored as best they could to master English. . . . And where were the priests from America? In 1921, before the American Jesuits, twenty strong, entered Manila, there were but two American priests in the whole Archipelago.⁸⁰

When American priests and religious started arriving in increasing numbers in the 1920s, serious catching up needed to be done. The religious gradually shifted to the use of English in Catholic schools, and the importation of educational materials such as textbooks

⁷⁸ Its whole title is *Catecismo Mayor O Sea Explicacion del Compendio de la Doctrina Cristiana Publicado por orden de Su Santidad El Papa Pio X y Accomodado a las Escuelas Catolicas del Archipelago Segun El Primer Concilio Provincial de Manila* (Manila: Santo Tomas, 1919). The book's introduction mentions another catechism published three years before, the *Catecismo Breve o sea, Primera Parte del Compendio de la Doctrina Cristiana publicado por orden de S.S. Papa Pio X y Acomodado a las Escuelas Catolicas del Archipelago Segun el Primer Concilio Provincial de Manila*.

⁷⁹ P: *Quienes pueden perdonar los pecados por la confesion?* R: *Todos los sacerdotes autorizados por el Obispo diocesano pueden oir las confesiones de los fieles y perdonar los pecados. P: Los ministros protestantes y aglipayanos pueden oir confesiones?* R: *Los ministros de otras religions, fuera de la catolica no pueden oir confesiones ni perdonar pecados, porque Jesucristo solo ha dado este poder a su Iglesia.* Ibid., 127

⁸⁰ Schumacher, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, 342.

on American history and English literature and grammar. Seminaries were among the last to shift to English in the 1950s. Schumacher concludes that the first two decades of American rule, when “the institutional Church, remained essentially Spanish in language, culture and outlook,”⁸¹ resulted in the absence of Church influence in the social, economic, and political spheres for a long time. In 1937, an Australian Jesuit observed that,

The religious of these islands can be divided into two classes, namely: the religious of Spanish origin, and all others. The latter, though they take their origin from various nations, for the most part speak English. These two classes are separated however, not only by language, but by customs, traditions, culture, political views, missionary methods . . .⁸²

The issue then, was not just language, though it was a big part of the problem. The identity of the Church in the Philippines was undergoing a critical transition during the American regime. Democracy, modernization and its accompanying secularization, the arrival of other Christian groups, the loss of personnel, the increasing difficulty or absence of religious instruction in public schools, all contributed to destabilize the Church’s former position and challenge it to search for a new way of being Church.

Catechetical Renewal during the American Regime

There were positive indications that the challenge of renewal was being met. The growth in the number of Filipino clergy and religious, the introduction and popularity of the Catholic Action movement, and the influence of the Christian Workers’ Movement were

⁸¹ Schumacher, “A Hispanicized Clergy,” 244.

⁸² APPSJ, IV-705, Joannes Fahy SJ “Summarum visitationis Missionis Philippinae,” 17 January 1937 quoted in Schumacher, “A Hispanicized Clergy,” 254.

signs of a recovering Church. In Manila, Archbishop O' Doherty called upon members of Catholic Action to take on "the teaching of catechism, particularly to the young attending schools where religious instruction is not given."⁸³ O'Doherty's successor, Archbishop Gabriel Reyes, the first Filipino Archbishop of Manila, also kept catechesis high among his priorities. Among his contributions are the establishment of vicarial institutes for catechist training, and the appointment of "superintendents of catechism."⁸⁴

Newer catechisms began to appear, and were in use alongside the older translations of Astete, Ripalda, and Bellarmine. Louis LaRavoire Morrow, secretary of Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines, Msgr. Guillermo Piani,⁸⁵ had many contributions to catechetical instruction. A Tagalog translation of his text, *My Catechism, Book One* was in print in 1938,⁸⁶ and his *My First Communion* book, available in both Tagalog and Cebuano, was widely used in the 1940s-50s.⁸⁷ Presumably, the *Baltimore Catechism* made its way to the Philippines, if not through the European religious congregations that arrived before Piani and

⁸³ Martin J. Noone, *The Life and Times of Michael O'Doherty* (Manila: R.P. Garcia Publishing Co., 1989), 84, quoted in Armando F. De Jesus, "The Archdiocese of Manila Under the Filipino Archbishops (1945-1995), 349, in *The Archdiocese of Manila: A Pilgrimage in Time (1565-1999)*, vol. 2, rev. ed. Crisostomo Yalung (Manila: Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Manila, 2000), 305-99.

⁸⁴ De Jesus, "The Archdiocese of Manila," 358.

⁸⁵ Piani was appointed in 1922, then moved on to Mexico in 1951 where he also served as Apostolic Delegate. Cf. <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bpiani.html> (accessed May 21, 2009). How long Morrow stayed in the Philippines is not clear; however, his latest publication in the Philippines, *A Short History of the Filipino People* (Manila: Catholic Truth Society) was printed in 1936. He became Bishop of Krishnagar, India in 1939. Cf. <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bmorrow.html> (accessed 21 May 2009).

⁸⁶ Louis La Ravoire Morrow, *Ang Aking Catecismo, Unang Aklat*, (Manila: The Catholic Truth Society, 1938). This text is a Tagalog translation of "My Catechism, Book One." Other books in Morrow's "My Religion Series" were published in the Philippines, such as *My Bible History* in Tiruray and Tagalog, and the five-volume set entitled, *My Readers* (Manila: Catholic Trade School, 1951).

⁸⁷ John N. Schumacher, interview by author, Quezon City, Philippines, 3 April 2009.

Morrow, then certainly in Morrow's adaptation of it, entitled, *My Catholic Faith*.⁸⁸ Another popular catechism used to teach children during these decades was the three-volume, graded text entitled *The Catholic Catechism* by Pietro Cardinal Gasparri.⁸⁹

The Commonwealth, World War II, the Japanese Occupation, and Independence (1935-1946)

Thirty years into American rule, a commonwealth government was declared in 1935 and the threat of Japan's invasion grew. While the Japanese increased its investments and increasingly migrated into the Philippines, U.S.-Japan relations steadily worsened. By January 1941, preparations were underway in the Philippines for an imminent attack from Japan. The bombing of Pearl Harbor in 8 December 1941 was followed quickly by the complete destruction of the American air bases in the Philippines at noon of the same day. Without air cover, various entry points of the Philippines were penetrated by the Japanese in a matter of days. On 1 January 1942, the Japanese entered Manila and established a puppet government to carry out their orders.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Louis LaRavoire Morrow, *My Catholic Faith: A Manual of Religion* (Kenosha, WI: My Mission House, 1949). On its copyright page, this book claims the following: all material from "A Catechism of Christian Doctrine," Revised Edition of the Baltimore Catechism . . . " The author has not been able to locate further evidence on the details surrounding the introduction of the 1888 Baltimore Catechism to the Philippines.

⁸⁹ These were Pietro Cardinal Gasparri, *The Catholic Catechism, Books One to Three* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1938, 1939).

⁹⁰ By then, General Douglas MacArthur, military adviser of the Commonwealth, and commanding general of the U.S. Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) and Commonwealth President Manuel L. Quezon had fled to the island of Corregidor. MacArthur concentrated his troops on this island and in Bataan, where they kept up the fight, awaiting reinforcements that never came. Unknown to MacArthur, U.S. President Roosevelt had decided to focus their military resources in Europe.

In 1943, Jose P. Laurel was declared president of the “independent” Philippine republic by the Japanese. Plans of “rebuilding the Philippines” involved “rejection of western, especially Anglo-American influence” in favor of an Asian, pre-hispanic identity.⁹¹ This program and the whole Japanese-backed regime was highly unpopular among the Filipinos indicated by continued resistance and guerrilla warfare until the return of MacArthur to the Philippines in October 1944. With the U.S. troops closing in on Japan, and days after the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, formal surrender of the Japanese came in 2 September 1945, putting an end to the war.

Recovering from the war was an immense challenge to the fledgling republic. When independence from the U.S. was officially granted on 4 July 1946, the country was in ruins. Receiving war damages payments were dependent on the approval of the Philippine Trade Act, which in turn, tied the Philippine economy to that of the U.S.. This law pegged the Philippine peso to the U.S. dollar, and upheld equal rights for American citizens to use the natural resources of the Philippines.⁹² Continued American military presence in the form of military bases was allowed even after the granting of independence. Ironically, the American regime left the Philippines more dependent on U.S. markets and on Filipino landowning elites. This resulted in a system where the benefits of economic progress were concentrated in the hands of a small minority, and a government dominated by the same oligarchy.⁹³

⁹¹ Arcilla, 138. The same author also cites Japanese scholar and professor at Tokyo Imperial University claimed that “family spirit” was the one truly Filipino trait and should be preserved., Ibid.

⁹² Ibid., 152. Other provisions of the act were free trade until 1974, absolute quotas for 20 years on sugar, cigars, cordage, coconut oil, tobacco, rice, pearl buttons.

⁹³ Benedict Anderson, “Cacique Democracy in the Philippines,” in *The Spectre of Comparison: Nationalism, Southeast Asia, and the World* (London / New York: Verso, 1998), 192-226.

Hence, the Philippines still remained largely feudalistic and reliant on the patronage of America and the wealthy.

The Post-War Republic (1947-1965)

Five presidential administrations went by, all of which were plagued by poverty, underdevelopment, and a growing communist threat. The solution to this scenario was to increase economic development through free trade, which in turn, would bolster democratic political structures. Encouraged by the success of postwar rehabilitation in Western Europe and Japan, the United States began to apply this same theory of developmentalism to newly-independent Third World countries. The underlying assumption was that the economic benefits gained through the capitalistic system would “trickle down” to the general public, increase political participation, and democratization.⁹⁴ By the 1950s it became clear that the “trickling down” was not happening, and political disorder was actually accompanying gains in literacy, urbanization, and political participation.⁹⁵ Communist-influenced student activism rose in the late 1960s, especially when Marcos began concentrating political power in his office. A Muslim secessionist movement also began to challenge the government, further increasing Marcos’ reliance on armed violence.⁹⁶ In response, the United States

⁹⁴ Robert L. Youngblood, *Marcos Against the Church: Economic Development and Political Repression in the Philippines* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990), 10.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 12.

⁹⁶ This secessionist movement, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) led by Nur Misuari, was later granted amnesty. Temporary peace was reached through the creation of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao. However, more radical splinter groups classified as “terrorist groups” such as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and the *Abu Sayyaf* group continue the fight for an independent Muslim nation today.

shifted its focus on helping governments keep political order by aiding counterinsurgency measures of new democracies. In the Philippines, this policy resulted in the inadvertent support by the U.S. of the authoritarian regime that the tenth president, Ferdinand E. Marcos, was beginning to establish.

Catechetical Renewal after the Second World War⁹⁷

Postwar recovery efforts of the Church in the Philippines, and the worldwide *aggiornamento* leading up to the Second Vatican Council serve as the backdrop for catechetical renewal in the 1950s and '60s. The *Catholic Welfare Organization*, the precursor to the *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines* (CBCP) was established in February 1945 to coordinate relief efforts in the country. At the CBCP's founding, the *Episcopal Commission on Education and Religious Instruction* (ECERI) was established as the bishops' national coordinating body for catechesis and Catholic education.

In January 1950, amid controversies on the optional provision of religious education in state schools, the Philippine bishops adopted for use in the lower grades of public schools, a graded catechism authored by Bishop Constancio Jurgens of Tuguegarao, Cagayan, a province in the northern part of the Philippines.⁹⁸ This catechism was entitled *The Catechism*

⁹⁷ This section is expanded and discussed in greater depth in this dissertation's Chapter 4: Post-Vatican II Developments in Catechesis and Inculturation in the Philippines (1965-1997).

⁹⁸ This Dutch missionary bishop was considered a great contributor to catechesis, and his diocese, a "model diocese for catechesis" during his term which began in 1928 and ended with his death in 1952. See "Archdiocese of Tuguegarao," in CBCP Monitor 11, no. 19 (September 17-30, 2007): B3, B7.

in *Pictures I and II* and was later supplemented with a teacher's guide in Tagalog.⁹⁹ In contrast, Catholic schools were given the freedom to choose their own textbooks, which according to one commentator, were "almost entirely American publications," and led to a wide diversity and eclecticism among the few who did get mandatory catechesis.¹⁰⁰

According to one commentator,

The choice of catechisms was extremely erratic and chaotic. Usually schools bought whatever imported catechisms they could find in local bookstores, mainly the *Baltimore Catechism* and Cardinal Gasparri's, but their use was not consistent. In Catholic schools one could often witness a situation in which Bishop Jurgens' *Catechism in Pictures I* was used in Grades One and Two, in the next two grades, Morrow's *My Catechism I*; in Grades Five and Six either Gasparri's *Catholic Catechism* or *Baltimore Catechism II*. In the high school there was even more variety. In public schools the few children who attended the religion classes usually had no catechism text at all . . .¹⁰¹

To address this situation, the Philippine bishops proposed to create a uniform graded catechism for children, a project which Bishop Jurgens himself would spearhead. The bishop's untimely death in 1952 set the work back considerably; however, by 1956, a draft scheme was produced and approved by the Philippine bishops. This outline was presented at

⁹⁹ Constancio Jurgens, *The Catechism in Pictures*, 2d rev. ed, (Baguio City, Philippines: W. Brasseur, 1951). This text is also available in a Hiligaynon translation. Before this text became popular, Jurgens had authored *An Aid to Catechists* (Tuguegarao, Philippines, 1930), as well as a teacher's guide entitled *Aklat ng Guro sa Unang Pakikinabang (Teacher's Guide for First Communion)*, trans. Nicanor P. Ramos (Manila: Catholic Trade School, 1949). This latter text is divided into twenty-one lessons beginning with the sign of the cross, creation, the fall, the birth and miracles of Jesus, and his institution of the Eucharist. Then it proceeds with more instructions on receiving communion, confession, and finally, the sacrament of confirmation.

¹⁰⁰ Camilo Marivoet, "International Chronicle: The Philippines," *Lumen Vitae* 6 (October-December 1951): 700.

¹⁰¹ Camilo Marivoet, "Making a Catechism: A Personal Experience," in *Teaching All Nations: A Symposium on Modern Catechetics*, ed. Johannes Hofinger, trans. Clifford Howell (London: Burns and Oates, 1960), 192.

the international catechetical study week at Eichstätt in 1960, and was described to be “thoroughly Christocentric” and inspired by Johannes Hofinger’s kerygmatic approach.¹⁰²

Up until this time, the Philippine Church had been borrowing, translating, and at the most, making simple modifications to catechetical texts from abroad. Also, catechesis was largely addressed to children in the school setting. These practices began to be questioned in during these decades as the worldwide catechetical movement and new theological thinking enlivened the Church. A key figure and conduit of catechetical renewal in the Philippines was the Jesuit Johannes Hofinger, founder of the *Institute for Mission Apologetics* (1955), later renamed the *East Asian Pastoral Institute* (EAPI) in 1961. As the organizer of the six international catechetical study weeks, Hofinger, with the help of his colleagues at the EAPI made significant and far-reaching contributions to catechesis both in the Philippines and internationally in the decades immediately surrounding the Second Vatican Council.¹⁰³

At the same time, the new impetus for improving catechesis led to the founding of institutions devoted to training catechists. The *Confraternity of Christian Doctrine* of the Archdiocese of Manila was founded in 1953, later renamed the *Institute of Catechetics of the*

¹⁰² Ibid., 197-98. Marivoet cites Johannes Hofinger, “Die rechte Gliederung des katechetischen Lehrstoffes,” *Lumen Vitae* 2, no. 4 (1947): 719-46. The draft outline is as follows:

Introduction: The Message of Christ

Part One: Christ’s Message: God loves us with an immense love

I. Christ reveals that God is our loving Father: The Creed

II. Christ gives us God’s own life: grace and the Sacraments

Part Two: We answer God’s love for us by living as children

I. Our Answer in words: Praying with Christ

II. Our Answer in deeds: Living like Christ (sin, virtue, commandments)

¹⁰³ For an autobiographical introduction to the contributions of the *East Asian Pastoral Institute* see Alfonso M. Nebreda, “The Beginnings of the EAPI—Reminiscing,” in *East Asian Pastoral Review* 14, no. 1 (1987): 4-20. Also see Francis X. Clark, “In Memoriam: Johannes Hofinger, S.J. (1905-1984) Life and Biography,” in *East Asian Pastoral Review* 21, no. 2 (1984): 103-20; and Alfonso M. Nebreda, “Johannes Hofinger: Catalyst and Pioneer Personal Reminiscences,” *East Asian Pastoral Review* 21, no. 2 (1984): 120-27.

Archdiocese of Manila in 1965. Other institutes based in Manila but whose students hail from other dioceses are the *Lumen Christi Catechetical Center* of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary founded in 1963, and the *Mother of Life Catechetical Formation Center* begun in 1967. Outside of Manila, the *Pius XII Institute for Catechetical and Social Studies* in Jaro, Iloilo City was founded in 1959.¹⁰⁴ The individual contributions of these institutes deserve to be explored in subsequent research. For now, it suffices to say that the decades of the 1950s to 1960s saw increased attention to catechesis, the availability of new theological resources, and better organization to carry out catechetical reforms on a wider, national scale.

Authoritarian Rule and People Power Revolution (1972-1986)

Cornerstones of the Marcos regime's economic policies were free-market capitalism, a dramatic increase in foreign debt, and the attraction of foreign investors to the country. All these required greater political order, which paved the way for his expansion of military power, and the declaration of Martial Law in 1972.¹⁰⁵ This notoriously violent and corrupt time in Philippine history is rife with accounts of human rights abuses, and the loss of basic liberties in all sectors of society. Mass arrests of demonstrators, political opponents, church and lay activists were conducted. Various military raids on church institutions, the torture of

¹⁰⁴ Archbishop Jose Maria Cuenco, "On the Blessing of Pius XII Institute for Catechetical and Social Studies," *Boletin Ecclesiastico de Filipinas* 33 (November 1959): 653-55.

¹⁰⁵ The justification for Martial Law consisted of the following: "rebellion by the Communists, secession demands from Muslim dissidents, *coup d'etat* and assassination plots by rightist oligarchs, the growth of private armies and criminal syndicates, and increased urban unrest among students, workers, and the poor." Youngblood, 25-26.

political detainees, control of the mass media, and the manipulation of elections, all reflect the increasing centralization of power and Marcos' intentions to stay in office beyond his term's official end.

In the years before the dictatorship, the Church began to take measures to address the Philippines' endemic social injustice worsened by the war and a corrupt political scene; however, it was not until after Vatican II that the Church began to make significant impact in terms of social and governmental reform.¹⁰⁶ Renewed by the Second Vatican Council, the Philippine Roman Catholic hierarchy stepped up its involvement in the work towards social justice. A crucial factor was their encouragement of the formation of Basic Christian Communities (BCCs). The BCC was aimed at "breaking the dependency syndrome of the marginalized by assisting them in becoming the agents of their own liberation."¹⁰⁷ The regular meetings and activities of these small groups "provided a context not only for examining church and community problems in terms of the gospel, but also for engaging in collective action."¹⁰⁸ Unfortunately, during the authoritarian regime, the military viewed working with the poor and the BCCs as synonymous with supporting communists, and therefore exerted every effort to stamp them out.

Though initially divided among themselves, the Philippine bishops and the *Association of Major Religious and Superiors* of the country increasingly heightened their opposition to the Marcos regime. Other sectors likewise stepped up their efforts especially

¹⁰⁶ Pasquale T. Giordano, *Awakening to Mission: The Philippine Catholic Church 1965-1981* (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day Publishers, 1988), 16-21.

¹⁰⁷ Youngblood, 84.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

after the 1983 assassination of Senator Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., one of Marcos' strongest opponents. In the face of continuing protests regarding the legitimacy of his administration, Marcos called for a presidential "snap election" scheduled for February 1986. Heading the opposition ticket was Aquino's widow, Corazon C. Aquino. When the voting tallies began to come in, it became clear that Marcos had blatantly rigged the election once again. On 14 February 1986, the CBCP issued a post-election statement condemning the fraud, stating that the election had no moral basis, and finally, calling on people to "confess their Christianity"¹⁰⁹ during this period of crisis. Following the uproar surrounding the election results, Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Vice Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos defected from the administration and holed up in their military camps situated along Metro Manila's main thoroughfare, Epifanio delos Santos Avenue, or EDSA in common parlance.

On 22 February 1986, Jaime Cardinal Sin, Archbishop of Manila, went on Catholic-operated radio station *Radio Veritas* to call for "no bloodshed" and for Filipinos to gather at EDSA to show solidarity with the military dissidents. As the crowd swelled to the tens of thousands, the rest of the military defected and the Marcoses succumbed to increasing U.S. pressure to leave the country for exile in Hawaii. On 26 February 1986, Corazon Aquino was inaugurated as the new President of the Philippines. These four days are widely understood as a culmination of the opposition of the Church, the labor and student sectors, leftist groups, but most of all, the middle class against the abusive Marcos regime. This

¹⁰⁹ Giordano, 255.

peaceful “revolution” is now what is widely called the People Power Revolution, or the EDSA Revolution.¹¹⁰

Pope John Paul II congratulated the Philippine bishops for the peaceful resolution of the conflict but also warned them “not to take positions of a political character, or to take part in partisan conflicts but to give society the expert contribution which is proper to her.”¹¹¹ Still, the leadership exercised by the Church at this time reaffirmed her commitment to social justice and shaped the role she was to play in the coming decades. In order to take stock of this new identity that was both post-Vatican II and post-EDSA, the bishops called for the holding of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines in January 1992. Here, the theme of “integral evangelization” came to the fore, and was officially adopted by the Catholic hierarchy.

The Church and Catechesis in Post-authoritarian Philippines (1986-present)

Since 1986, four presidential administrations have passed which in many ways attest to the continuation of widespread poverty, unemployment, and graft and corruption.

Economy and government are still dominated by the oligarchy formed during the Spanish

¹¹⁰ Benedict J. Kerkvliet and Resil Mojares, eds., *From Marcos to Aquino: Local Perspectives on Political Transition in the Philippines* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1991). “EDSA was a concatenation of events: the accelerating deterioration of Marcos’ authoritarian government, widening and increasingly vociferous opposition to the government, the snap presidential election campaign of December 1985-February 1986, a military mutiny, a People Power uprising on Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA) in metro Manila, the flight of Marcos and company, and Aquino’s assumption of the presidency, followed by a prolonged struggle to stabilize and legitimate this government. . . .” *Ibid.*, 1.

¹¹¹ John Paul II, “Letter to Bishops July 14, 1986,” *L’Osservatore Romano* 1986, 5. Quoted in Antonio Moreno, *Church, State, and Civil Society in Postauthoritarian Philippines: Narratives of Engaged Citizenship* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2006), 70.

regime, and the transition between Spanish and American colonial states. Endemic insurgency remains through the presence of communists and Muslim separatists.

The Church still enjoys a “relatively high public confidence” but this picture is quickly changing due to “the rise to prominence of church actors who are anti-Catholic (*Iglesia ni Cristo* and fundamentalist movements) and those that grew out of the Catholic fold (*El Shaddai*).”¹¹² The decline of academic interest in the church as an actor in democratization since the 1990s, could also indicate the Church leadership’s “inertia” and a need to “redefine its thrusts.”¹¹³ Current dialogue on the issues of prevalent graft and corruption in the present administration, “reproductive rights,” the impact of “brain drain” and separated families due to the immigration of OFWs (Overseas Foreign Workers), the sweeping secularization, the growth of fundamentalism and other sects, all challenge the Church to rethink its positions vis-à-vis Church-and-state issues that directly impact upon its teachings. Furthermore, church “ad intra” problems such as those related to priestly formation, sexual abuse cases, and the like need careful attention since they have the potential of undercutting the Church’s moral authority. At the same time, the growth of indigenous Catholic lay movements and the strong support they receive from the hierarchy are possible signs of vibrancy in the local Church.

¹¹² Moreno, 132. The *El Shaddai* group has been one of the fastest-growing and controversial Catholic charismatic groups among Filipinos, both in the Philippines and abroad. In 1997, their estimated membership ranged from 9 to 11 million people. For an excellent study of the group and their “prosperity theology,” see Katharine L. Wiegale, *Investing in Miracles: El Shaddai and the Transformation of Popular Catholicism in the Philippines* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2007).

¹¹³ Moreno, 274.

The National Catechetical Scene: Some Achievements and Present Problems

The Philippine catechetical scene today is marked by success in the publication of several ground breaking, national-level documents since Vatican II, the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (1985), the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (1997), and most recently, the *New National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (2007). Other achievements in catechist formation include the establishment of the *Catechists' Basic Formation Program* in 1992, and its current revision, as well as the preparation of a *Religion Teachers' Basic Formation Manual* that is still in process.

However, many problems plague other aspects of the catechetical ministry. Some key difficulties are basic and reflective of the poverty characterizing the rest of the country—the enormous lack of funds, catechists, and catechetical materials. The 2000 survey pegs the total population of catechists at 63,778, a pitifully small number considering that at the time, Catholics numbered 53.84 million in the country. Of this small group of catechists, only 7% are professional catechists, and the remaining 93% are volunteers. Overall, educational attainment is low, and the number of catechists with formal catechetical training is even lower.¹¹⁴ The inadequacies in both quantity and quality of catechists are compounded by two factors—the vast majority of Catholic students in the Philippines are enrolled in public

¹¹⁴ Salvatore P. Putzu, “The National Survey On the Catechetical Situation In the Pastoral Setting: Some Relevant Remarks (First of Three Parts),” *Docete* 24 (April-June 2001): 7. Among those teaching the elementary grades, only 1% have a master’s degree, 21% have college degrees, an astounding 44% are high school graduates, and a disturbing 34% are only elementary graduates. Among those teaching on the high school level, 3% have a master’s degree, 38% are college graduates, 45% are high school graduates, and 14% are only elementary graduates.

schools where religious education and catechesis are not offered, and typical Philippine parishes are not in a position to offer religious instruction to these students.¹¹⁵

In addition to the problems pertaining to personnel, the catechetical ministry also suffers the lack of teaching materials. According to the catechists themselves, the top difficulties are “inadequate teaching materials” and “insufficient funding.”¹¹⁶ The teaching materials most needed are textbooks, audio-visual equipment and materials, and activity sheets.¹¹⁷ The lack of textbooks is attributed to both the dearth of authors and the unwillingness of publishers to produce textbook series for the public schools. The scenario is different for religion teachers in private Catholic schools, who have an extensive selection of textbooks and teachers’ guides available to them.¹¹⁸ For parish-based catechists, a Bible, the CCC, and the CFC are provided and not much else. This means that they are expected to prepare their own lesson plans and syllabi with only these references. Considering the lack of training and poor educational attainment, it is not surprising that the outcome is typically poor as well.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Salvatore P. Putzu, “The National Survey On the Catechetical Situation In the Pastoral Setting: Some Relevant Remarks (Part Three and Conclusion),” *Docete* 25 (October-November 2002): 17. School-based catechists consider “lack of teaching materials” the top difficulty, whereas for parish-based catechists, the greatest hardship is “insufficient funds.” Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 19. According to the catechists, other materials sorely lacking are reference books, lesson plans, and syllabi.

¹¹⁸ Salvatore P. Putzu, “The National Survey On the Catechetical Situation In the Pastoral Setting: Some Relevant Remarks (Part Two),” *Docete* 24 (July-September 2001): 21. A few exceptions are the publishers (1) *Kalakbay Buhay* Catechists’ Foundation of the Philippines based in Quezon City, and (2) Communication Foundation for Asia located in Manila, both of which have published multi-media catechetical materials that reach the primary and secondary public school audience such as *Catellele*, *Youcaleth*, *Sacraments: Spring of New Life*, and various flip chart series. Ibid.

The survey concentrates on catechesis on the elementary and high school levels because in the Philippines, catechesis is still very much school-based and focused on the youth in spite of the acknowledged need for adult catechesis. The neglect of adult catechesis, and the lack of advocacy for the catechetical ministry on the parish and diocesan levels are both serious problems that stand in stark contrast with the rhetoric of local magisterial teachings that constantly call for better Christian formation.

While it is necessary to recognize and address these economic, resource-related problems, the practical difficulty often lies in perceiving the real “depth and extent of the whole picture, while recognizing the significant difference between an abstract ideal (perhaps as sketched in official Church documents), and the ever present limitations of actual catechetical programs and efforts.”¹¹⁹ Moreover, there are many programs started that “are not always based on critical planning or accurate assessment of the many actual complexities and depths of the problem.”¹²⁰ As such, the first priority is to develop an understanding of the basic elements and principles of the catechetical enterprise, which can then serve as a basis for directed efforts at renewal.¹²¹ This was the conviction on which the *General Catechetical Directory* of 1971 was based, later adopted by the NCDP, CFC, and new NCDP.

¹¹⁹ Joseph L. Roche, “Toward ‘Maturing in Faith’ Today,” *Landas* 18, no. 1 (2004): 7.

¹²⁰ Roche gives examples of the typical mindset among many volunteer catechists or new catechetical leaders is that whatever was being done needs to be radically transformed. The unfortunate result is that many five-year plans last for about two years before they get revamped again. *Ibid.*, 5.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

Conclusion

This chapter provides an overview of the conditions and manner in which the Christian faith has been transmitted and received by the Filipino people. In doing so, the chapter sheds light on the following: (1) the historical and cultural roots of present problems in Philippine catechesis, and (2) the adequacy of the attempts to address these problems.

First, perpetual issues regarding the number and quality of personnel, availability and quality of catechetical materials, language/s used for catechesis, and catechesis' overall effectiveness are shown to have a complexity and depth that need to be plumbed. The larger environment of culture, society, and the political and economic spheres cannot be neglected in this regard, for they contribute in shaping the means and content of catechesis.

Second, the attempts to address catechetical problems varied according to the resources and limitations of the day, but a definite shift began to take place in the 1950s and '60s, as the Church approached the celebration of the Second Vatican Council. Henceforth, new directions in catechesis were charted, and the Philippine Church's catechetical efforts began to come to grips with the changed environment.

These shifts in catechesis and inculturation will be developed over the next three chapters of this dissertation, culminating in the creation of the NCDP and CFC. In contrast to their many predecessors listed in this first chapter, the NCDP and CFC reflect an explicit effort to engage the Philippines' cultural and historical background in communicating the faith, thanks to a changed theological and ecclesial situation ratified at Vatican II.

CHAPTER TWO

POST-VATICAN II DEVELOPMENTS IN CATECHESIS

The fuller story of the development of the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (NCDP) and *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (CFC) dates back to the discussions on catechesis at the Second Vatican Council. John XXIII's call to *aggiornamento* led to an overhaul of the ways in which catechesis had been officially envisioned and conducted. At the outset, the Conciliar plans seemed to favor the continuation of Vatican I's unfinished project of a universal catechism. As the council unfolded, the bishops gave their support to the creation of a general catechetical directory. By virtue of this decision, "the specter of uniformity had been finally exorcised from the landscape of catechetics."¹

Nevertheless, a remarkable mainstay in the post-Conciliar catechetical scene is the tension among those who emphasize uniformity in formulations of the faith and those who are more concerned with cultural and theological diversity. Adding fodder to this matter is the canonical question of who has final authority over supra-diocesan catechetical texts.²

¹ Michael Donnellan, "Bishops and Uniformity in Religious Education: Vatican I to Vatican II," in *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics*, vol. 1, ed. Michael Warren (Winona, MN: St. Mary's Press, 1983), 240.

² Canon 775 §2 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law states that "... it is for the conference of bishops to take care that catechisms are issued for its territory, with the previous approval of the Apostolic See." For text and commentary, see James A. Coriden, "Book III: The Teaching Function of the Church," in *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, eds. John P. Beal, James A. Coriden and Thomas J. Green (New York / Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2000), 934-35.

In principle, there is agreement that unity-in-diversity in theology and catechetics is not only a positive value, but a requirement that comes with the modern, global context and the universality of faith itself. This is a hallmark of post-Conciliar times. The following history will show how the Church, through key Conciliar texts, the Synods, catechetical documents, and various local catechetical initiatives has sought to articulate and en flesh this very principle. In relation to the NCDP and CFC, this chapter gives an overview of the broader scene out of which these Philippine documents emerge. In particular, the chapter traces the contours of catechesis as found in (1) various documents of the Second Vatican Council; (2) the GCD; (3) the 1974 and 1977 Synods, and the 1985 Extraordinary Synod.

Catechesis at the Second Vatican Council

The liturgical, biblical, and catechetical movements preceding the Council were largely responsible for the shape that catechesis was to take in the decades to come. These movements were ecclesial responses to a changing world dominated by an increasing historical-consciousness, cultural and religious pluralism, and a global and scientific worldview. The impetus for adult catechesis, revival of the catechumenate, emphasis on catechesis' rootedness in scripture and liturgy, decentralization of church authority, increased efforts toward participation and adaptation, and a renewed understanding of revelation and culture were among the contributions of these movements that influenced the discussions on catechesis at Vatican II. Although none of Vatican II's final documents was explicitly

devoted to catechesis, the concern for it was expressed throughout the Council.³ The Preparatory Commission for the Discipline of the Clergy and Christian People had the task of planning for the Conciliar discussion on catechetical instruction.⁴ They were given instructions by the Central Preparatory Commission to initiate the planning for a new catechism, and to emphasize catechesis for adults. While the latter instruction was carried out in the council's final documents, priority was given to the creation of a common directory rather than a universal catechism patterned after the Council of Trent's *Roman Catechism*.⁵

The schemas produced by the Preparatory Commission for the Discipline of the Clergy and Christian People were later incorporated into a new schema, *De Cura Animarum*, which combined all matters relating to catechesis and placed them alongside the treatment of the pastoral office of bishops. This new schema made two significant additions: first, that episcopal conferences should produce their own directories in addition to the common directory; and second, that the catechetical directory should contain formulas of fundamental truths of the faith, moral teaching and prayer, norms for compiling catechisms, and content from the Oriental and Latin rites.⁶

De Cura Animarum was revised and later incorporated into another schema entitled "The Bishops and Diocesan Government." This was renamed "The Pastoral Office of

³ Berard L. Marthaler, *Catechetics in Context: Notes and Commentary on the General Catechetical Directory Issued by the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1973).

⁴ Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph A. Komonchak, eds., *Announcing and Preparing Vatican Council II: Toward a New Era in Catholicism*, vol. 1 of *History of Vatican II*, trans. Matthew O'Connell (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995), 184.

⁵ Marthaler, *Catechetics in Context*, xvii.

⁶ Ibid.

Bishops” in 1964, and became the basis for the decree *Christus Dominus* (CD).⁷ It is here that we find the most explicit directive for catechesis, a mandate that became the basis for the creation of the *General Catechetical Directory* (GCD):⁸

A special directory should also be compiled concerning the pastoral care of special groups . . . and also a directory for the catechetical instruction of the Christian people in which the fundamental principles of this instruction and its organization will be dealt with and the preparation of books relating to it. In the preparation of these directories due consideration should be given to the views expressed by both the commissions and by the Conciliar fathers (CD 44).

The decision to create a directory providing basic, general principles to guide the catechetical ministry, leaving “the application of the general norms in specific situations to the Episcopal Conferences”⁹ is the clearest evidence of one shift in the way catechesis came to be envisioned. Alongside the emphasis on adaptation, this mandate assumes the place of catechesis within the ambit of the bishops’ ministry, and the bishop’s authority over the catechetical formation of his diocese. The following quote states these points explicitly, and sums up directions for catechesis adopted by the Council:

Bishops should be especially concerned about catechetical instruction. Its function is to develop in men a living, explicit, and active faith, enlightened by doctrine. It should be carefully imparted, not only to children and adolescents but also to young people and even to adults. In imparting this instruction the teachers must observe an order and method suited not only to the matter in hand but also to the character, the ability, the age and the lifestyle of their audience. This instruction

⁷ “Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church *Christus Dominus*,” in *Vatican Council II The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, new rev. ed., vol. 1 (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing, 1984), 564-90. Hereafter referred to as CD plus paragraph number.

⁸ Congregation for the Clergy, “General Catechetical Directory (1971),” in *The Catechetical Documents: A Parish Resource* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1996): 7-77. Hereafter referred to as GCD plus paragraph number.

⁹ Ibid.

should be based on holy scripture, tradition, liturgy, and on the teaching authority and life of the church

. . . They should take steps to reestablish or modernize the adult catechumenate (CD 14).¹⁰

These preceding paragraphs from *Christus Dominus* (CD 14 and 44) contain the heart of the Council's explicit teaching on catechesis. Another document whose impact was felt in the field of catechetics was the *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Dei Verbum* (DV).¹¹ The text makes only one explicit reference to catechesis, stating that catechesis should be "healthily nourished and thrives in holiness through the Word of Scripture" (DV 24). However, the document's influence on post-Vatican II catechesis goes much further than encouraging a biblical inspiration for catechesis. *Dei Verbum's* focus on Revelation as God's personal self-communication was legitimately or otherwise, considered transformative of prevailing catechetical methods.¹²

The recognition of present-day human experience as a valid source for theology and catechesis has its correlates in the documents on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, *The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* (LG), *Gaudium et Spes*, *The Pastoral Constitution on the Church*

¹⁰ These shifts are echoed in two other texts, namely, "The catechumenate for adults, comprising several distinct steps, is to be restored and brought into use at the discretion of the local ordinary" (SC 64), and "The ministry of the Word, too—pastoral preaching, catechetics and all forms of Christian instruction, among which the liturgical homily should hold pride of place—is healthily nourished and thrives in holiness through the Word of Scripture" (DV 20).

¹¹ "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*," in *Vatican Council II The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, new rev. ed., vol. 1 (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing, 1984), 750-63. Hereafter referred to as DV plus paragraph number.

¹² One example is the much-abused "experiential" approach. See Maura Thompson Hagarty, "The Role of 'Experience' in Religious Education/Catechesis in the United States since the Second Vatican Council: An Analysis and Critique," (Ph.D. diss., The Catholic University of America, 2000). For a study of *Dei Verbum's* impact on catechesis, see Gabriel Moran, *Catechesis of Revelation* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966).

in the Modern World (GS), and *Ad Gentes, The Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity* (AG).¹³ As texts dealing with the mission and life of the Church *ad intra* and *ad extra*, these three documents are filled with references to the need to engage “culture” and “the world” in greater dialogue. The spirit of decentralization and dialogue pervading these texts influenced the formulation of CD's mandates, and the catechetical documents that were developed shortly after the Council.

AG affirms the importance of catechesis as a ministry “necessary for the implanting and growth of the Christian community” (AG 15). Furthermore, the document's emphasis on adaptation in general, and on relating missionary efforts with local cultures in particular, is reflected in its treatment of catechesis:

The faith should be imparted by means of a well adapted catechesis and celebrated in a liturgy that is in harmony with the character of the people; it should also be embodied by suitable canonical legislation in the healthy institutions and customs of the locality (AG 19).

The same themes are applied to the training of catechists. First, formation and recruitment of catechists is given importance especially in light of the decreasing number of clergy (AG 17, 26). Second, the training of catechists “should also be such that they understand both the universality of the Church and the diversity of peoples” (AG 26). Third, provision is also made for continuous training of clergy in the form of “refresher courses on the Bible and in spiritual and pastoral theology” (AG 20).

¹³ “The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, “The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*,” and “The Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity,” in *Vatican Council II The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, new rev. ed., vol. 1 (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing, 1984), 350-426, 903-1001, 813-62, respectively. Hereafter referred to as LG, GS, AG plus paragraph number.

Both GS and LG do not mention catechesis at all; however, their outward-looking thrusts served as bases for catechetical developments. For example, the prominence given to local churches in LG helped to spur catechetical initiatives among local episcopates. In GS, the repeated call to engage the world and address its social and economic problems reappeared in practically all the catechetical documents henceforth.

The attention given to the world at large in the preceding documents was accompanied by a look at the changing role of the laity. In *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the *Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People* (AA),¹⁴ the laity's active role in evangelization is affirmed (AA 6). The document names catechetical instruction within their own church communities as one of the ways in which the laity can specifically contribute to evangelization (AA 10). But whether lay people involve themselves in catechesis or not, proper training suited to the lay state is necessary. This includes an integral human education, spiritual formation, doctrinal grounding, and a Christian sensibility allowing them to "see all things in the light of faith, to judge and act always in its light" (AA 29). While these references to catechesis do not represent major developments such as those embodied in CD, DV, and the Conciliar documents on the Church and its mission, they do bring up the matter of lay involvement in catechesis. Whether as catechists or catechized, the role of lay people in catechesis is another issue that will be seen more and more in the decades following the Council.

¹⁴ "Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People *Apostolicam Actuositatem*," in *Vatican Council II The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, new rev. ed., vol. 1 (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing, 1984): 766-98.

In summary, the following developments became relevant for Post-Vatican II catechesis: (1) a mandate was drawn up to create a catechetical directory; (2) catechesis was defined as belonging to the ministry of the Word, and thus placed within the ambit of the bishop's authority; (3) adult catechesis and the adult catechumenate were revived; (4) greater emphasis was placed on revelation as God's Self-communication and according to a particular economy; (5) dialogue with cultures, the modern world, other religions, and the concomitant call to adaptation and participation in all aspects of the Church's life was encouraged.

Catechesis after Vatican II (1965-1985)

The catechetical scene following the Second Vatican Council is characterized by the implementation of Conciliar decrees on the part of central authorities in Rome, the writing of a series of catechetical documents by Holy See, and various catechetical initiatives in local churches that both reflect and modify catechetical developments ratified at the Council. These three inter-related streams of activity steered the course of catechesis in the two decades after the Council. As far as the catechetical documents are concerned, there occurred both a continuation of themes already present at the Council, and the setting of new directions. The following section will discuss these documents inasmuch as they provided direction and content to NCDP and CFC.

The General Catechetical Directory (1971)

In the Foreword, the GCD states its intention to provide fundamental principles for catechesis; namely, basic content and guidelines for the development of national and regional directories, catechisms, and other catechetical materials and programs. The following paragraph summarizes the directory's rationale and presents the reader with its novel approach:

. . . the errors which are not infrequently noted in catechetics today can be avoided only if one starts with the correct way of understanding the nature and purposes of catechesis and also the truths which are to be taught by it, with due account being taken of those to whom catechesis is directed and of the conditions in which they live (GCD Foreword).

Therefore, the main challenge and solution proposed by the GCD to catechetical ministers is to understand catechesis itself. This understanding involves knowing catechesis' nature and purpose, which are determined by both the content and recipients of catechesis. By highlighting the fact that recipients determine the catechetical process just as much as the *fides quae* does, the inherent flexibility of catechesis is brought to the fore. This freedom makes more demands of catechetical ministers and calls for an astute grasp of both their audiences' contexts and sound theology. The skill required most of all is adaptation, one of the directory's great leitmotifs.

The GCD's six parts reflect the above emphases. *Part One: The Reality of the Problem* identifies key "features and characteristics of the present situation" (GCD 1). Worldwide developments such as rapid societal and cultural shifts, pluralism, secularization, and indifferentism are described in relation to their impact on the ministry of the word. This section recognizes its limited scope and relatively tentative content, explicitly stating the

need for “filling out this outline and applying it to the circumstances of individual countries and regions” (GCD 1).

Part Two: The Ministry of the Word opens with a chapter on the foundations of the ministry of the word; namely, Revelation, Christ, Scripture, and Tradition. The second chapter “Catechesis in the Pastoral Mission of the Church,” contains catechesis’ definition as “that form of ecclesial action which leads both communities and individual members of the faithful to maturity of faith.” (GCD 21). Leading up to this, catechesis is considered first, as one of the forms of the ministry of the word (GCD 17); and second, catechesis for adults is considered the chief form of catechesis (GCD 20).

Two principles are presented in this section that reappear in many succeeding catechetical documents. First, the notion of God’s pedagogy in revealing is used as the basis for pedagogy in catechesis. Just as God made Himself known gradually, through deeds and words, for humanity’s salvation,¹⁵ so must the Church in her catechetical ministry ensure that God’s message is presented in its integrity, and according to the abilities of those being taught (GCD 33). Second, this pedagogy implies the challenge of maintaining “fidelity to God, fidelity to man” (GCD 34).¹⁶ The value of this idea lies in its ability to show the inseparability of the two phrases. Both are in direct proportion to one another; thus, the more faithful catechists are to the integrity of God’s message, the more concretely and personally

¹⁵ Marthaler, *Catechetics in Context*, 68-69.

¹⁶ According to Marthaler, this was a catchphrase in France and Italy at the time. See *Catechetics in Context*, 69. Later on, this phrase reappears in the *General Directory for Catechesis* (1995) with the addition of “fidelity to the Church.”

do they address the needs of their audience. The reverse is also true; the less they know about their audience's state and manner of receiving the Gospel message, the less will they be able to convey its wholeness.

Part Three: The Christian Message covers the *fides quae* that must be present in any catechetical material to be produced henceforth. It begins with a chapter on "Norms or Criteria" which gives the essential characteristics of sound catechesis; for example, catechesis must present the entire content in a holistic manner (GCD 38, 39); it must be Christocentric (GCD 40); rooted in the Trinity (GCD 41); it must show the close connection between human existence and the mystery of God because catechesis is ultimately aimed at helping all towards salvation (GCD 42).

This content is found "in God's word, written or handed down" (GCD 45). This encompasses Magisterial teaching, the liturgy, the life of the Church, and "the genuine moral values which, by divine providence are found in human society" (GCD 45). These sources are not to be considered equal, because in principle, Revelation is pre-eminent among them. Nevertheless, there is much flexibility in arranging content and in the use of these sources, as the following paragraphs show:

It is not possible, however, to deduce from those norms an order which must be followed in the exposition of the content. It is right to begin with God and proceed to Christ, or to do the reverse; similarly, it is permissible to begin with man and proceed to God, or to do the reverse; and so on. In selecting a pedagogical method, one ought to take into account the circumstances in which the ecclesial community or the individuals among the faithful to whom the catechesis is directed live

The Conferences of Bishops have the task of giving more specific norms in this matter and of applying them by means of catechetical directories, of catechisms for various age levels and cultural conditions, and of the other helps that seem appropriate for the task (GCD 46).

The significance of these statements lies in their explicit articulation of the view that catechesis has an “ad hoc” character; that is, variation in structure and emphases is not only legitimate but necessary in order to remain “faithful to God, faithful to man.”

Following this section on content, it is no wonder that *Part Four: Principles of Methodology* places the greatest importance on the role of the catechist when it says “No method, not even one much proved in use, frees the catechist from the personal task of assimilating and passing judgment on the concrete circumstances, and from some adjustment to them” (GCD 71). It adds that good catechists far more determine the success of catechesis than any method, text, or tool (GCD 71). It is only after this reminder that the GCD proceeds to its expositions on methods, formulas, use of experience, and catechizing in groups (GCD 72-76). More is said about catechizing in groups in *Part Five: Catechesis by Age Level*. This part speaks generally of the needs of particular age groups with a focus on adults and adult catechesis.

Part Six: Pastoral Action, The Ministry of the Word provides an outline of general instructions for catechetical planning. Foremost importance is given to the formation of catechists on whose abilities depend the proper use of catechetical aids and the strengthening of catechetical organization (GCD 108). Those in priestly formation must also be given a solid grounding in catechetics (GCD 115).

Guidelines pertaining specifically to catechetical directories and catechisms are mentioned in this part. The GCD states that a directory’s purpose is “promoting and coordinating catechetical action in the territory of a region or nation, or even of several nations

of the same socio-cultural condition” (GCD 117). Their creation is subject to consultation with local bishops and review and approval by the Congregation for the Clergy (GCD 134). In contrast, the purpose of catechisms is “to provide under a form that is condensed and practical, the witnesses of revelation and of Christian tradition as well as the chief principles which ought to be useful for catechetical activity . . . ” (GCD 119). The process by which the writing is to be undertaken is as follows:

In view of the great difficulties in putting these works together . . . it is most expedient that: (a) there be collaboration by a number of experts in catechetics and in theology; (b) there be consultation with specialists in other religious and human disciplines, and also with other pastoral organizations; (c) individual local Ordinaries be consulted and their opinions be carefully considered; (d) limited experiments be tried before definitive publication; and (e) these texts be duly reviewed after a certain period of time. Before promulgation, these catechisms must be submitted to the Apostolic See for review and approval (GCD 119).

These principles and emphases found in the GCD represent the first steps in the formulation of the theory and direction of catechesis in the Post-Vatican II church, as well as the first set of guidelines on the creation of national directories and catechisms.

The Church’s adoption of the GCD’s genre and major thrusts in the 1970s and 80s indicated a widespread desire in the catechetical field for *aggiornamento* as well. For one, the GCD reflected new content from the catechetical movement and the Council. Just as significant is the fact that the GCD represented a new approach to achieving unity while recognizing diversity in catechesis. Its creation was premised on the idea that a common vision for catechesis depended on a solid understanding of catechesis itself, which in turn could be established by a directory. In other words, a universal catechism was not the only way in which catechetical unity could be safeguarded.

Five months after the GCD's publication, an international catechetical congress was held in Rome. Conclusions of the congress echo emphases laid out in the GCD, such as the shift from child-centered to adult catechesis, espousing pluralism in catechetical approaches while upholding unity of faith, the use of new developments in understanding Revelation, need for greater creativity and cooperation in the field of catechetics.¹⁷ Following at the heels of the six International Catechetical Study Weeks,¹⁸ it is also no surprise that the discussions and conclusions contain a strong focus on catechesis' contribution to all humanity, as well as a sensitivity to particular needs of churches in mission countries and the developing world.¹⁹ With regard to the GCD, the congress participants issued a clarification and affirmation of its use; namely, it is "to provide an orientation rather than legislation," and is "not meant to be a definitive document but a point of departure."²⁰

¹⁷ First Summary Report of the First [Second?] International Catechetical Congress, Rome, 20-25 September 1971, *Teaching All Nations* 8, no. 4 (1971): 3-9.

¹⁸ Eichstätt (1959), Bangkok (1962), Katigondo (1964), Manila (1967), Medellin (1968), Rome (1971). For an overview of these study weeks, see Luis Erdozain, "Evolution of Catechetics: A Study of the Six International Study Weeks on Catechetics," *Lumen Vitae* 25 (1970): 7-31, reprinted in *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics* vol. 1, 86-109.

¹⁹ The Report states, "A significant feature and an important outcome of this congress was the contribution and the impact of the delegates of the Third World." For a bird's eye view of the discussion at the special workshop for the Third World delegates, see "First Summary Report," 4. The participants from the Philippines were the following: Rufino Santos, Archbishop of Manila; Antonio Mabutas, Archbishop of Davao; Paul Brunner, Maria Bunuan, Jose Calle, Madeleine Capistrano, Evelyn Coronel, Mary Vincent Feliciano, Peter Leonard, Antonia Lladoc, Teresita Nitorreda, Maria Romana Villarama. Jose Calle, head of the East Asian Pastoral Institute (Manila) presented on the "difficulties, needs, and possibilities of catechesis in Asia, particularly East and Southeast Asia." See *Sacra Congregazione Per Il Clero*, Atti del II Congresso Catechistico Internazionale Roma, 20-25 settembre 1971 (Roma: Editrice Studium, 1971), 241 and index.

²⁰ "First Summary Report," 6.

Catechesis at the Synods of 1974, 1977, and 1985

The 1974 Synod focused on the theme, “Evangelization in the Modern World.” The first day opened with Pope Paul VI’s acknowledgment of the challenge posed by the broadness of the topic at hand, and an emphasis on the permanent necessity, universality, and finality of evangelization.²¹ After hearing preliminary reports from the Synod’s secretariat,²² the participants began discussing the Working Paper’s two parts: first, the mutual exchange of experiences in evangelization; and second, reflection on theological questions that emerged from practice. The most salient themes that emerged were the following “dilemmas”²³ in evangelization: the Church’s witness and credibility in today’s world, unity and diversity, the role of the Holy Spirit in evangelization, the relationship between evangelization and human liberation, the youth, and the identification of various obstacles to evangelization.²⁴

²¹ Paul VI, Opening Address, 27 September 1974, *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* 48 (December 1974): 815-21.

²² Aloisio Lorscheider, “Panorama of the life of the Church 1971-1974,” in *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* 48 (December 1974): 847-49.

²³ Michael Warren, “Evangelization: A Catechetical Concern,” *Living Light* 10 (1973): 487-96, reprinted in *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics*, vol. 1, 329-38.

²⁴ “Declaration of the Synodal Fathers approved at the conclusion of the 1974 Assembly of the Synod” *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* 48 (December 1974): 840-46. More background is provided by the following commentaries: Catalino Arevalo, “A Theologian Speaks on What the Synod Said,” lecture at Catholic Centre of Hong Kong, published in two parts in *The Sunday Examiner*, 13 December 1974, 11; and 20 December 1974, 11; and reprinted in *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* 48 (December 1974): 867-72; and Duraisamy S. Amalorpavadass, ed. *Evangelisation of the Modern World: Synod of Bishops, Rome 1974* (Bangalore: National Biblical Catechetical and Liturgical Centre, 1975). The atmosphere of controversy and disagreement during the Synod became most obvious when the bulk of the Draft Final Document was rejected by the participants, and only the first of four parts was approved by a majority of the Synod fathers. See “The Synod in Brief,” *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* 48 (December 1974): 809-13.

The 1974 Synod culminated with Pope Paul VI's issuance of his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN) in 1975.²⁵ In this document, evangelization is described very broadly, as "bringing the Good News into all the strata of humanity," with the aim of "transforming humanity from within and making it new" (EN 18). By interior transformation, the document refers to converting individual and collective consciences (EN 18) and recasting criteria of judgment and standards of values (EN 19). To emphasize the point, the document states that evangelization involves going to the "roots of culture and cultures" not merely by "applying a thin veneer" (EN 20).

The document considers catechesis as a means and form of evangelization alongside witness, preaching, administration of the sacraments, and popular piety (EN 40-48). Furthermore, catechesis needs to be "adapted to the age, educational level and aptitude of the persons concerned" (EN 44).²⁶ With regard to catechisms, there is a hint of things to come when Pope Paul VI states, "There can be no doubt that the whole work of evangelization will be materially helped if the catechetical teachers can avail themselves of suitable books, wisely and competently prepared under the direction of the bishops" (EN 44).

Continuing the thrusts of *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, the 1977 Synod pursued further discussion on evangelization by focusing on a more specific theme, "Catechesis in our time, with special

²⁵ Paul VI, "On Evangelization in the Modern World, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975)," in *The Catechetical Documents: A Parish Resource* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1996): 157-99.

²⁶ The relationship between evangelization and catechesis, and the focus on adaptation are both traced to the work of Pierre-André Liege and the International Study Weeks. See Michael Warren, "Evangelization: A Catechetical Concern," *Living Light* 10 (1973): 487-96, reprinted in *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics*, vol. 1, 329-38.

reference to the catechesis of children and young people.” Paul VI’s intention for calling this assembly was to “stimulate a renewed commitment for catechesis.”²⁷

At the Synod’s conclusion, the document “Message to the People of God”²⁸ was prepared and approved by the participants. It contains the reason for their focus on the youth, the strengths, difficulties, and complexities encountered in catechesis, especially those posed by the diversity of cultures, and new technical skills that change values and relationships. To meet these challenges, the Synod fathers call for a carefully planned renewal that is focused on Christ, and catechesis as “word, memory, and witness.”²⁹

Aside from the Message, Synod *Relator* Cardinal Aloisio Lorscheider’s thirty-four propositions, a summary of the points discussed at the Synod, reflects priorities later incorporated into the Pope’s Apostolic Exhortation. Among the highlights of these topics are the following:

- (1) catechesis has Trinitarian, Christological, ecclesiological, and anthropological dimensions.
- (2) The specific Catholic character of catechesis according to revelation and the sacred Magisterium of the Church must always emerge . . .
- (3) Catechesis should be rooted in diverse cultures in such a way that the Gospel judges, purifies and transforms any given culture . . .
- (4) The Church should prepare people capable of evaluating and serving the teaching church through the mass media.

²⁷ Paul VI, “To Revive and Renew Catechesis of the Word of God in the Faithful,” speech at the Conclusion of the Synod of Bishops, 29 October 1977, *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* 52 (April-May 1978): 213-17. Also see the Synod’s “Working Paper,” in *Living Light* 13 (fall 1976): 328-48.

²⁸ “Message to the People of God,” *Lumen Vitae* 33, no. 1 (1978): 7-53.

²⁹ For an explanation of these points, see John Paul II, *Catechist: The Text with Commentary and Discussion Questions of Catechesi Tradendae, the Pope’s New Charter for Religious Education Today* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1980): 42-43.

- (5) The parish . . . has unique importance for catechesis . . . *communautés de base* (“basic communities”) are of fundamental importance.³⁰

The document *On Catechesis in Our Time, Catechesi Tradendae* (CT) begun by Paul VI, was completed by John Paul II in 1979 as a culmination of the 1977 Synod.³¹ Like EN, this document considers catechesis to be intimately linked to the broader process of evangelization, as “one of its moments” (EN 18, 26). CT also follows the GCD on catechesis’ aim of maturing in faith (CT 19, 20) and of the primacy of adult catechesis. This importance given to adult catechesis is not a cancellation of the Synod’s explicit focus on the youth, rather, catechesis for the youth and young persons served as the “point of entry” into a broader discussion and understanding.³²

Like the GCD, CT admits legitimate variations in catechesis’ structure and language though it is more cautious in tone stating that “the choice made will be a valid one to the extent that, far from being dictated by more or less subjective theories or prejudices stamped with a certain ideology, it is inspired by the humble concern to stay closer to a content that must remain intact” (CT 31). Also, three emphases already present in the GCD received even greater attention: first, catechesis is given a strong Christocentric focus, as reflected in the statement, “. . . the definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch, but in

³⁰ Ibid., 43-44.

³¹ John Paul II, “On Catechesis in Our Time, *Catechesi Tradendae* 1979,” in *The Catechetical Documents: A Parish Resource* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1996): 373-416. Hereafter referred to as CT plus paragraph number. For a comparison of the “Message” and Lorscheider’s “Thirty-four propositions” with the papal document, see Marianne Sawicki, “The Process of Consensus: Purpose, Papers and Proceedings of the Synod,” *Living Light* 15 (spring 1978): 7-31.

³² Sawicki, 8.

communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ” (CT 5).³³ Second, the need for organic and systematic catechesis is repeatedly asserted. The terms “organic” and “systematic” mean, “programmed for a certain goal, dealing with the essentials, sufficiently complete, and integral Christian initiation, open to other factors of Christian life” (CT 21).³⁴ Third, the term “inculturation” appears for the first time in an official church document in the following paragraph:

“The term ‘acculturation’ or ‘inculturation’ may be a neologism, but it expresses very well one factor of the great mystery of the Incarnation.” We can say of catechesis, as well as of evangelization in general, that it is called to bring the power of the Gospel into the very heart of culture and cultures. For this purpose, catechesis will seek to know these cultures and their essential components; it will learn their most significant expressions; it will respect their particular values and riches. In this manner it will be able to offer these cultures the knowledge of the hidden mystery and help them to bring forth from their own living tradition original expressions of Christian life, celebration and thought (CT 53).³⁵

With regard to the creation of catechetical literature, the document offers both praise and criticism. Pope John Paul II exonerates successful texts but warns against those that are ambiguous and harmful. In fact, without naming them, he points to actual texts “in certain places” that “bewilder the young and even adults, either by deliberately or unconsciously omitting elements essential to the Church’s faith, or by attributing excessive importance to certain themes at the expense of others . . . or by a chiefly horizontalist view . . .” (CT 49).

³³ Also see CT 6 “Christocentricity in catechesis also means the intention to transmit not one’s own teaching or that of some other master, but the teaching of Jesus Christ.” The emphasis is on the fact that primarily, the content or message of catechesis is a *person*, Jesus Christ. The objective content of Jesus’ Christ’s teaching needs to be understood in the context of a relationship with him.

³⁴ These characteristics reflect the importance of and need for “planned, not improvised,” and “integral” catechesis. Ibid., 94.

³⁵ The discussion of inculturation at the 1977 Synod will be tackled in this dissertation’s Chapter Three.

As a response to these problems, the following four requirements are listed for the preparation of catechetical texts:

(a) they must be linked with the real life of the generation to which they are addressed; showing its acquaintance with its anxieties and questionings . . . ; (b) they must try to speak a language comprehensible to the generation in question; (c) they must make a point of giving the whole message of Christ and his Church, without neglecting or distorting anything, and in expounding it they will follow a line and structure which highlights what is essential; (d) they must really aim to give those who use them a better knowledge of the mysteries of Christ, aimed at true conversion and a life more in conformity with God's will (CT 49).

Following this enumeration, the Pope reminds those in the business of creating catechetical texts, especially catechisms, that they “can do so only with the approval of the pastors who have authority to give it, and taking their inspiration as closely as possible from the GCD” (CT 50). Episcopal conferences are then encouraged to produce catechisms that are “faithful to the essential content of Revelation and up to date in method” (CT 50).

At both Synods of 1974 and 1977, various proposals were brought forward to write catechisms whose scope would extend beyond the national or diocesan. Individual bishops recommended the creation of a short catechism for the youth, a catechism that was to be a compilation of Vatican II teachings, a catechism for catechists, and finally “a catechism that would be normative for the universal Church.”³⁶ In CT, Pope John Paul II makes use of the Council of Trent as an example of a Church council that spurred the creation of catechisms when he says, “May the Second Vatican Council stir up in our time a like enthusiasm and similar activity.” (CT 13).

³⁶ Berard L. Marthaler, *The Catechism Yesterday and Today: The Evolution of a Genre* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1995), 134-35.

At the Extraordinary Synod of 1985 commemorating the twentieth anniversary of Vatican II's close, the proposal for a catechism or compendium for the universal church was officially adopted. The idea can be traced to several reports of episcopal conferences prepared for the Synod,³⁷ various interventions made by individual bishops,³⁸ and the conference reports of several language groups.³⁹ The Final Report contains the following quote:

Very many have expressed the desire that a catechism or compendium of all Catholic doctrine regarding both faith and morals be composed, that it might be, as it were, a point of reference for the catechisms or compendiums that are prepared in the various regions.⁴⁰

The Pope mentioned the proposal in his closing address, saying that it “corresponded to a real need both of the universal and of the particular churches.”⁴¹ In July 1986, the Pope

³⁷ These were the reports of the bishops of Korea, Mauritania, Senegal, and the United States. Cf. Liam Kelly, *Catechesis Revisited: Handing On Faith Today* (Mahwah, NJ, Paulist Press, 2000), 85; and Avery Dulles, Appendix to *The Reception of Vatican II*, eds. Giuseppe Alberigo, Jean-Pierre Jossua, and Joseph A. Komonchak, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1987), 357. Hereafter cited as Dulles, “Appendix.”

³⁸ Cardinal Bernard Law of Boston made the following intervention: “I propose a Commission of Cardinals to prepare a draft of a Conciliar Catechism to be promulgated by the Holy Father after consulting the bishops of the world. In a shrinking world—a global village—national catechisms will not fill the current need for clear articulation of the Church’s faith.” Archbishop Joachim Ruhuna of Burundi requested “a model catechism, inspired by Vatican II.” Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Giacomo Beltritti advocated a single catechism for children to be used in the entire Church, adaptable to the need of various countries. Cf. Marthaler, *Catechism Yesterday and Today*, 140; and Dulles, “Appendix,” 358.

³⁹ Italian-language group: catechism of the faith for believers, book of Christian faith for non-believers, and a book of moral doctrine for everyone; English-language group: compendium of Catholic teaching from which each country could draw its own teaching documents; French group B: a catechism or compendium containing the teachings of Vatican II, focus on Christ; Spanish group B: reference work of Catholic teaching, which would be a compendium of synthetic formulations of the faith; Latin group: universal catechism according to Vatican II, similar to Roman catechism. Cf. Marthaler, *Catechism Yesterday and Today*, 140-41; Dulles, “Appendix,” 358-59.

⁴⁰ *Message to the People of God The Final Report, Extraordinary Synod of Bishops, Rome 1985* (Washington, D.C.: National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1986).

⁴¹ Dulles, “Appendix,” 358.

appointed twelve cardinals and bishops to oversee the project, under the leadership of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, prefect of the *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* (CDF).

According to the Final Report, this project of a universal “catechism or compendium” was to be accompanied by three other works: the completion of the Code of Canon Law for Eastern-rite churches, a study of the theological status and doctrinal authority of episcopal conferences, and of the applicability of subsidiarity to the Church.⁴² Because of its emphases, the Final Report has been said, on the one hand, to legitimately counteract horizontalist tendencies in many places; but on the other, to overly focus on this problem so as to privilege a pessimistic reading of postconciliar events over other possible interpretations. As such, the Final Report has been criticized for an inadequate representation of the views shared at the Synod, and drawing much of its material from the German-language group’s reports. The less than optimistic attitude toward the “signs of the times” is in part due to the document’s predominant theological slant which Dulles describes as “neo-Augustinian” and Komonchak typifies as more “epiphanic” than correlational.⁴³ Regarding rhetorical style, Komonchak points out the Report’s problematic pattern of “taking a criticized notion in the worst possible sense while counterposing to this deformation a laboratory-pure sense of the notion one prefers.”⁴⁴

⁴² Ibid., 356.

⁴³ Dulles, “Appendix,” 351. Also see Joseph A. Komonchak, “The Synod of 1985 and the Notion of the Church,” *Chicago Studies* 26 (1987): 330-45; and Joseph A. Komonchak, “Dealing with Diversity and Disagreement: Vatican II and Beyond,” (keynote address, Fifth Annual Catholic Common Ground Initiative, Washington, D.C., June 2003).

⁴⁴ Komonchak, “Synod of 1985,” 335.

When read in light of these assessments, the mandate for the creation of the universal catechism or compendium were both welcomed and aroused suspicion, even with the caveat that the future text would not replace local catechisms, but would serve as a point of reference for their creation. For the Philippine catechism project that was ongoing in 1985, the Final Report raised the following issues: first, whether work on the national catechism would have to stop to await the publication of the planned universal catechism,⁴⁵ and second, the extent to which the Final Report's theological slant and pessimistic view of the world would shape the CCC and determine the process of evaluating forthcoming local catechisms. The tension brought to light by the Final report and expressed by Dulles—" . . . there is as yet no full agreement as to the necessary measure of visible unity and the limits of permissible variety"⁴⁶—was keenly felt by the teams that worked on the Philippines' catechetical directory and national catechism. They experienced first hand their critics' and the CDF's preference for particular emphases and theological approaches. On hindsight, the Synod's Final Report represents a real turning point that set a definite direction for catechesis, and ecclesiology as a whole.

The acceptance of the proposal for the "universal catechism" at 1985 Extraordinary Synod is best understood when set against the backdrop of several catechetical controversies

⁴⁵ Leonardo Z. Legaspi, "The Growth of the Catechetical Ministry in the Philippines," *Docete* 9 (July-September 1986): 5. At the 1985 Extraordinary Synod, the Philippines was represented by Cardinal Ricardo Vidal of Cebu, see Fausto Gomez, "The Synod of Bishops '85: Relaunching Vatican II," *Boletin Eclesiastico de Filipinas* 62 (March-April 1986): 140-58, 175.

⁴⁶ Dulles, "Appendix," 362-63.

around the world.⁴⁷ Put negatively, these conflicts were about what was considered acceptable content in catechetical texts, and who had the final responsibility for their approval. For example, in 1966, *Die Nieuwe Katechismus*, more popularly known as the “Dutch catechism” received much praise and wide acceptance from catechists all over the world, until a Dutch traditionalist group protested “the seven deadly sins” of the text. This led to the addition of an “appendix” in later editions.⁴⁸ Published in 1969, the Italian Isolotto catechism was criticized for allegedly presenting Christ “as a social agitator, and reducing salvation to the sociological sense of liberation from oppression and exploitation.”⁴⁹ Then in 1981, *Pierres Vivantes* was published by the French episcopate, and later came under attack by the CDF for its controversial use of contemporary biblical scholarship.⁵⁰ In 1984, the Anthony Wilhelm’s *Christ Among Us* was also criticized, this time, for not sufficiently distinguishing between the teachings of faith and that of theologians.⁵¹

Meanwhile, in the Philippines, the *National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines* (NCDP) draft was subjected to serious critique from the *Opus Dei* group on the eve of its approval by the Philippine bishops in 1983. Among the charges were the text’s use of

⁴⁷ Marthaler, *Catechism Yesterday and Today*, 137-40. For a specific study of the process of approval of catechisms and catechetical directories, see the following: Joint Committee of the National Conference of Diocesan Directors of Religious Education, Catholic Theological Society of America, College Theology Society, and Canon Law Society of America, “The Approval of Catechisms and Catechetical Materials,” Appendix A; and “Significant Developments in Catechetics: A Chronology 1965-1985,” addendum to Appendix A, in *Catholic Theological Society of America Proceedings of the Forty-first Annual Convention*, Chicago 11-14 June 1986 vol. 41, ed. George Kilcourse (CTSA, 1986): 181-204.

⁴⁸ Joint Committee, “Significant Developments in Catechetics,” in *CTSA Proceedings* 41, 200.

⁴⁹ Joint Committee “The Approval of Catechisms,” in *CTSA Proceedings* 41, 201.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 194-95; also in Marthaler, *Catechism Yesterday and Today*, 138-39.

⁵¹ Ibid.

“personal theological reflections not grounded in magisterial teaching,” and the obscuring of the “supernatural character of salvation” by a theology of liberation.⁵² Throughout the process of gaining approval for the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (CFC), the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) repeats much of the criticisms leveled by the *Opus Dei* at the NCDP, to the CFC’s draft texts.⁵³

Conclusion

Catechetical developments from the time of the Council’s preparation to the Extraordinary Synod of 1985 provide the larger context in which church leaders in the Philippines undertook the creation of a national catechetical directory and national catechism. These documents were part of and were influenced by the ferment of these decades, as seen in the texts’ adoption of the emphases outlined in the foregoing chapter. Some of these elements are the primacy given to adult catechesis, the focus on a Christocentric, organic, and systematic presentation, the newly re-discovered biblical, liturgical, and social justice orientations, and most of all, the thrust toward creating inculturated catechetical texts. In imbibing these characteristics, the NCDP and CFC represent the Philippine church’s efforts to take *aggiornamento* to the catechetical field.

⁵² Roberto Latorre, “A Theological Study of the NCDP Draft: *Maturing in Christian Faith, National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines*, revised draft of February 1983. Based on Selected Texts of Important Documents of the Magisterium of the Church,” cited in Linda Tacorda, “History and Development of the National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines,” *Docete* 9 (January-March 1987): 23.

⁵³ The debates surrounding the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (NCDP) and the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (CFC) will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

At the same time, a pattern of interaction between Roman authorities and local episcopates evolved during these decades, one that became the mold for the deliberations between the committees working on NCDP and CFC and those with the authority to grant their approval. A similar pattern of criticisms can likewise be discerned in the objections toward many postconciliar catechetical texts. One is led to ask what exactly this situation indicates; that is, whether these similarities in criticism reveal inherent biases, legitimate or otherwise; or plain and simple coincidence. Seen in a more positive light, these conflicts also express the desire and need for greater catechetical coordination; specifically, for a process of creating and approving catechetical texts that reflects the principle of communion more effectively.

In this chapter's study of key Conciliar texts, catechetical documents, and accounts of local catechetical initiatives, one cannot help but notice the ubiquity of the issue of unity-in-diversity in today's Church. In catechesis, as in other realms of the Church's life, the primary manner in which our challenges are framed is in terms of the pressing need to visibly manifest integrity and unity of faith in a Church that in principle, considers theological and cultural diversity a value. Inculturation is the key concept that encapsulates this issue, a notion that emerged in conjunction with the catechetical ferment of this era. The connection to catechesis notwithstanding, the understanding of inculturation has its own history, which is the matter for this dissertation's next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

POST-VATICAN II DEVELOPMENTS IN INCULTURATION

Alongside the development of post-Conciliar catechesis, the Church's own understanding and appreciation of mission, the local church, and the world's cultures underwent a major transformation, all of which contributed to the push toward creating inculturated catechetical texts. The insufficiency of existing catechetical materials and methods came into sharper focus with the Council's official recognition of the desirability of openness and dialogue with the wide variety of cultures and contexts of those to be catechized. The acceptance of cultural pluralism in principle, and the importance given to local churches and their leaders, all pointed the Church in the direction of inculturation.

Unlike its predecessors, such as accommodation and adaptation, inculturation is marked by a more reciprocal view of the relationship between faith and cultures, mutually enriching each other. Adaptation emphasizes the changes in language, symbol, and other elements of communicating the faith in order to render the Gospel more intelligible to a new missionary area. Accommodation focuses on "making room" for local cultural elements within the Christian faith.¹ Inculturation encompasses the two terms, seeks greater integration between culture and faith, while acknowledging the local churches as primary

¹ Francis Vincent Anthony, *Ecclesial Praxis of Inculturation: Toward an Empirical-theological Theory of Inculturizing Praxis* (Rome: Libreria Ateneo Salesiano, 1997), 32-34.

agents of the process.² As the term gained currency, a host of tensions began to surface that inevitably come into play in the varied attempts to conceptualize and practice inculturation.

In the four decades after the Council, Church authorities and academic theologians alike have increasingly taken up inculturation, and in varying degrees have succeeded in pushing the agenda forward. The creation of both the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (NCDP) and the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (CFC) was largely based on the explicit call for inculturation found in various Church documents. Still, many factors hamper progress in both the theoretical and practical domains, many of which surfaced in the creation of the CFC and NCDP. This chapter describes the development of the Church's thought on inculturation, and articulates the tensions present in key documents. This will be done by (1) tracing inculturation's roots in the documents of Vatican II, (2) discussing the term's origins and use in subsequent church documents, and (3) describing the ways in which the creation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) raised specific issues pertaining to inculturating catechesis.

Themes from the Second Vatican Council: Culture, Adaptation, the Churches Local and Universal³

According to Karl Rahner, the Council was “the beginning of a tentative approach by the Church to the discovery and official recognition of itself as world-church.”⁴ He cites the

² Louis J. Luzbetak, *The Church and Cultures: New Perspectives in Missiological Anthropology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988), 82.

³ This section was based on a longer essay, Patricia G. Panganiban, “Inculturation and the Second Vatican Council,” *Landas: A Journal of the Loyola School of Theology* 18, no. 1 (2004): 59-93.

⁴ Karl Rahner, “Basic Theological Interpretation of the Second Vatican Council,” in *Concern for the Church*, vol. 20 of *Theological Investigations* (New York: Crossroad, 1986), 77-89.

following as indicative of this emerging self-identity: the triumph of the use of the vernacular in liturgy in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the awareness of the responsibility of the Church for the history of mankind in *Gaudium et Spes*, the avoidance of the linguistic style of neoscholastic theology in *Lumen Gentium* and *Dei Verbum*, the positive appraisal of the great world-religions in *Nostra Aetate*, the strong belief in the effectiveness of the universal salvific will of God in *Lumen Gentium*, *Ad Gentes*, and *Gaudium et Spes*, and finally, the renunciation of “the use of any powers in proclaiming its message that are not implied in the power of the gospel itself” in *Dignitatis Humanae*.⁵

Alongside these developments, other theologians have pointed out the change in the Church’s attitude toward culture. Lonergan uses Vatican II as a reference point in explanation of the breakdown of a classicist notion of culture (“Culture” with a capital C) to the emergence of a modern notion of culture.⁶ Scherer and Bevans have considered the positive view of culture expressed in *Gaudium et Spes* to be a crucial turning point in the shaping of the thrust toward inculturation.⁷ Komonchak sums up the significance of the Council similarly, as “the acceptance of the Church of historical consciousness, its need for critical history, cultural and historical diversity, and a greater sense of individual and collective responsibility for the future of humanity.”⁸ The Council was, in this sense, “a long-overdue effort by the Catholic Church to deal seriously and discriminatingly with the

⁵ Ibid., 82.

⁶ Bernard Lonergan, “Belief: Today’s Issue,” in *A Second Collection: Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan*, eds. William Ryan and Bernard Tyrell (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996), 92-93.

⁷ James A. Scherer and Stephen B. Bevans, eds., *New Directions in Mission and Evangelization*, vol. 3 *Faith and Culture* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1999), 6.

⁸ Joseph A. Komonchak, “The Local Realization of the Church,” in *The Reception of Vatican II*, eds. Giuseppe Alberigo, Jean-Pierre Jossua, and Joseph A. Komonchak, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1987), 87.

culture created in the West by the Enlightenment, the economic and political revolutions of the last two centuries, the development of the natural and human sciences and the secularization and pluralization of society.”⁹

In this light, the Council was itself a moment of inculturation, one in which the Church positively engaged in the prevailing culture of modernity in the West by shifting away from a negative, combative attitude toward anything and anyone that seemed to put its authority to question. From this point of view, the Council represented a turning away from a particular “incarnation” of the Church—that is, its sociological form that developed in reaction to modernity, which was largely patterned after an idealized medieval Christendom.¹⁰

Instead, the Church turned toward a serious effort to create an ecclesiology that takes into account the great variety of cultures, peoples, and contexts. This theme, often referred to as adaptation in the Conciliar texts, is most evident in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, *Lumen Gentium*, *Ad Gentes*, and *Gaudium et Spes*. The subsequent sections describe and analyze the ways in which these documents dealt with the relationships among faith, the Gospel, and the Church on the one hand, and cultures on the other. These discussions will be shown to reflect the options taken by the Council, and throw light on problems to be encountered in the future.

⁹ Ibid., 79.

¹⁰ Joseph A. Komonchak, “Modernity and the Construction of Roman Catholicism,” *Cristianesimo Nella Storia* 18 (1997): 353-85.

Sacrosanctum Concilium (SC)

As the first document to be approved, SC's emphases and tone set a precedent for succeeding Conciliar texts. Its overall emphases on "full, active, conscious participation in liturgical celebrations" (SC 14) and its concomitant call to "a general restoration of the liturgy" (SC 21) involved distinguishing between "unchangeable elements divinely instituted, and of elements subject to change . . . (and) ought to be changed with the passage of time" (SC 21).

This distinction between "changeable" and "unchangeable" elements appeared easy enough to accept in principle. However, the debates on individual aspects of proposed reforms showed numerous difficulties in identifying how, what, and how far change would be allowed to take place. The most contested issues in the aula involved specific changes such as the use of the vernacular, adaptation, the authority of bishops in relation to liturgical reform, concelebration, communion under both species, the reform of the Breviary, the Missal, and the Ritual, and the anointing of the sick.¹¹ Not surprisingly, the main proponents of "a more thorough and fundamental adaptation of the rites to local situations and mentalities" came from bishops of the Third World, with the support of professional liturgists.¹²

In the final text, paragraphs 36-40 contain the most references to adaptation. These paragraphs focus on the use of the vernacular (SC 36); the need to "respect and foster the qualities and talents of various races and nations," and the possibility of "admitting such

¹¹ Mathijs Lamberigts, "The Liturgy Debate," in *The Formation of the Council's Identity First Period and Intersession October 1962-September 1963*, vol. 2 of *History of Vatican II*. eds. Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph A. Komonchak (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis; Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 112.

¹² Ibid., 148.

things to liturgy itself” (SC 37); allowing “legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions and peoples” in revising the liturgical books provided that the substantial unity of the Roman rite is preserved (SC 38); and allowing “more radical adaptation of the liturgy” and the processes to be followed by the competent authorities in charge of these undertakings (SC 39, 40).

The most contentious of these issues, as the document’s future interpretation and implementation shows, is the matter of radical adaptation, and whether the creation of new rites is implied by these paragraphs.¹³ In the end, Shorter concludes his study of SC with the statement that the document’s general rule was “an extrinsic adaptation of the Roman rite.”¹⁴

Lumen Gentium (LG)

The preparatory schema for the draft *De Ecclesia* was structured much like the ecclesiologies of neoscholastic manuals,¹⁵ and was rejected early on, allowing the Council Fathers to contribute a more radical shift in emphasis. In its final form, *Lumen Gentium* describes the Church as mystery and sacrament, and makes use of various biblical images such as People of God, Bride of Christ, *communio*, and others, to balance the former overemphasis on the Church as *societas perfecta*. The amount of attention formerly given to

¹³ See following articles: Congregation for the Clergy, “On the Translation of Liturgical Texts for Celebrations with a Congregation (1969),” in *Documents on the Liturgy 1963-1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts*, compiled by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy, ed. and trans., Thomas O’ Brien, (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1982), 284-91; Congregation for the Clergy, “The Roman Liturgy and Inculturation: Fourth Instruction for the Right Application of the Conciliar Constitution on the Liturgy,” *Origins* 23, no. 43 (April 14, 1994): 745-56; Anscar J. Chupungco, “Inculturation and the Organic Progression of the Liturgy,” *Ecclesia Orans* 7 (1990): 7-21; and “Remarks on the ‘The Roman Liturgy and Inculturation’,” *Ecclesia Orans* 11 (1994): 269-77.

¹⁴ Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1988), 193.

¹⁵ Gerard Philips, “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: History of the Constitution,” in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol.1, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), 106.

the authority of the papacy, and the hierarchy was likewise tempered with a focus on greater participation and co-responsibility of the whole People of God, and the laity in particular (LG 32, 33, 37) which had been neglected in the past.

It is in the second and third chapters that ecclesiological foundations for reflection on the local/particular churches appear in the document.¹⁶ In LG 23 the Council states, “it is in these (particular Churches) and formed out of them that the one and unique Catholic Church exists” (LG 23). Three paragraphs later, the Council recognizes that “the Church of Christ is really present in all legitimately organized local groups of the faithful, which in so far as they are united to their pastors, are also quite appropriately called Churches in the New Testament” (LG 26).

The relationships among local churches and the universal church are described in the following text on catholicity, another one of the document’s important themes:

The one People of God is accordingly present in all the nations of the earth, . . . All the faithful scattered throughout the world are in communion with each other in the Holy Spirit so that ‘he who dwells in Rome knows those in most distant parts to be his members’ Rather, she fosters and takes to herself in so far as they are good, the abilities, resources and customs of peoples. In so taking them to herself she purifies, strengthens, and elevates them. . . .

In virtue of this catholicity, each part contributes its own gifts to other parts and to the whole Church, so that the whole and each of the parts are strengthened by the common sharing of all things and by the common effort to attain to fullness in unity (LG 13).

This paragraph provides an excellent image of catholicity-at-work. The idea of local churches contributing gifts that strengthen the whole Church is a fine principle that is easy to

¹⁶ The terms “local” and “particular” churches are used variably and interchangeably in the Council documents.

accept until the questions are raised as to what the phrase “insofar as they are good” exactly means, and who decides what “gifts” are acceptable to the rest of the Church.

Of a piece with the Council’s teaching on the local/universal church is the matter of papal primacy and episcopal collegiality, the “hot potato” in the discussions at the aula. According to Komonchak, the Council remained content to simply state the terms of the debate. The text reads, “For the Roman Pontiff, . . . has full, supreme and universal power over the whole church. . .” On the other hand, the same paragraph states, “The order of bishops is the successor to the college of the apostles . . . Together with their head, the Supreme Pontiff, and never apart from him, they have supreme and full authority over the universal Church; . . .” (LG 22). The debates continue to this day, another manifestation of the need to “reconcile the demands of unity and the requirements of diversity.”¹⁷

This tension between the desire for greater authority among local bishops on the one hand, and the necessity of papal primacy on the other, plays itself out in many high-level attempts at inculturation. Shorter gives the specific example of the many Eucharistic prayers and rites that remain unapproved by Rome.¹⁸ Schreiter speaks more generally when he says that a major problem in inculturation is the hesitance of church authorities to allow legitimate experimentation in inculturation.¹⁹

¹⁷ Joseph A. Komonchak, “The Significance of Vatican II for Ecclesiology,” in *Gift of the Church: A Textbook on Ecclesiology in Honor of Patrick Granfield, O.S.B.*, ed., Peter C. Phan (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 87.

¹⁸ Shorter, 193-94.

¹⁹ Robert J. Schreiter, “Faith and Cultures: Challenges to a World Church,” *Theological Studies* 50 (1989): 758.

Ad Gentes Divinitus (AG)

As one of the last texts to be approved, *Ad Gentes* was often in danger of being dropped from discussion. However, in spite of its shaky beginnings, AG's significance cannot be underestimated especially with regard to adaptation and to the relationship between faith and cultures.

The opening paragraph on Christian witness begins the long string of references to adaptation and to the need for understanding the relationships among Christian faith and different peoples and cultures. It states, "they should be familiar with their national and religious traditions and uncover with gladness and respect those seeds of the Word which lie hidden among them" (AG 11). AG 15 is worthy of note because it speaks of local Christian communities as "endowed with cultural riches of their own nation." The next paragraph stresses the need for priestly training that incorporates the desire to "... face up the particular nation's own way of thinking and acting. . . .so that they will better understand and appreciate the culture of their own people; . . . they should examine the relationship between the traditions and religion of their homeland and Christianity" (AG 16).

The third chapter entitled "Particular Churches" is the section with the most references to the still nascent idea of inculturation. When the document speaks of the work of building up Christian communities, there is a keen sensitivity and priority accorded to taking into account local cultures and contexts (AG 19).²⁰ There is also new focus on the laity as missionaries who carry out Christian witness precisely within their own societies and cultures. Hence, stress is put on the need for familiarity with their own culture, and their task

²⁰ AG 19 states, "The faith should be imparted by means of a well adapted catechesis and celebrated in a liturgy that is in harmony with the character of the people; it should also be embodied by suitable canonical legislation in the healthy institutions and customs of the locality."

of guarding and purifying it (AG 21). In these articles, “adaptation is emphasized to satiety.”²¹ This section ends “with an ideal and grandiose vision of the future when the treasures of the nations in customs and tradition . . . are brought into the young churches, and men’s religious diversity are brought into the catholic unity of the universal Church.”²² The next chapter, which is on missionaries, also lays great stress on the local culture in the process of formation of missionaries.

These sections of *Ad Gentes* testify to the fact that once cultural pluralism became accepted, a more dialectical view of adaptation came to be considered a necessary element of mission. That said, no directives were specified as to how to go about the programme of adaptation apart from laying out the principle of discerning “seeds of the Word,” and the general injunction to examine the relationships between local traditions and Christianity. The task of implementation was left to post-Conciliar generations. Hence, more than forty years after the Council, a wealth of scholarship and activity pertaining to inculturation has emerged, albeit plagued by problems of methodology, definition, and application.²³

Gaudium et Spes (GS)

The “decisive impulse,” as Moeller puts it, to produce such a draft can be traced back to Dom Helder Camara of Rio de Janeiro who constantly argued against strictly focusing on internal Church troubles while problems of hunger, under-development, and other similar

²¹ Suso Brechter, “Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity: Origin and History of the Decree,” in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 4, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), 146.

²² *Ibid.*, 150.

²³ Schreiter, “Faith and Cultures,” 758-60.

issues were afflicting the world.²⁴ Cardinal Suenens of Malines-Brussels then suggested dividing the various schemata into the categories of *Ecclesia ad intra* and *Ecclesia ad extra* by the end of the First Session.

Recurring conflicts throughout the text's discussion reveal the complexities of the matter at hand and the limits of current language. First, the problem of defining culture arose in the early stages of the deliberations. By the time of the second text's preparation, the Council Fathers resorted to an expanded description of culture rather than creating a definition.²⁵ Second, the question of how to describe the state of the world today, that is, "without descending to platitudes" was an issue that arose at Malines in 1963, and later again during the Third Session.²⁶ The synthesis arrived at involved a double tension that was summed up in the following manner:

On the one hand, Christians need not accept the world as it is. On the contrary they should build it up in the light of the principles of their faith, for example, in accordance with the command to fill the earth and subdue it (K. Rahner). On the other hand, it is not necessary to reduce the role of humanity to that of a laybrother in a monastery (Congar). A type of presence of the Church in the world must be achieved which is not one of power and domination but of service.²⁷

Third, in spite of this early position, the usages of the terms Church and world would emerge as problematic, as present-day scholars on inculturation point out.²⁸ Fourth, in a significant intervention at the Third Session, Cardinal Lercaro stated that the discussions on culture

²⁴ Charles Moeller, "Pastoral Constitution in the Modern World: History of the Constitution," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 5, ed., Herbert Vorgrimler (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), 10-11.

²⁵ Ibid., 16.

²⁶ Ibid., 21 and 35. The phrase "signs of the times" which first appears in *Pacem in Terris* is used in this draft. That a Subcommittee for the Signs of the Times was created at the Third Session shows how seriously the formulation of the state of the world was taken.

²⁷ Ibid., 22.

²⁸ Schreiter, "Faith and Cultures," 746-760.

ought to form the core of the entire schema. He said that “culture is a ‘fundamental medium’ a ‘form’ involved in . . . the content expressed in words, symbol, ritual, or any other means.”²⁹ Fifth, at the Fourth Session the difficulty of “speak(ing) of faith as applied to the problems of actual life”³⁰ emerged, with some going so far as to question the whole idea and possibility of being pastoral on a worldwide scale. Overall, those involved in the preparation of this text felt this was one of the most difficult and most significant documents of the Council, indicated by their struggle to deal with formulating balanced statements pertaining to modern culture.³¹ These points of criticism probably tell us more about the Council’s real difficulties in engaging culture and the program of adaptation than the final texts do. Nevertheless, the document depicts the Church approaching “the modern world” in a spirit of dialogue and openness. This lay the groundwork for the attention given to culture and adaptation throughout the text.

Two articles from the first half of the text echo *Lumen Gentium* in asserting the following: that the Church is universal, thereby “not committed to any one culture” (GS 42); but also the Church “profits from the experience of past ages, from the progress of the sciences, and from the riches hidden in various cultures (GS 44). Then in a key paragraph,

²⁹ Moeller, 43.

³⁰ Ibid., 60.

³¹ See for example, Joseph A. Komonchak, “The Redaction and Reception of *Gaudium et Spes*,” photocopy, author’s unpublished translation of original article, “La redazione della *Gaudium et Spes*,” *Il Regno* 44 (1 July 1999): 446-55. According to Komonchak, Chenu gave the document much praise for its “Christian anthropology which relates grace to a knowledge of human nature that goes beyond the psychological to include the social and the historical,” whereas Rahner criticized its lack of “a sufficient theological gnoseology that would explain how it arrived at its analysis of contemporary culture, a profound theology of sin, and of eschatology.” Ratzinger pointed out two main concerns, those of a “dubious use of the term ‘People of God’ and a Teilhardian tendency of identifying Christian hope with modern confidence in progress.” Dossetti, spoke strongly against the document by calling them a bunch of common-sense assertions marked by “insipid optimism and lacking real universalism.” Ibid.

the document states that the human person achieves “true and full humanity only by means of culture,” and that culture refers to “all those things which go to the refining and developing of man’s diverse mental and physical endowments” (GS 53). The text is significant for a second reason, that is, for explicitly acknowledging cultural pluralism in a Conciliar document. Moeller thinks these points deserve merit for going beyond “a purely aristocratic conception of culture, by clearly rejecting the idea of ‘uncivilized’ nations,”³² as Lonergan similarly observed.

The notion that culture is a human product appears shortly after the foregoing texts, and is followed by statements that stress the positive ends to which culture must be aimed and used (GS 55-59). This is also a significant development that brings to light the Church’s responsibility toward developing culture. Thus the Church does not merely “adapt” itself, its teachings, and liturgy to culture but actively shapes it.

Summary of Themes from Vatican II: Implications for Inculturation

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that the transition toward a more positive view of culture, and the acceptance of the need to engage culture more closely was difficult and fraught with ambiguities. In SC, the discussions on “changeable” vs. “unchangeable” elements of liturgy, and whether “radical adaptation” allowed for the creation of new rites reveal the deeper issues of how much variety is permissible in the Church’s liturgical practice, and who has final authority to settle these matters. In LG, there is a strong statement on the Church’s acceptance of the world’s cultural riches “insofar as they are

³² Moeller, 256.

good,” which again raises the question of how the acceptability of cultural traits is determined and who does the deciding. The clearest articulation of this matter of authority lay in the issues pertaining to episcopal collegiality and papal primacy. AG repeatedly acknowledges the need of all Christians to become familiar with their own cultural riches and discern in them “seeds of the Word,” but leaves open the question of how to do the discerning, and whether and to what extent these cultural riches can transform Christianity. Finally, in the drafting of GS, difficulties in defining culture and of describing one’s “context” came to the fore, as well as the insufficiency of the poles “church” and “world,” and the challenge of speaking of faith as applied to problems of actual life. In the document’s final text and in its criticisms, one sees clearly the mix of optimism and pessimism toward the modern world, as well as an optimistic belief in the Church’s ability to transform cultures.

Hence, tensions marking our understanding of inculturation can already be found in the Council documents. First, the principle of cultural pluralism, i.e., that Christianity is not bound to any particular culture, comes as a counter-balance to the fact that Christianity is always in some cultural and historical form. Second, culture is a human product, open to change and deliberate transformation yet it is also always already graced. Third, the Council’s focus on adaptation emphasizes active intervention on the part of the Church, whereas later definitions of inculturation remind readers of the complexity of cultural change. Fourth, authority over inculturation initiatives lies supremely with the Pope, but also “supremely” with the bishops of respective dioceses.

As the programme of inculturation took the place of adaptation in the 1970s, these tensions became more obvious and came under closer scrutiny. The following history shows that the ambiguities encountered at the Council and the eventual adoption of the term inculturation resulted in varying emphases in subsequent church documents and academic literature.

“Inculturation” as a Theological Term and Its Critique

The term’s entrance into official Church parlance has been documented by many scholars.³³ Enculturation, the anthropological term from which the theological term inculturation was derived, refers to “the process by which an individual becomes part of his culture.”³⁴ At first, the terms *enculturation* and *inculturation* were used interchangeably by cultural anthropologists, but when they crossed over to the field of missiology, presumably through the work of the Jesuits Pierre Charles in 1953,³⁵ and Joseph Masson in 1962,³⁶ the

³³ Ary A. Roest Crolius, “What is so new about inculturation?: A Concept and Its Implications,” *Gregorianum* 59 (1978): 721-38; Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1988); Peter Schineller, *A Handbook on Inculturation* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1990); Louis J. Luzbetak, “Mission Models,” Chap. 3 in *The Church and Cultures: New Perspectives in Missiological Anthropology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998), 64-105.

³⁴ Crolius, 724-25. The term enculturation was coined by M.J. Herskovits in *Man and his Works* (New York: 1952), 39. More recent anthropological research defines the term more specifically, as “the process by which children are socialized to the standard modes of thinking, feeling, and behaving considered appropriate for an adult in a given society.” See *Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, ed. H. James Birx (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2006), s.v. “Enculturation” by Luci Fernandes. Another term, socialization, is used interchangeably with enculturation and is defined as “the process of learning to pattern behavior and adapt to society’s norms, rules, and strictures for playing specific social roles.” See *Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, s.v. “Socialization” by Barbara West. While interconnected, the two are nevertheless distinguished by their differing foci—learning to participate in society (socialization), and gaining competence in the ideational realm of culture (enculturation), cf. Fitz John Porter Poole, “Socialization, Enculturation, and the Development of Personal Identity,” in *Companion Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, ed. Tim Ingold (London/New York: Routledge, 1997).

³⁵ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991), 447.

form inculturation was used. It is no surprise then that the 32nd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus held from December 1974 to April 1975 would use this term, aside from the fact that in Latin, only the form *inculturatio* is possible.³⁷ Jesuit Father General Pedro Arrupe's definition is as follows:

the incarnation of Christian life and of the Christian message in a particular cultural context, in such a way that this experience not only finds expression through elements proper to the culture in question (this alone would be no more than a superficial adaptation) but becomes a principle that animates, directs, and unifies the culture, transforming it and remaking it so as to bring about a 'new creation.'³⁸

However, as early as 1970, the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) spoke of "inculturation of the life and message of the Gospel in Asia."³⁹ Then, in their final message at the first Plenary Assembly in Taiwan (1974), they gave local churches the imperative to be "a church incarnate in a people, a church indigenous and inculturated."⁴⁰ On the tenth anniversary of *Ad Gentes*' promulgation, Paul VI also expressed the idea of inculturation, without calling it such in the following paragraph:

... what matters is to evangelize man's culture and cultures (not in a purely decorative way as it were by applying a thin veneer, but in a vital way, in depth and right to their very roots), in the wide and rich sense which these terms have in

³⁶ Masson was a professor at the Gregorian University in Rome. In 1962, he wrote, "Today there is a more urgent need for a Catholicism that is inculturated in a variety of forms." Shorter, 10.

³⁶ Scherer and Bevans, *New Directions in Mission*, 2.

³⁷ Crollius, 725.

³⁸ Pedro Arrupe, "Letter to the Whole Society on Inculturation," *International Apostolate of Jesuits*, 2; quoted in S. Iniobong Udoidem, *Pope John Paul II on Inculturation: Theory and Practice* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1996).

³⁹ Asian Bishops' Meeting, "Message and Resolutions (Manila, 29 November 1970)," par. 24; in *For all the Peoples of Asia, The Church in Asia: Asian Bishops' Statements on Mission, Community, and Ministry 1970-1983*, vol. 1, *Texts and Documents*, eds. Catalino G. Arevalo, Teresita Feliciano, Teresita Giron (Manila: IMC Publications, 1984), 11-23.

⁴⁰ FABC, "Evangelization in Modern Day Asia: Statement and Recommendations of the First Plenary Assembly of the FABC (Taipei, 27 April 1974)," par. 12, in *For all the Peoples of Asia (1970-1983)* vol. 1, 25-47.

Gaudium et Spes, always taking the person as one's starting point and always coming back to the relationships of people among themselves and with God (EN 20).

Rather, Paul VI calls this task “cultural and anthropological adaptation,” which involves “assimilating the essence of the Gospel message and of transposing it, without the slightest betrayal of its essential truth, into the language that these particular people understand, then of proclaiming it in this language” (EN 63).

In spite of these emphases, critics of EN still think that Paul VI, “though echoing the Synod’s debates, falls short of solving them.”⁴¹ In contrast to the participants’ emphasis on cultural diversity and its influence on evangelization efforts, the apostolic exhortation allegedly shows a preference for “epistemological categories” such as the “‘unchangeable deposit of faith,’ (EN 65) whose ‘essential contents’ (EN 25, 63) are fully preserved in their ‘untouchable purity’ (EN 3) by the Roman Catholic magisterium alone (EN 54).”⁴² These critics question whether such language allows for “any substantial feedback from the context, upon the idiom and institutions of Roman Catholic Christianity.”⁴³ The Synod and its document thus brings to light the continuation of the desire and the challenges encountered in relating the “church” and “faith” on the one hand, with “cultures” and “world.”

In 1977, Arrupe is said to have introduced the term to the Synod on catechesis in Rome, while another source attributes the mention of the term at the same Synod to Cardinal Sin of Manila.⁴⁴ Crollius also mentions that a contrary story is told by Congar, who states

⁴¹ Michael Singleton and Henri Maurier, “The Establishment’s Efforts to Solve the Evangelical Energy Crisis: The Fourth Roman Synod and *Evangelii Nuntiandi*,” in *Concilium*, vol. 114, eds. Norbert Greinacher and Alois Müller (New York: Seabury Press, 1979): 113.

⁴² Ibid., 118.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Peter Schineller, S.J., *A Handbook on Inculturation* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1990), 21.

that the term was coined in Japan as a variant of the term acculturation, or cultural exchange.⁴⁵ These refer to “contact between two or more cultures and the cultural changes resulting from it.”⁴⁶ Another account of the term’s origin is that of Chupungco, who says the word was coined in 1973 by G.L. Barney, a Protestant missionary.⁴⁷

Given its ambiguous origin, one can surmise that inculturation as a theological term was created by way of a two-fold analogy. First, just as individuals are inserted into their own cultures at birth, so does the Church undergo a process by which it becomes part of the culture of a people.⁴⁸ The second parallel is drawn with the incarnation. Just as the Word of God became flesh for us, so does the Gospel get expressed in a particular language and form.⁴⁹ These two analogies are clearly limited, for the Church, unlike a newborn infant, always already comes in a cultural form; and likewise, the Gospel, unlike the Word of God before the incarnation, comes to new cultures already expressed in the language and culture of its bearers.

⁴⁵ Crollius, 722. In more recent anthropological sources, acculturation is treated as a more specific category within the broader idea of “cultural change.” Acculturation studies investigate “the impact of dominant (colonial) societies on native cultures under conditions of sustained, first-hand contact.” *Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1996), s.v. “culture change” by Philip K. Bock. In another reference work, contrast is drawn between cultural diffusion, the adoption of various cultural traits, tools, beliefs, etc. and acculturation, whereby “the culture of more highly developed nation is ‘imposed’ upon the less developed peoples and cultures...this acquisition of foreign culture by the subject people is called acculturation and is manifested by the indigenous populations of Latin America as well as other regions.” *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th edition, s.v. “culture.”

⁴⁶ Anthony, 42.

⁴⁷ Anscar J. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacramentals, Religiosity and Catechesis*, (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 25.

⁴⁸ Crollius, 725.

⁴⁹ Mariusai Dhavamony, *A Christian Theology of Inculturation* (Rome: Pontificia Editrice Vaticana, 1988), 95. Here he says, “the incarnation of the Word of God is the archetype of the inculturation of the Gospel.” *Ibid.*

In light of these limitations, many have posed the critique that the language of inculturation has tended to overemphasize the Gospel as supracultural, and the process of inculturation as starting “from above.”⁵⁰ Paul VI’s teaching in EN expresses this idea:

The gospel and, therefore, evangelization cannot be put in the same category with any culture. They are above all cultures. Nevertheless, the kingdom of God which is proclaimed by the gospel is put into practice by men who are imbued with their own particular culture, and in the building up of the kingdom it is inevitable that some elements of these human cultures must be introduced. The gospel and evangelization are not specially related to any culture but they are not necessarily incompatible with them. On the contrary, they can penetrate any culture while being subservient to none (EN 20).

As a corrective, various critics insist on focusing on the element of acculturation also implied by the inculturation process. This term highlights the fact that the Church and the Gospel are already always in some cultural form when they encounter a new culture. However, since “ecclesial faith cannot be identified with Western culture or for that matter with any particular culture,”⁵¹ the term acculturation fell into disuse soon after the Synod of 1974. Another term, “intercultural,”⁵² was developed to highlight the irreplaceable role of local churches and their need to act as partners in the process of inculturation. The effect of the ongoing discussion on these matters was to enlarge the meaning of inculturation, and highlight its complexity.

Succeeding papal documents reflected the growing emphasis and development of the Church’s understanding of inculturation. At the 1977 Synod, the relationship between faith

⁵⁰ Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, revised and expanded ed., 4th printing (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002), 43, 50.

⁵¹ Anthony, 42.

⁵² The term was first used by Bishop J. Blomjous, “Development in Mission Thinking and Practice 1959-1980: Inculturation and Intercultural,” *African Ecclesial Review* 22 (1980) 393; quoted in Anthony, 46.

and culture received much attention from the participants.⁵³ John Paul II's *Catechesi Tradendae* (1979), reflects this concern and marks the term's first appearance in a papal document. This apostolic exhortation speaks of evangelization and catechesis in terms of "bringing the power of the Gospel into the very heart of culture and cultures" (CT 53), along the same lines as the teaching of Paul VI. The following quote shows that John Paul II outlines in greater detail and with better nuance the following tasks that catechesis must undertake following in this direction:

For this purpose, catechesis will seek to know these cultures and their essential components; it will learn their most significant expressions; it will respect their particular values and riches. In this manner it will be able to offer these cultures the knowledge of the hidden mystery and help them to bring forth from their own living tradition original expressions of Christian life, celebration and thought. Two things, however, must be kept in mind.

On the one hand, the Gospel message cannot be purely and simply isolated from the culture in which it was first inserted (the Biblical world, or more concretely, the cultural milieu in which Jesus of Nazareth lived), nor without serious loss, from the cultures in which it has already been expressed down the centuries; it does not spring spontaneously from any cultural soil; it has always been transmitted by means of an apostolic dialogue which inevitably becomes part of a certain dialogue of cultures.

On the other hand, the power of the Gospel everywhere transforms and regenerates. When that power enters into a culture, it is no surprise that it rectifies many of its elements. There would be no catechesis if it were the Gospel that had to change when it came into contact with the cultures . . .

It is a different matter to take, with wise discernment, certain elements, religious or otherwise, that form part of the cultural heritage of a human group and use them to

⁵³ Cardinal Sin of Manila said, "inculturation must be considered as the fundamental postulate of every catechesis" both for biblical reasons (this is how God operated in the Old Testament) and because faith itself is always professed "socially, namely the influence of the culture must be considered primordial in the very form in which the faith is born, develops, is exercised." Another participant quoted at length is Bishop Joseph Ek Thabping of Ratchaburi, Thailand. "Once such pluralism is admitted, catechisms must also be adapted to the demands of various cultures in the manner and the fullness of explaining some truths, always saving the substantial integrity of the whole. In this way, there will be a difference not only in method and variety of expressions, but also in the content of catechesis.," quoted in Francis E. George, *Inculturation and Ecclesial Communion: Culture and Church in the Teaching of Pope John Paul II* (Rome: Urbaniana University Press, 1990), 62-63.

help its members to understand better the whole of the Christian mystery. Genuine catechists know that catechesis ‘takes flesh’ in the various cultures and milieux: . . . But they refuse to accept an impoverishment of catechesis through a renunciation or obscuring of its message, by adaptations, even in language, that would endanger the “precious deposit” of the faith or by concessions in matters of faith or morals. They are convinced that true catechesis eventually enriches these cultures by helping them to go beyond the defective or even inhuman features in them, and by communicating to their legitimate values the fullness of Christ (CT 53).

Three aspects are worth noting from this quote: first, the acknowledgment of Christianity as a historical religion and the non-existence of a pure, disembodied Gospel; second, the emphasis on the transformative power of the Gospel as it enters a culture; and third, a warning against an uncritical use of cultural elements that would endanger the deposit of faith.⁵⁴

John Paul II’s subsequent pronouncements contain further mentions of inculturation. *Slavorum Apostoli* (1985),⁵⁵ his encyclical marking the eleventh centenary of evangelization of the Slavic people by Saints Cyril and Methodius, applauds the two brothers’ example and calls them models of inculturation:

The work of evangelization which they carried out—as pioneers in territory inhabited by Slav peoples—contains both a model of what today is called “inculturation”—the incarnation of the Gospel in native cultures—and also the introduction of these cultures into the life of the Church (SA 21).

He praises their vision of catholicity and communion that is “neither absorption nor fusion” (SA 25); one that involves a “generous exchange of cultural and spiritual sources” (SA 26).

Furthermore, John Paul II once again shows the connection between inculturation and catechesis in the following:

⁵⁴ For more on CT and inculturation, see George, “Inculturation and Ecclesial Communion,” 61-69.

⁵⁵ John Paul II, “*Slavorum Apostoli* An Encyclical Letter in Commemoration of the Eleventh Centenary of the Evangelizing Work of Saints Cyril and Methodius,” in *The Encyclicals of John Paul II*, ed. J. Michael Miller (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1996), 228-53. Hereafter cited as SA. Also see the “Editor’s Introduction” for helpful commentary, 215-26.

In order to translate the truths of the Gospel into a new language, they had to make an effort to gain a good grasp of the interior world of those to whom they intended to proclaim the word of God in images and concepts that would sound familiar to them. They realized that an essential condition of the success of their missionary activity was to transpose correctly biblical notions and Greek theological concepts into a very different context of thought and historical experience. It was a question of a new method of catechesis (SA 11).

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of *Ad Gentes*, John Paul II promulgated *Redemptoris Missio* (1990).⁵⁶ In this encyclical, inculturation's definition is taken from the 1985 Extraordinary Synod's Final Report "the intimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration in Christianity and the insertion of Christianity in the various human cultures"⁵⁷ (RM 52). The process involves the following:

Through inculturation the Church makes the Gospel incarnate in different cultures and at the same time introduces peoples, together with their cultures, into her own community (CT 53; SA 21). She transmits to them her own values, at the same time taking the good elements that already exist in them and renewing them from within (EN 20). Through inculturation, the Church, for her part, becomes a more intelligible sign of what she is, and a more effective instrument of mission (RM 52).

Two principles are proposed as general criteria for inculturation: first, "compatibility with the gospel; and second, 'communion with the universal Church'" (RM 54). In addition to definition and criteria, the Pope calls on the Bishops to "take care to ensure fidelity and, in particular, to provide discernment, for which a deeply balanced approach is required" (RM 54). Again, the pope cautions against an overestimation of culture, since it too is in need of redemption.

⁵⁶ John Paul II, "*Redemptoris Missio* An Encyclical Letter on the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate," in *Redemption and Dialogue: Reading Redemptoris Missio and Dialogue and Proclamation*, ed. William R. Burrows (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993), 3-55. Hereafter cited as RM with paragraph number.

⁵⁷ Extraordinary Synod of 1985, *Final Report*, II, D, 4.

A significant addition to the ongoing development of papal teaching on inculturation is the insistence on collaboration and the notion of “translation” found in RM 53:

To this end, especially in the more delicate areas of inculturation, particular churches of the same region should work in communion with each other and with the whole Church, convinced that only through attention both to the universal Church and to the particular churches will they be capable of translating the treasure of faith into a legitimate variety of expressions. Groups which have been evangelized will thus provide the elements for a "translation" of the gospel message keeping in mind the positive elements acquired down the centuries from Christianity's contact with different cultures and not forgetting the dangers of alterations which have sometimes occurred.

In spite of all the attempts in the documents to assert and nuance the idea that the Gospel is on the one hand, not bound to any particular culture and yet on the other hand, is embedded in culture, Bevens still thinks that the idea of translation found in papal documents propagates the “kernel-husk” paradigm that he finds so problematic.⁵⁸ He says that Pope John Paul II’s emphases assume that the concepts and values of Christianity has “equivalents” in various cultures, even when the general translatability of cultures is in question.

Furthermore, while it is widely acknowledged that John Paul II placed the dialogue with cultures at the forefront of his papacy, Shorter generally finds a note of skepticism in John Paul II’s attitude by “insisting on the dangers, rather than on the advantages of inculturation.”⁵⁹ Citing his letter on the creation of the Pontifical Council for Culture in 1982, Shorter adds that John Paul II tended to “view diversity and local autonomy as signs of weakness,”⁶⁰ and that he “appreciates the synthesis in the historic cultures of Christian

⁵⁸ Bevens, 41-42.

⁵⁹ Shorter, 225.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 227.

Europe, and fears for their future, while at the same time hesitating to risk the deposit of faith in a dialogue with the cultures of the non-Christian Third World.”⁶¹ Other scholars share Shorter’s views. Magesa, for example, says that “Church leaders’ tight grip on the process has taught ordinary Christians to mistrust their own views on the matter.”⁶²

To sum up, the Council’s and the papal documents’ teachings on inculturation are wholly consistent. Vatican II’s acceptance of cultural diversity set the agenda for subsequent articulations of the Church’s understanding of the relationships between faith and culture, and the limits for acceptable pluralism. *Lumen Gentium* states that cultural elements are to be adopted by the Church, “in so far as they are good,” whereas *Redemptoris Missio* requires “compatibility with the Gospel and communion with the Church.” *Catechesi Tradendae* and *Slavorum Apostoli* both clearly affirm the unity-yet-distinction between faith and culture, warn against uncritical adoption of cultural elements, and assert the transformative power of the Gospel and authentic catechesis and evangelization. Both also give nodding reference to the overlapping processes of inculturation and catechesis.

While modest, the progress achieved during the intervening decades is undeniable. Just the same, the discussions on the complex reality of inculturation are far from over.⁶³ Some obstacles to inculturation are the following: (1) a lack of methodologies and tools; (2) reluctance of church officials to permit legitimate experiments in inculturation; (3) the

⁶¹ Ibid., 225-31.

⁶² Laurenti Magesa, *Anatomy of Inculturation: Transforming the Church in Africa* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004), 36.

⁶³ Robert J. Schreiter, “Inculturation of the Faith or Identification with Culture?,” in *New Directions in Mission and Evangelization*, vol. 3, 70. Schreiter states that the major difficulty in inculturation is that we still do not know much of the process as of yet. In addition, other difficulties lie in the fact that different models of inculturation produce different results, and second, there is no consensus on definitions of either faith or culture.

association, even identification of cultural embeddedness with contingency; and (4) the general issue of how to conceptually deal with pluralism;⁶⁴ specifically, the equation of pluralism with relativism.⁶⁵ Further difficulties are posed by the obvious inconsistencies in terminology; for example, which “poles” are being inter-related—the gospel, faith, or the Church on the one hand; and culture, or cultures on the other hand.

The foregoing section provides a sketch of the state of the inculturation issue when the proposal to create a “catechism or compendium” for the universal Church was broached at the 1985 Extraordinary Synod, and as the work on this project continued. Naturally, the idea of a composing a single catechetical text for the whole Church throughout the world elicited strong reactions amidst the conversations around diversity and the new buzzword, inculturation. The following section provides a snapshot of the discussions on the proposed text, and on what the project meant for ongoing inculturation efforts.

Inculturation, the Extraordinary Synod of 1985, and the *Catechism for the Universal Church*

The Extraordinary Synod of 1985 was called by John Paul II to mark the twentieth anniversary of the close of the Second Vatican Council, and to take stock of the Council’s implementation. Two documents were issued by the Synod, “Message to the People of God,” and “The Final Report,” both of which contain the emphases brought forth by the

⁶⁴ Ibid., 757.

⁶⁵ Dermot Lane, “The Challenge of Inculturation,” *Living Light* 29 (winter 1992): 16-17. Lane responds by stating, “Pluralism does not necessarily mean relativism. A pluralism that is engaged in dialogue and correlation with faith is far from relativistic; it is a pluralism seeking a center of unity.” Ibid., 17.

participants.⁶⁶ It was in this context that the idea of a “catechism or compendium” was broached. In the words of the Final Report, the proposal states,

There is almost a unanimous desire that a catechism or compendium of all Catholic doctrine be drawn up, both as regards faith and morals, in order to act as a point of reference for catechisms or compendiums prepared in different countries. The presentation of doctrine must be biblical and liturgical, offering sound doctrine and at the same time one that is adapted to the actual life of Christians.⁶⁷

Reactions to the overall thrusts of the Final Report have been documented elsewhere,⁶⁸ and responses to the specific proposal for the “catechism or compendium” mirror this mix of hesitation and of the need for further clarification.⁶⁹ Several fears were articulated; first, that of “freezing the Conciliar decrees . . . into a quasi-definitive formulation, (and) . . . cut(ting) short the researches undertaken”⁷⁰ A second concern pertained to the catechism or compendium’s future use—would it serve as a tool for imposing uniformity and closing discussion on issues still open for deliberation?⁷¹ Third, others cautioned against propagating

⁶⁶ Joseph A. Komonchak, “The Theological Debate,” in *Synod 1985—An Evaluation*, *Concilium* 188, eds. Giuseppe Alberigo and James Provost, English ed., Marcus Lefebure, (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1986), 53-63.

⁶⁷ The Final Report, quoted in Joseph Ratzinger, “Progress Report on the Universal Catechism,” *Living Light* 27 (winter 1991): 131-38.

⁶⁸ Jean-Marie Tillard, “Final Report of the Last Synod,” 64-77; Aloisio Lorscheider, “The Extraordinary Synod in the Light of Vatican II Twenty Years Later,” 78-82; and Joseph Komonchak, “The Theological Debate,” 53-63; all in *Synod 1985—An Evaluation*. ”

⁶⁹ Thomas J. Reese, “Bibliographical Survey on the Catechism for the Universal Church,” *Living Light* 27 (winter 1991): 151-157.

⁷⁰ Elias Zoghby, “The Universal Catechism: A Cultural and Pastoral Viewpoint,” in *Synod 1985—An Evaluation*, 87.

⁷¹ Emilio Alberich, “Is the Universal Catechism an Obstacle or a Catalyst in the Process of Inculturation?” in *World Catechism or Inculturation?* *Concilium* 204, eds. Johann-Baptist Metz and Edward Schillebeeckx, English ed. Philip Hyer (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1989), 95-96. Alberich sums up his concerns in the following quote: “History and experience teach us that we cannot forget the ever present risk of catechisms becoming real and, to greater or lesser degree, deliberate instruments of standardization and of an imposed uniformity; there is always the danger that individual theological positions are imposed as part of the essence of the faith or that matters which are essentially still open to further questioning and deeper understanding are deliberately presented as otherwise. Many catechisms still carry that hidden element which

Eurocentrism hidden in the concept of “world”, since the term used to describe the project early on, especially among the German speakers, was “world catechism.”⁷² A further dimension of the questions on the catechism’s target audience—whether “world” or “universal Church”—was whether real polycentrism existed in the Church.⁷³ Fourth, the strong reactions prompted the question of whether the proposal was in fact, consistent with the teachings of Vatican II.⁷⁴

Alongside these more general concerns, the Final Report’s description of the proposed catechism/compendium was subjected to further specification and discussion. First, German theologian Vorgrimler identifies the central problem underlying the envisioned project, the “seductive idea” of a “fixed, unchangeable ‘deposit’ of teaching of faith and morals which ‘in itself’ has never been affected by history and may not be affected by transmission in the processes of inculturation.”⁷⁵ Then he lays out the four principles for the proposed text’s development—biblically based, liturgically oriented, containing correct

consists of the undeclared conviction that what is crucial in education in the faith is the exact transmission of contents which have been very clearly defined.” Ibid.

⁷² David Tracy, “World Church or World Catechism: The Problem of Eurocentrism,” and Jean Joncheray, “What ‘Catechism’ for What ‘World’?,” in *World Catechism or Inculturation?*, 28-37 and 18-27, respectively.

⁷³ Johann-Baptist Metz, “Unity and Diversity: Problems and Prospects for Inculturation,” in *World Catechism or Inculturation?*, 79-87. Given that the Church cannot step out of its European “garb,” Metz argues that, “First, it (the Church) must see itself as, and prove itself in terms of its biblical inheritance, to be a religion committed by its mission to seeking freedom and justice for all. Second, it must see itself as, and prove itself to be, a religion which derives from its biblical inheritance a particular culture, a culture based on the acknowledgment of the other in their otherness, in other words on the creative acknowledgment of ethnic and cultural plurality, such as ought to be familiar to us from the primitive history of Christianity.” Ibid., 82.

⁷⁴ Berard Marthaler, “The Synod and the Catechism,” in *Synod 1985—An Evaluation*, 97. Marthaler argues that for as long as the proposed catechism or compendium upholds adult catechesis as normative, and allows for inculturation, it would be in line with thrusts of the GCD.

⁷⁵ Herbert Vorgrimler, “The Adventure of a New ‘World Catechism’,” in *Religion in the Eighties Concilium* 192 (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1987), 104.

doctrine, adapted to the modern outlook on life—and offers a critique and preliminary exploration on the implementation of each one.⁷⁶

Second, the importance of having clearly focused guidelines and of determining the text's audience is emphasized by Joncheray, another contributor to this *Concilium* issue.⁷⁷ Here, he states, “where a work of this kind is concerned, the people for whom it is intended, the degree to which it is supposed to be normative, the purpose for which it is meant, are not secondary, accidental characteristics, but are an integral part of its very definition and affect its meaning.”⁷⁸ A third set of recommendations were specifically on how a “world catechism,” can be turned into a tool for inculturation, i.e., containing guidelines and providing the impetus for inculturation.⁷⁹

These early responses to the Synod's proposal indicate the struggle with understanding unity and diversity in the specific area of catechesis. The foremost issue is the need to distinguish between, but not separate, the faith from its expression. Many have cautioned against the pitfall of reducing faith to “abstract essence,”⁸⁰ or of assuming that the Gospel is in a “pure state or ahistorical pristine condition,”⁸¹ or a “substance” whose “accidens” can be changed without affecting it. Given that faith and culture are distinct, not separate, we still need to ask how “changeable” our formulations of doctrine are. A

⁷⁶ Ibid., 103-109. The difference in English translation is noted: Vorgrimler's “adapted to the modern outlook on life of the faithful” and Ratzinger's “adapted to the actual life of Christians.” The latter translation was more prevalent in the works consulted for this study.

⁷⁷ Jean Joncheray, “What ‘Catechism’ for what ‘world’?,” in *World Catechism or Inculturation*, 18-29.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 18.

⁷⁹ Alberich, “Is the Universal Catechism an Obstacle or Catalyst?,” 96.

⁸⁰ George, *Inculturation and Ecclesial Communion*, 221.

⁸¹ Lane, 9.

secondary, but no less important question, is the envisioned use for this text and the implicit, sometimes explicit fear that it would be a tool for imposing uniformity.

The practical responses to these questions were formulated as implementation of the universal catechism project was carried out.⁸² In November 1989, four years after the Extraordinary Synod, a draft of the *Catechism for the Universal Church* was distributed to all the bishops of the Catholic Church. The reactions to this draft brought into question the adequacy of the text from an astounding variety of viewpoints.⁸³ In a nutshell, these discussions exposed first, the great variation in people's expectations for this text—its title, aim, content, sources, specific structure and method; and second, the ways in which these expectations did or did not match the options taken by the commissions working on the document.⁸⁴

The draft's future use as a source and reference point for the creation of local catechisms was picked up in a few published reviews. First, Marthaler argues that this use grounds the need for articulating guiding principles specifically addressed to those doing the necessary adaptations.⁸⁵ Second, he adds that the inclusion of an introduction—"sketch(ing) some characteristics of the present situation by pointing out the spiritual repercussions they have"—would help prevent the criticism that the draft contains "an abstract presentation of

⁸² On 10 July 1986, John Paul II formed a commission for the preparation of the *Catechism for the Universal Church* under the leadership of the CDF. Various other groups collaborated with this commission. See Ratzinger, "Progress Report," 131-32.

⁸³ For a sampling of these reactions, see Reese, "Bibliographical Survey" and Thomas J. Reese, *The Universal Catechism Reader: Reflections and Responses* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1990).

⁸⁴ Reese, "Bibliographical Survey," 157. "It is clear from this review of literature, however, that the overwhelming response of the scholarly community has been negative. Both the Woodstock scholars and the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars point to serious difficulties with the draft." Ibid. Also see Reese's summary of criticisms in his introduction to *The Universal Catechism Reader*, 8-11.

⁸⁵ Marthaler, "The Catechism Seen As a Whole," in *The Universal Catechism Reader*, 29.

Catholic doctrine.”⁸⁶ This aspect of the draft catechism was picked up by another reviewer from the Philippines, Joseph L. Roche, who at the time was working on the national catechism for the Philippines. According to Roche, the *Catechism for the Universal Church* was too self-enclosed. He goes further than Marthaler’s critique in observing that the text:

manifest(s) very little direct relationship to anything that has gone on in the world during the past few decades. This holds for both the religious and academic world of Scripture studies, fundamental theology, systematic theology, liturgical renewal, moral theology, catechesis/religious education, and the like, as well as the secular world of history, behavioral and social sciences, contemporary atheism and the climate of secularistic materialism.⁸⁷

Roche’s main suggestion to address this problem was to focus the draft more sharply on “how to live the Christian life today.”⁸⁸ In his view, this was the most direct way in which the universal catechism could address its broad audience and modify its orientation from one more heavily focused on doctrinal presentation to that of Christian practice.

According to Cardinal Ratzinger, head of the commission tasked with the universal catechism project, the worldwide consultation on this draft nevertheless confirmed the validity of the project, and showed the bishops’ “wide acceptance” of the draft as basis for the final work.⁸⁹ While the suggestions on adding guidelines on necessary adaptations, the inclusion of a “context” section, and on focusing on Christian living/practice did not make it to the final text, the CCC is clear in its support for the production of local catechisms and of inculturation in general.

⁸⁶ Ibid., quoting GCD Part 1’s purpose.

⁸⁷ Joseph L. Roche, “Catechisms for the Post-Vatican II Church: Situating the *Catechism for the Universal Church* and its Critiques,” *Landas* 4 (1990): 231-32.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ratzinger, “Progress Report,” 134. His full statement was, “The revised draft has been widely accepted by the bishops as a possible basis for the elaboration of the definitive text. Nevertheless, it is admittedly clear that much remains to be done in order to achieve the final product.” Ibid.

The CCC on Culture and Inculturation

In the Apostolic Letter *Fidei Depositum* published as part of the introductory material of the CCC, John Paul II states the intent of the CCC vis-à-vis local catechisms:

This catechism is not intended to replace the local catechisms duly approved by the ecclesiastical authorities, the diocesan Bishops and the Episcopal Conferences, especially if they have been approved by the Apostolic See. It is meant to encourage and assist in the writing of new local catechisms, which take into account various situations and cultures, while carefully preserving the unity of faith and fidelity to Catholic doctrine.⁹⁰

Moreover, the CCC's Prologue repeats this idea,

By design, this Catechism does not set out to provide the adaptation of doctrinal presentations and catechetical methods required by the differences of culture, age, spiritual maturity, and social and ecclesial condition among all those to whom it is addressed. Such indispensable adaptations are the responsibility of particular catechisms and, even more, of those who instruct the faithful . . . (CCC 24).

The CCC's statement that it would not provide the "necessary adaptations" means that it leaves the matter of inculturation to local churches and their catechisms. What it does provide is "encouragement and assistance," a "sure point of reference" for those doing the adaptations. These statements raise the following related questions: first, how will the CCC "encourage and assist" those tasked with the creation of local/particular catechisms? Second, from the point of view of local authors of catechisms, how far can their works diverge from the CCC? In other words, what are the limits of theological pluralism in a national catechism?

With regard to the first question, the CCC "encourages and assists" those tasked with inculturating catechesis, first, by providing an "organic synthesis of the essential and

⁹⁰ John Paul II, "Apostolic Constitution *Fidei Depositum*, On the Publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* Prepared following the Second Vatican Council," http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_19921011_fidei-depositum_en.html (accessed 29 September 2009).

fundamental contents of Catholic doctrine, as regards both faith and morals, in the light of the Second Vatican Council and the whole of the Church's Tradition" (CCC 11) and by "presenting what is fundamental and common to the whole Church" (CCC 1075). Second, the CCC supports inculturation efforts by recognizing the importance of taking culture and cultural elements into account in catechizing. In many paragraphs—on scripture interpretation, liturgy and sacraments, liturgical catechesis, and moral teachings—the CCC makes this very point.⁹¹ Third, though a minor point, the CCC explicitly uses the term inculturation in reference to missionary work, in a quote from John Paul II's *Redemptoris Missio*.⁹² And if any doubt remains as to the CCC's awareness of its function and limits with regard to inculturation, the *Informative Dossier* published by editorial commission states the following:

. . . it cannot embody all the distinctive and specific aspects of the multiform local churches. It cannot express the unique characteristics of the different cultures around the world or the particular characteristics proper to every person's developmental level. Hence, it requires the indispensable mediation of national and diocesan catechisms and other catechetical materials.

⁹¹ Here is a sampling of paragraphs including "culture": Scripture interpretation must take culture into account (CCC 110); communion, and unity/diversity in the Church (CCC 814); liturgical catechesis to be presented by local catechisms (CCC 1075); sacraments' signs and symbols have meanings rooted in creation and culture (CCC 1145); the need for liturgy to correspond to different cultures (CCC 1204), but not be "submissive" to cultures (CCC 1207); the importance of forms of popular piety (CCC 1679); application of natural law (CCC 1957), forms taken by homosexuality (CCC 2357) and modesty (CCC 2524) have varied from culture to culture; the gospel purifies and elevates the morality of peoples, takes the spiritual qualities and endowments of every age and nation, . . . causing them to blossom (CCC 2527), the need to distinguish between growth of the reign of God and progress of culture and society (CCC 2820).

⁹² CCC 854 "Missionary endeavor requires patience. It begins with the proclamation of the Gospel to peoples and groups who do not yet believe in Christ," continues with the establishment of Christian communities that are "a sign of God's presence in the world," and leads to the foundation of local churches. It must involve a process of inculturation if the Gospel is to take flesh in each people's culture. There will be times of defeat. "With regard to individuals, groups, and peoples it is only by degrees that [the Church] touches and penetrates them and so receives them into a fullness which is Catholic."

Authors of national or diocesan catechisms and other catechetical materials should pay particular attention to the different socio-cultural-ecclesial contexts and to the unique characteristics of the persons to whom the catechesis is directed.⁹³

Based on these assertions, the CCC offers itself as a guide and model for catechesis for the whole church, based on the common pastoral needs of the Church worldwide.

Granted that the CCC serves as a positive norm for local catechisms, how does the CCC limit difference? Can local catechisms vary from the CCC's choice and range of content (the "essentials" of faith), focus and aim (doctrinal presentation toward maturing of faith), structure (four pillars), sources (Scripture, tradition, avoidance of "theological opinion" or "particular theological schools"), use of bible versions, and the policies developed for the creation of CCC translations? One view is that variation from the CCC is acceptable in terms of "style rather than content . . . diverging from it only in the choice of texts, episodes and examples used to illustrate its truths."⁹⁴ Another point of view allows for greater difference; namely, far from "mere translation," the task of composing local catechisms requires "bishops and other faithful to undertake a similar task of discernment, of interpretation, and of confident proclamation in and for their churches and their worlds."⁹⁵ In the latter view, the use of the CCC's final text as a reference and norm is placed within the context of the whole process undertaken by the worldwide church—the consultations and principles that the various commissions used—in creating the CCC. From this perspective,

⁹³ "Appendix III The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: Some Basic Information," *Living Light* 29 (summer 1993): 84. This text is adapted from Editorial Commission of the CCC's "Informative Dossier," dated 29 October 1992.

⁹⁴ Aidan Nichols, *The Splendour of Doctrine: The Catechism of the Catholic Church On Christian Believing* (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1995), 7.

⁹⁵ Joseph A. Komonchak, "The Authority of the Catechism," in *Introducing the Catechism of the Catholic Church: Traditional Themes and Contemporary Issues*, ed. Berard L. Marthaler (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1994), 31.

contrary to being a “straitjacket,” the CCC is meant to aid local churches in the task of creating their own inculturated catechisms, concretizing the norm—“fidelity to the Gospel and communion with the worldwide Church” (RM 54)—in the realm of catechisms.

Conclusion

The overall thrust toward inculturation from the time of the Council and onward, is part of the larger context in which the CFC and NCDP were envisioned. As such, many of the accomplishments and obstacles encountered in the work of conceptualizing and implementing inculturation during these decades made their mark on the environment in which the two catechetical documents were created.

The Council’s promotion of “adaptation” as a programme for liturgy and mission, its focus on the local church and authority of bishops, and its explicit acknowledgment of the Church’s responsibility toward culture at large, brought to light the lack of local catechetical texts for use in the country and empowered the bishops to take inculturation to the catechetical field. Though the Council’s teachings on inculturation are inchoate, certain questions came to light: How does one define culture and how does cultural change take place? How is inculturation done? What are its goals and criteria? Who has final authority over inculturation projects?

Papal teachings on inculturation, especially those of John Paul II, provided greater definition, more guidelines on methodology, much encouragement and even greater caution in the actual work on the NCDP and CFC. These teachings served as yardsticks in the process of envisioning these two local texts. Most of all, the discussions on inculturation at the 1985 Extraordinary Synod and throughout the creation of the CCC shed the greatest light

on issues encountered by the drafters of the NCDP and CFC. The matter of diverging from structure and content was particularly relevant for the Philippine catechism's editorial team.

Looking forward, Chapter Four will show how the Philippine church experienced and responded to these post-Conciliar shifts in the areas of evangelization and catechesis. Then, Chapter Five will analyze how the Philippine Church worked through the difficulties discussed above as they drafted the NCDP and CFC and obtained final approval from Rome. In so doing, ambiguities in the various statements on both catechesis and inculturation are shown to make an impact in practice.

CHAPTER FOUR

POST-VATICAN II DEVELOPMENTS IN CATECHESIS AND INCULTURATION IN THE PHILIPPINES (1965-1997)

For the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines, the years 1965 to 1997 span the period between the close of the Second Vatican Council and the publication of *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (NCDP) and the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (CFC). These years are marked by the implementation and reception of the teachings of Vatican II, the Synods, and the experience of political and social turmoil in the country. Against this backdrop, the Philippine bishops pursued a vision of “integral evangelization” that emphasizes the interconnectedness of catechesis, the social apostolate, and authentic worship within a more recognizably Filipino context. The adoption of this concept of evangelization was made official at the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines of 1991, as the Philippine catechism neared completion.

This chapter (1) provides a preliminary sketch of the reception of Vatican II in Asia and the Philippines, (2) focuses on the impact of the worldwide catechetical movement on the Philippines in preparing for the NCDP and CFC, and (3) describes and discusses the directions laid out by the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II). These events and their teachings prepared the ground for, and largely influenced the creation of the NCDP and CFC.

The Reception of Vatican II in Asia

The use of reception as a category in ecclesiology has been motivated by a desire “to get down to the real life of the churches who are not just passive but active witnesses to the gospel.”¹ An early proponent of reception, and influential *peritus* during the Council, Yves Congar describes reception as:

the process by means of which a church (body) truly takes over as its own a resolution that it did not originate in regard to its self and acknowledges the measure it promulgates as a rule applicable to its own life. Reception includes something more than what the Scholastics called “obedience.” . . . Reception is not a mere realization of the relation *secundum sub et supra*: it includes a degree of consent, and possibly of judgment, in which the life of a body is expressed which brings into play its own original spiritual resources.²

The effort to distinguish reception from obedience and subordination to legitimate authority was in part due to contemporary developments characterizing the post-Conciliar period. Among these are the following: (1) shifts in communication theory involving a move from “transmission” or “projectile” understandings of communication to those that emphasize “sharing;” (2) the increased interest in local churches; and (3) greater research into inculturation; that is, the refinement of the tools with which we can examine the relationships between faith and culture.³ This is a marked shift away from the former

¹ Julio Manzanares, “Colloquium on Reception,” *The Jurist* 57, no. 1 (1997): 6. This whole issue of *The Jurist* is devoted to the Salamanca Colloquium on the idea of reception held in 1996. Another significant work on the topic is Giuseppe Alberigo, Jean-Paul Jossue, and Joseph Komonchak, eds. *The Reception of Vatican II* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1987).

² Yves Congar, “Reception as an Ecclesiological Reality,” in *Election and Consensus in the Church, Concilium* 77, eds. Giuseppe Alberigo and Anton Weller (New York: Paulist, 1972), 45, quoted in Elias Yanes, “Inaugural Address,” *Jurist* 57, no. 1 (1997): 13.

³ Gilles Routhier, “Reception in Current Theological Debate,” *The Jurist* 57, no. 1 (1997): 28-31.

emphasis on “applying” the teachings of the Council, which is ultimately based on “. . . a schema which assigned a secondary role to practice in relationship to theology.”⁴

The value of using reception as a category in studying the impact of Vatican II in Asia and the Philippines lies in the emphasis it places on the local churches themselves, and the profound links between these church’s histories and cultures on the one hand, and the directions taken in various areas of Church life, after Vatican II. Furthermore, this focus on reception conceived as such, highlights the role of bishops and the practice of faith among ordinary Filipino Catholics.

To shed light on the reception of Vatican II in Asia, theologian Peter C. Phan discusses the ways in which the Council’s various emphases made their way to the local churches on the Asian continent. First, reception involved the translation of the Council’s sixteen documents and liturgical books into various Asian languages. Though basic, translation was already a daunting task for most of the Asian episcopates due to the lack of experts and theological resources. Second, more organized and official efforts to pursue inculturation, inter-religious dialogue, social development, liberation, and ecumenism affirmed and bolstered the attempts of heretofore scattered groups to push these issues. Third, the founding of institutions such as the FABC and the holding of the Asian Synod in 1998 helped make the ideals of participation and collegiality tangible on the Asian continent. However, factors such as Christianity’s minority status in Asia, the presence of hostile governments, and the overall lack of resources necessary for implementing the directives of

⁴ Ibid., 19.

the Asian Synod and the FABC hinder fuller reception and present a continuing challenge to Asian churches.⁵

The program for evangelization in Asia in the decades since the Council likewise represents the continuation of many of the thrusts ratified at the Council. According to FABC documents, the notion of integration aptly sums up how the Asian churches approach evangelization. First, the point of departure has consistently been “the vision of a ‘new world being born’ in Asia since the end of the colonial period.”⁶ Virtually every FABC document opens with a description of Asian realities and contexts, against which the Church’s tasks are juxtaposed. In spite of the great diversity within the Asian continent, the FABC has nevertheless described their shared context to be one marked by massive poverty, and the perceived foreignness of the Church.⁷ Second, this context explains why the FABC’s main emphasis has been on mission, that is, in the form of a triple dialogue with the poor (liberation and social development), cultures (inculturation), and other religions (inter-religious dialogue).⁸ Third, it is widely repeated that the acting subject of mission is the local church, with special attention given to the laity and special ministries that may be created for

⁵ Peter Phan, “Council Reception in Asia,” in *The Second Vatican Council and the Church in Asia: Readings and Reflections*, FABC Papers no. 117, ed. James H. Kroeger, <http://www.ucanews.com/html/fabc-papers/fabc-117.htm> (accessed 29 September 2009).

⁶ Catalino G. Arevalo, “. . . The Time of Heirs,” in *For All the Peoples of Asia, Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences Documents from 1970-1991*, eds. Gaudencio B. Rosales and Catalino G. Arevalo, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis; Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Publications, 1992), xix.

⁷ Felix Wilfred, “The Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences (FABC): Orientations, Challenges, and Impact,” in *For All the Peoples of Asia*, xxiv. Wilfred attributes this perceived foreignness primarily to the fact that “the local churches in the countries of Asia have, by and large, kept themselves aloof from the mainstream of the life of the people, their history, their struggles and dreams. They have failed to identify themselves with the people even though in terms of charity many praiseworthy services have been rendered.” Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., xix.

them. Hence, “integration” in the FABC documents refers to the direct effort to relate the proclamation of the good news to on-the-ground realities in the continent—those of poverty, and the great diversity of cultures and religions.

While more difficult to determine, reception of the Council on the parish level in Asia can be seen in the slow emergence of participatory structures in the Church all over the continent. The most visible of these are the promotion of Basic Ecclesial Communities or Basic Christian Communities (BECs/BCCs), and the push for lay leadership. As of 1985, Philippine bishop Francisco Claver, S.J. made the generalization that as far as the whole continent is concerned, both of these thrusts were only in their beginning phases. Like Phan, Claver identifies obstacles to their proliferation; namely, “the deeply entrenched concept of the Church as institution . . . compounded when, as in Asia, traditional respect for elders is transferred to ecclesiastical leaders and the ethic of participation is interpreted as an erosion of their authority and power.”⁹

The Reception of Vatican II in the Philippines

Jaime Cardinal Sin, former Archbishop of Manila, identified the following four shifts characterizing Philippine Church’s life twenty-seven years after the Vatican II: “a turning to the people, to the poor, to prayer, and to the politics of peace-making.”¹⁰ Filipino theologian

⁹ Francisco Claver, “The Church in Asia Twenty and Forty Years After Vatican II: Personal Reflections 1985 and 2005,” in *The Second Vatican Council and the Church in Asia*” *Readings and Reflections* FABC Papers No. 117, ed. James H. Kroeger, <http://www.ucanews.com/html/fabc-papers/fabc-117.htm>. Also see Julio X. Labayen, “Vatican II in Asia and the Philippines,” *Ecumenical Review* 27 (July 1985): 275-82.

¹⁰ Cardinal Jaime L. Sin, “The Church in the Philippines: Twenty-Seven Years After Vatican II,” *Landas* 2 (1988): 3-10.

Catalino Arevalo interprets these as “a local realization of the decisive paradigm shift in ecclesiology which has taken place since Vatican II.”¹¹ These developments were manifested in different ways and varying degrees in the Philippine Church’s life. Given that research on this topic has been much neglected, information is very much lacking and piecemeal. What follows is the most general of sketches on the reception of Vatican II in the country.

Initial Implementation of Vatican II

By the time the Council was called, the Philippine bishops’ were organized under the *Catholic Welfare Organization* (CWO), a national governing body established to respond to the needs of a war-ravaged Philippines in 1945. It became the officially registered organization of the Philippine Church hierarchy and “the means through which the interests and values of the Catholic Church were articulated, defended, protected and furthered.”¹²

At least twelve member bishops of the CWO attended the sessions of the Second Vatican Council: Rufino Cardinal Santos of Manila, Bishop Luis Del Rosario of Zamboanga, Bishop Clovis Thibault of Davao, Bishop Alexander Olalia of Lipa, Archbishop Julio Rosales of Cebu, Bishop Henry Byrne of Lamia, Bishop Juan Sison of Nicopsi, Bishop Lino Gonzaga of Palo, Bishop Manuel del Rosario of Malolos, Bishop Mariano Madriaga of

¹¹ Catalino G. Arevalo, “After Vatican II: Theological Reflection in the Church in the Philippines 1965-1987,” *Landas* 2 (1988): 14.

¹² Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines, “CBCP Documents, the 1940s,” <http://www.cbcponline.net/documents/1940s/1940s.html> (accessed 29 September 2009).

Lingayen-Dagupan,¹³ Archbishop Jose Maria Cuenco of Jaro, Bishop Gerard Mongeau, O.M.I. of Cotabato,¹⁴ On the eve of the Council's opening, Archbishop Julio Rosales of Cebu, president of the Catholic Welfare Organization, issued the "Bishop's Pastoral Letter on the Ecumenical Council,"¹⁵ calling for study and prayer for the success of the Council, and exhorting parish priests, leaders of Catholic schools, and the like, to work towards promoting Vatican II's teachings.

A study of the contributions of the Filipino bishops in the Council's sessions must be left to a later time.¹⁶ What is known with certainty now is that upon their return, they affirmed the Council's positive value and began to set the course for implementing the Council's decrees.¹⁷ At their annual meeting in January 1965, the Philippine bishops promulgated the "Decree of the Philippine Hierarchy on the Use of the Vernacular in the Liturgy,"¹⁸ which allowed the use of Tagalog, Spanish, English, Cebuano, Ilocano, Pangasinan, Hiligaynon, Pampango, Bicolano, and Samareño in most parts of the Mass, and

¹³ *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani Secundi*, vol. 1, part 1 (Vatican City: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1970), 54. This is not an exhaustive list.

¹⁴ These last two names are not in the *Acta Synodalia*, but they nonetheless appear in the indices of the Alberigo and Komonchak, eds. *History of Vatican II*, 5 vols. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995-2005).

¹⁵ Available at http://www.cbcponline.net/documents/1960s/1962-ecumenical_council.html (accessed 29 September 2009).

¹⁶ To start, Alberigo and Komonchak's *History of Vatican II*, vols. 1-5 report that Cardinal Santos was among the avid supporters of the minority group, International Council of Fathers. This gives support to the "rumor" that Santos was not enthusiastic about implementing Vatican II liturgical reforms in Manila, and that dioceses further from Luzon, i.e., Mindanao, experienced the changes sooner. John N. Schumacher, interview with author, Quezon City, Philippines, 3 April 2009.

¹⁷ "Warm Welcome to the Council Fathers," *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* 40 (January 1966): 134-135.

¹⁸ Published in *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* 40 (January 1966): 191.

in the administration of sacraments.¹⁹ The adoption of the English and Spanish breviaries approved for use in the United States and Spain, respectively, was also among the decree's provisions. By early 1966, norms for clerical attire were published in the hierarchy's official organ.²⁰ Then at the 1966 annual meeting, the Philippine bishops' conference established a "Central Commission for the Implementation of the Decrees and Conclusions of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council" headed by Rufino Cardinal Santos.²¹

Aside from the hierarchy's concerted effort to promote the Council, various independent groups also undertook this task. Laity and members of religious orders alike were involved. The *cursillos* "carried the first waves of Vatican II euphoria"²² and so did various renewal programs for priests and sisters and lecture series for the public.²³ Some of the notable ones were the courses offered by the *East Asian Pastoral Institute* (EAPI) in

¹⁹ The decree allows the use of the aforementioned vernaculars from the Mass' beginning to the *Sanctus*, then from the *Pater Noster* to the end, the rite during Good Friday and Holy Saturday, the administration of sacraments and sacramentals except for some parts of Holy Orders previously prescribed. Ibid.

²⁰ "Norms on the Use of Clerical Attire in the Philippines," *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* 40 (March 1966): 195-96.

²¹ *Boletín Eclesiástico* 40 (March 1966): 198.

²² Sin, "The Church in the Philippines," 4. *Cursillos* are parish-based lay groups whose aim is "the Christianization of the world through the apostolic action of Christian leaders in all the areas of human activity." See *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Second edition, ed., Berard Marthaler, et. al. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America/Thomson Gale Inc., 2003), s.v. "Cursillo Movement" by G.P. Hughes and F. Byron.

²³ Catalino G. Arevalo, "Filipino Theology," *Dictionary of Mission: Theology, History, Perspectives*, eds. Karl Muller, et. al. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997), 162-64.

Manila,²⁴ and the seminars of the University of Santo Tomas, entitled “The Documents of Vatican II and Today’s Christian.”²⁵

Renewal in the Social Apostolate

The push for greater involvement with the poor and the dialogue with local culture was already somewhat evident in the Philippine context of the mid-1960s. As in the rest of the Asian continent, evangelization in the Philippines in the first two decades after the Council has also been described as a search for “integrality” on many levels.²⁶ In his study of evangelization in the Philippines during this era, missiologist James H. Kroeger writes,

. . . “integrality” is an interpretative key unlocking the realities of the local Church. This means that human promotion-development-liberation are integral tensions of evangelization; they are not only a *praeparatio evangelica* or “indirect evangelization”. . . . Integrality . . . also means that human promotion-development-liberation do not alone constitute the totality of evangelization.²⁷

It is important to note that the understanding of integration above was directly influenced by the fact that these same two decades spanning 1965 to 1985, coincided with the Marcos administration—his election to the presidency in 1965, the proclamation of Martial Law and his absolute rule in 1972, and his toppling via the peaceful “People Power revolution” in February of 1986. The timing proved to be significant, resulting in a

²⁴ Jose Mario Francisco, interview with author, Boston, MA, September 2005.

²⁵ This was held on 26 February 1966. Proceedings were published in *Boletin Ecclesiastico de Filipinas* 40 (March 1966).

²⁶ See James H. Kroeger, “Evangelization in the Philippine Church: 1965-85,” *Philippine Studies* 35 (1987): 3-30. Also see Pasquale T. Giordano, S.J., *Awakening to Mission: The Philippine Catholic Church 1965-1981* (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day Publishers, 1988).

²⁷ Kroeger, “Evangelization in the Philippine Church,” 28.

dovetailing of interests and concerns among Filipinos as citizens of their country and as members of the Catholic Church. The call for social justice in the context of a dictatorship found a language and was given momentum by an ethic of participation suffusing new Conciliar teaching. This combined with a more inductive, “signs of the times” theological approach of *Gaudium et Spes*, the overall pastoral tone of the Council, and an astounding amount of indigenous social teaching issued by the local church hierarchy, buttressed the efforts of grassroots communities and many Basic Christian Communities (BCCs) nationwide.²⁸ Not to be discounted was the impact of the persecution of clergy, religious, and lay leaders of prominent BCCs and other Church organizations. This had the effect of increasing the visibility of the Church’s moral credibility and prophetic stance.

Unfortunately, these years also made apparent certain divisions in the Church hierarchy that were previously unexposed. Various positions were taken to address policies during the Marcos dictatorship, which until the mid-1970s, were “ambiguous on the surface, deeply splintered beneath.”²⁹ At times, this disunity resulted in “weak pastoral guidelines and social analysis, an underdeveloped appreciation of the role of the laity, a weak Church strategy for promoting a just society with the resulting growth of Marxist-Maoist influences

²⁸ For an insightful history of BECs/BCCs in the Philippines, see Francisco Claver, “The History of the BCCs: The Philippines,” in *Church of the People: The Basic Christian Community Experience in the Philippines*, eds. Gabino A. Mendoza, Juan Miguel Luz, and Jose T. Deles (Manila, Philippines: Bishops-Business Conference for Human Development, 1988), 18-27. For a more recent work, see Francisco Claver, *The Making of a Local Church* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2008).

²⁹ Francisco Claver, “Prophecy or Accommodation: The Dilemma of a Discerning Church,” *America* 142 (26 April 1980): 355.

among students.”³⁰ At the heart of these differences were “divergent ecclesiologies and concomitantly varied approaches to evangelization.”³¹

Unity among the bishops against the dictatorship became clearer only in the mid-1970s as Jaime Cardinal Sin, then president of the *Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines* (CBCP), began to increase his opposition toward the Marcos regime. These efforts continued for a decade, making it seem to many that the only institutions that could provide alternatives to military rule were the Catholic Church on the one hand, and the growing Communist Party of the Philippines on the other. In the eyes of the Marcos administration, both sides were threatening, especially since both groups’ work with the disenfranchised overlapped. It is not difficult to imagine how, in the BCCs, boundaries could blur between the social ministry of the Church and political activism. After all, life in the BCCs combined bible-reading, catechesis, prayer, and the ever-controversial social analysis. All these elements were intended to lead to praxis.

While the political scene required that the Church leadership be predominantly concerned with its social apostolate, it did not take much to recognize the relationships between this priority and the theological ferment that, though slow at the beginning, was later to produce a significant body of theological writing directly addressed to the Philippine context.³²

³⁰ Kroeger, “Evangelization in the Philippines,” 26.

³¹ Ibid., 10. This point is supported by Claver who states that the emphasis on “church-as-institution” vs. “church as people of God” has spelled the difference in the attitudes toward the social apostolate during these trying times. Cf. Claver, “Prophecy or Accommodation,” 356.

³² Arevalo, “Filipino Theology,” 162.

Liturgical Renewal

Prior to the Council, the liturgical movement had reached the Philippines, indicated by the selection of Manila as the host city for the celebration of the Thirty-third International Eucharistic Congress in 1937, and the holding of the Second National Eucharistic Congress in 1956.³³ In 1958, the “Instruction on Sacred Music and Sacred Liturgy”³⁴ concerning the singing of vernacular hymns during mass, and the encouragement of active participation began to be implemented in the country, and in 1961, the Philippine bishops issued “Pastoral Directives of the Philippine Hierarchy for the Celebration of Holy Mass.”³⁵

Leading Filipino liturgist Anscar Chupungco states that since the Council, there has been “a flourishing of parish liturgical life and active involvement of the laity in liturgical ministries.”³⁶ The early efforts at liturgical adaptation and inculturation are evident in the production of translations of the missal and rites,³⁷ the composition of Filipino liturgical music in the 1960s, and in 1971, the approval of the use of the *Salubong*, a popular Easter devotion reenacting the “meeting” of Mary and the Resurrected Christ, as an entrance rite for

³³ Leonardo Legaspi, “The Church in the Philippines since 1900,” *Boletin Eclesiastico de Filipinas* 39 (January-February 1965): 347.

³⁴ Issued by the Sacred Congregation for the Rites on 3 September 1958.

³⁵ Paul Brunner, “Liturgical Renewal in the Philippines,” *Teaching All Nations* 2 (October 1965): 477-78.

³⁶ Anscar J. Chupungco, “Towards a Filipino Liturgy,” in *Liturgical Renewal in the Philippines*, Maryhill Studies 3, ed. Anscar J. Chupungco (Quezon City, Philippines: Maryhill School of Theology, 1980), 105.

³⁷ The Tagalog *Ang Bagong Ordinaryo ng Santa Misa* (The New Ordinary for Holy Mass) was approved by the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship on 7 August 1969.

the first mass of Easter Sunday.³⁸ Work on the *Misa ng Bayang Pilipino* (Mass of the Filipino People) was begun in 1974 and completed in 1975. This Mass is a “radical adaptation of the Roman Mass to the traditional religious culture of Filipinos.”³⁹ The *Misa* features the use of the basic outline of the Roman Mass with the inclusion of aspects of the Filipino baroque religiosity, the cultural importance given to “mediation,” the value of hospitality, and dramatic Filipino idioms in its language.⁴⁰ Soon after, Tagalog and Ilocano rites for marriage were also developed.⁴¹ Although much success has been achieved, much more is also still desired. While the *Misa* has been approved by the Philippine bishops, it has received mixed reviews, and has not gained the approval of the Holy See.

Role of Theological Institutes

Writing in 1965, the editors of the *Philippine Studies* journal candidly remarked on the state of academic theology in the country at the time:

Serious theological work, on a level even approaching contemporary studies and writing of theologians in Europe and America, has not even begun in the Philippines. (Not even the present Ecumenical Council, which has stirred up so remarkable a theological ferment in most countries, has succeeded in bringing about a theological awakening within our Catholic community. . .) . . . The appearance of a theological

³⁸ Ibid., 110. For details on this work, Chupungco cites *The Liturgical Information Bulletin of the Philippines* 6 (March-April 1971): 32-33, and M. Andrade “*Encuentro* during Easter Sunday Celebration,” *Liturgical Information Bulletin of the Philippines* 11 (March-April 1976): 50-52.

³⁹ Chupungco, “Towards a Filipino Liturgy,” 111.

⁴⁰ Anscar J. Chupungco, “A Filipino Attempt at Liturgical Indigenization,” *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 91 (1977): 370-76; also see his *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacramentals, Religiosity, and Catechesis* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992): 171.

⁴¹ CBCP, *Ang Pagdiriwang ng Pag-iisang Dibdib* (The Celebration of Marriage), (Manila: CBCP Regional Committee for Tagalog in the Liturgy, 1983). For a comprehensive study of the Ilocano rite, see David William Antonio, *An Inculturation Model of the Catholic Marriage Ritual* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2002).

work . . . is regrettably a real rarity on local publication lists. There is no appreciable demand for such items locally, and the theologians we have in our midst ordinarily reach only the students in our major seminaries and are usually so involved in administrative and pastoral concerns that they simply do not have the time necessary for the serious pursuit of their craft. And so no theological work of any genuine quality or value is being ‘locally produced’ or—if it is—the general lack of interest successfully prevents it from coming to the surface here.⁴²

This situation began to change in the 1970s, as theological institutes began to increase in number, size, and output, marking the rise of “Filipino theology.”⁴³ A key theme of the emerging field was “a concern for dialoguing with the concrete life situation of the Filipinos.”⁴⁴ These works were suffused with an interest in presenting the Gospel message integrally, that is, in direct relation to culture, praxis, and spirituality. These themes were developed in various ways, the most mainstream of which involved a serious and prevalent engagement of references to the Magisterium. Arevalo explains, “this does not mean, by and large, a mere parroting of magisterium texts but . . . a considerably creative and forward-looking use of the texts of Vatican II and other magisterium documents and their application to the Philippine (and Asian) settings.”⁴⁵

Some of the leading institutions that propagated new conciliar teaching and served as “seed-beds” for Filipino theology were the *East Asian Pastoral Institute* (EAPI) based in the Jesuit’s Ateneo de Manila campus in Quezon City, the *Loyola School of Theology*, also located on the same campus; the *Ecclesiastical Faculty of Sacred Theology* housed in the

⁴² “Introduction,” *Philippine Studies* 13 (July 1965): 430.

⁴³ This thesis is developed in Dindo Rei Tesoro and Joselito Alviar Jose, *The Rise of Filipino Theology* (Pasay City, Philippines: Paulines, 2004).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 16, citing Arevalo, “Filipino Theology,” 163.

Dominican's University of Santo Tomas, and the *Maryhill School of Theology* in Quezon City, founded by the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Other smaller but notable seminary and formation houses are the *Divine Word Seminary* in Tagaytay City and the *Paul VI Institute for Liturgy* in Bukidnon all of which have made their mark in the development of Filipino theology.⁴⁶

At present, the faculties of these institutions are mostly dominated by the religious orders that run them, and are attended mostly by their own novices, diocesan clergy, and religious women. Only a small minority of lay men and women enroll as students, and even fewer serve on their faculties. Interestingly enough, lay people abound in Philippine catechetical centers, of which there are around thirty at present. Lay teachers also dominate religion departments of Catholic schools.⁴⁷

In summary, the search for integration, understood as the attempt to present the faith more wholly and in relation to a particular people's concrete life, characterizes evangelization in the two decades immediately following the Council. The FABC documents, as well as those issued by the Philippine bishops provide ample evidence that the Church's openness to dialogue with society and the world at large was taking place. In the Philippines in particular, reception of the Council coincided with the twenty years of the Marcos dictatorship. This placed a strong liberationist and activist accent on local

⁴⁶ Brief histories of these institutions can be found in *The Rise of Filipino Theology*, 42-63.

⁴⁷ ECCCE, "The Catechetical Situation in the Philippines at the Beginning of the Third Millennium: A Report Prepared by ECCCE and submitted to the Vatican through the CBCP," *Docete* 25 (October 2001-March 2002): 70. In addition to the thirty catechetical institutes nationwide, the same report adds that a total of ten universities/institutes of higher learning offer degree programs in religious education.

magisterial teachings and the burgeoning theological enterprise in the country. At the same time, the broader categories of culture and spirituality were gaining more attention, resulting in increasing attention to inculturation in liturgy, theology, and catechesis.

Post-Vatican II Catechetical Renewal in the Philippines

The catechetical scene in the Philippines in the 1960s appears to have developed apart from the aforementioned academic theological circles and movements of liturgical renewal, however not in total isolation. The worldwide catechetical movement that contributed to the Council had been making an impact in the Philippines years before Vatican II teachings made their way to the country. If the events of the 1960's and '70s were crucial for the emergence of Filipino theology in general, for Philippine catechesis, the worldwide catechetical movement and key individuals affiliated with the *East Asian Pastoral Institute (EAPI)* and the six International Catechetical Study Weeks served as more immediate catalysts.

The trickle of developments from the catechetical movement onto Philippine soil is confirmed by the appearance of translations of textbooks that were produced by the kerygmatic renewal.⁴⁸ One example is Wilhelm Pichler's *Katolisches Religionsbuchlein* of 1912, which was adapted into English by the Benedictine sisters of Fatima, in Vigan, northern Philippines. Writing in 1964, Hofinger states that this English adaptation had since

⁴⁸ The basic tenets of the kerygmatic approach can be found in Josef Jungmann's two works, *The Good News Yesterday and Today* (New York: Sadlier, 1962) and *Handing on the Faith: A Manual of Catechetics* (New York: Herder, 1957).

been translated into Ilocano.⁴⁹ The *On Our Way Series* of Sr. Maria dela Cruz Aymes was also available in Tagalog and Ilocano translations and was published locally by the EAPI.⁵⁰ As of 1963, a guide to the German Catechism⁵¹ was also published by EAPI entitled, *A Companion to 'A Catholic Catechism'* by John Seffer.⁵² While these texts were imports from abroad, they were highly popular and recommended for use in the missions for their “thoroughly Christocentric exposition . . . their concentration on the essentials of the Christian religion, and their guidance to a personal encounter with God. . .”⁵³ Hofinger and many others who attended the Study Weeks were of the mind that though imports were provisional, they could function as “bridges to the fully adapted mission catechisms of the future.”⁵⁴ This was admittedly a more positive view that addressed existing biases against anything foreign, “whether specialists . . . or catechisms . . . or method and pedagogy discovered by foreign Institutes.”⁵⁵ Unfortunately, at the time, such biases were strengthened by a tendency in the so-called young churches to just “copy and imitate the

⁴⁹ Johannes Hofinger, “New Western Textbooks in the Missions,” *Teaching All Nations* 1 (January 1964): 3. According to Hofinger, this book represents one of the first achievements of the catechetical movement. He says, “unlike former catechisms, Christian religion is . . . (presented as) the message of God’s dealings with us, which are recalled in the main events of the history of salvation according to the cycle of the liturgical year.” He omits the publication dates of both the English and Ilocano translations. *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ For background on this series, see William J. Reedy, “Maria de la Cruz Aymes,” *Living Light* 12 (summer 1975): 293-97. Hofinger was a collaborator and coauthor in this series.

⁵¹ The German catechism referred to is the *Katolischer Katechismus der Bistumer Deutschlands* (Freiburg: Herder, 1955).

⁵² Hofinger, “New Western Textbooks in the Missions,” 5-6.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 8. Also see Duraisamy S. Amalorpavadass, “Guidelines for the Production of Catechetical Material,” *Teaching All Nations* 5 (October 1968): 483.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 484.

West as regards its trends and publications.”⁵⁶ Like Hofinger, Amalorpavadass, an Indian liturgist and catechetical expert during the Study Weeks, considered “borrowing and translating . . . at most, a short term solution.”⁵⁷

This desire for a more updated and adapted catechism was shared by the Philippine bishops, who commissioned a national catechism for children in 1953 upon the initiative of Bishop Constancio Jurgens of Tuguegarao in 1949. Though this national catechism was never completed, a draft outline and the questions-and-answers that formed the draft’s scheme were finished and approved by the Philippine bishops in 1956. At the International Catechetical Study Week held at Eichstätt in 1960, Rev. Camilo Marivoet, C.I.C.M., a member of the catechism’s drafting committee presented on their ongoing work and described the draft scheme as “Christocentric” and “kerygmatic,” having been based on Hofinger’s work.⁵⁸ Furthermore, this text was envisioned to be expository; that is, each lesson was planned to contain a narrative (biblical as much as possible), followed by a positive exposition of a doctrinal point, then the Q&A, then finally, various applications for Christian living. This was also going to be a graded catechism; that is, the first book was to be a first communion catechism for grades one and two, the second was for use in grades three and four, and the third for grades five and six. Since these catechetical texts were never completed and published, nor were their drafts used or consulted throughout the creation of the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (NCDP) and the *Catechism for*

⁵⁶ Ibid., 485.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Johannes Hofinger, “Die rechte Gliederung des katechetischen Lehrstoffes,” *Lumen Vitae* 2, no. 4 (1947): 719-46.

Filipino Catholics (CFC), it is difficult to assess the impact of these efforts on the NCDP and CFC. What is certain is that new ideas and emphases from the catechetical movement gave catechesis in the Philippines new impetus, and the most important conduits in this process were the *East Asian Pastoral Institute* in Manila, and later, Calle and Nitorreda's *Christian Communities Program*.

Johannes Hofinger and The East Asian Pastoral Institute

The man behind the EAPI was Austrian Jesuit Johannes Hofinger. He was born in 1905 in Tyrol, and joined the Society of Jesus in 1925. His overlapping interests in catechetics, liturgy, Bible, and the missions were profoundly influenced by Rev. Josef Jungmann, his professor and dissertation adviser at Innsbruck. In the 1920s and '30s, Jungmann was already a leading figure in theology and liturgy, and the main proponent of the kerygmatic renewal in theology and catechetics. This renewal was a reaction to an exaggerated focus on the "Munich method," and its emphases on the pedagogical value of activities, and the "presentation, exposition, and application" scheme.⁵⁹ In this context, Jungmann's main contribution was a reorientation of priorities on the need to adequately

⁵⁹ Johannes Hofinger, "The Missionary Character of Modern Catechetics," *Teaching All Nations* 1 (October 1964): 410. Hofinger adds, "Modern catechetics shuns increasingly the dissection of catechesis into the classical three parts—presentation, explanation and application. Often an intuitive presentation that is intelligible in itself makes explanation and application unnecessary." Ibid.

communicate catechesis' *content*: the Good News that is the person of Christ, the climax of the whole history of salvation.⁶⁰

In 1937, Hofinger volunteered for the Jesuit mission in China. When communism broke out there, he transferred to a war-ravaged Manila in 1949, where he founded the *Institute of Mission Apologetics* in 1953. In 1961, this institute was renamed the "East Asian Pastoral Institute."⁶¹ The increasing demand for a pastoral center that served the missionaries of Asia was well-known by Hofinger and his colleagues, and at a 1964 meeting of the provincials of the Jesuits' East Asia Assistancy, it was decided that Hofinger's EAPI would now serve as the new inter-provincial pastoral training center, under the auspices of the East Asia Assistancy. In 1965, this institute was moved to the Jesuit's new Ateneo de Manila campus in Quezon City, and was renamed the *East Asian Pastoral Institute*. By this time, Hofinger was already an established catechetics expert whose vision for the EAPI was more heavily focused on the catechetics, whereas others (such as his Jesuit colleague Alfonso Nebreda) were more convinced of a "pastoral" orientation for the institute.⁶² The view at the time was that a catechetical focus would narrow the institute's scope, when the East Asia Assistancy's intention was to "cover several ministries" so as to "address the various needs

⁶⁰ For more information on Jungmann and Hofinger's work, see Michael Horan, "Kerygmatic Catechesis: An Analysis of the Writings of Jungmann and Hofinger as Reflected in Post-Conciliar Catechetical Documents" (Ph.D. diss., Catholic University of America, 1989).

⁶¹ Jose M. Calle, "Remembering Some Highlights of the First Ten Years at the EAPI," (speech at the 42nd Alumni Homecoming of the East Asian Pastoral Institute, Quezon City, Philippines, October 2008), <http://www.jceao.net/content/first-ten-years-eapi-0> (accessed 23 September 2009).

⁶² Felipe Gomez, interview with author, Quezon City, Philippines, 15 September 2009.

of the Churches in Asia.”⁶³ Hofinger went along with the new orientation, and kept his focus on his roles as Vice-director for international affairs (basically, the Study Weeks), and the Book Service which published the journal *Teaching All Nations: A Quarterly Review on Mission Catechetics and Liturgy* (1964-1978), the bi-monthly magazine *Good Tidings* (1962) and the smaller pamphlets *Amen* and *Pamphlets for Training Catechists*, which were more practically-oriented and addressed to parish-level or school-based catechists. Though short-lived, these smaller publications were envisioned to be a means to propagate the liturgical and catechetical renewal surrounding Vatican II at a more “grassroots” level.⁶⁴

The EAPI’s “pastoral” vision was cemented when Alfonso M. Nebreda,⁶⁵ a Spaniard from the China province was named the first Director of the EAPI by the Jesuit Father General, Pedro Arrupe. At the same time, differences between Hofinger’s and Nebreda’s theological emphases came to fore, fueled by the publication of Nebreda’s book *Kerygma in Crisis?*,⁶⁶ and demonstrated at the Study Weeks, particularly the ones held at Bangkok and Manila.⁶⁷ By 1968, Hofinger stayed on at the institute but was out of the country for the

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Felipe Gomez, interview by author, Quezon City, Philippines, 11 January 2006. The publications *Good Tidings*, *Amen*, and *Pamphlets for Training Catechists* all later merged into the *East Asian Pastoral Review* in 1979. Other local publications, such as *Philippiniana Sacra*, the theological journal of the University of Santo Tomas also featured kerygmatic catechesis. See for example, Braulio Peña, “Christ’s Catechetical ‘Method’ in Transmitting the Message,” *Philippiniana Sacra* 5 (1970): 250-61; and “The Catechetical Role: Its Image in the Church,” *Philippiniana Sacra* 5 (1970): 417-28.

⁶⁵ Linda Tacorda, “Alfonso M. Nebreda, S.J. (1926-) and the Missionary Problem of Pre-Evangelization” (Ph.D. diss., Pontifical Salesian University, Rome, 1995). Nebreda passed away in Japan in 2004.

⁶⁶ Alfonso Nebreda, *Kerygma in Crisis?*, Loyola Pastoral Series (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1965).

⁶⁷ Nebreda writes of “the inadequacy of this (kerygmatic) approach to satisfactorily explain the whole process of faith and therefore the catechetical problem in all its breadth. The reason is, . . . that not enough

most of the year, first travelling and lecturing in Latin America, then in the United States. In 1976, Felipe Gomez, a Spanish Jesuit, replaced Hofinger as head of publications and editor of the journal *Teaching All Nations*. Gomez later became faculty member and librarian of the EAPI, positions he holds to this day.

Throughout its forty-five years of existence, the EAPI has changed considerably, all the while keeping its international and pastoral orientations. Until the early '90s, the institute offered its "renewal course," a seven-month long residential program that incorporated the latest in "post-Vatican II" liturgical, biblical, missiological, and catechetical courses. The program was modified to a series of short, month-long courses in order to address the drop in student enrollment in the late '80s-early '90s, but the live-in residential arrangements remained the same, and the "international" character of the student body was unchanged. Today, these short courses are grouped under two "programs," one geared toward pastoral renewal (running from July to December), and the other geared toward leadership (January to May).

A cursory look at the course offerings and the publications of the EAPI shows a sudden disappearance of catechetics from its purview from the mid-'80s onward. When the Book Service closed in the late 1970s, the EAPI as an institution was no longer directly involved in Philippine catechetical efforts. Rather, the contributions to local catechesis were on the level of individuals who also happened to be faculty members of the EAPI; namely,

attention is paid to the experience of the adult unbeliever in his confrontation with the Christian message." The Bangkok Study Week, which "frontally attacked the problem of the adult unbeliever in regard to faith," stressed the need for a stage of "pre-evangelization." Alfonso Nebreda "Fundamental Catechesis," in *A Selection from the Proceedings of the Sixth International Study Week on Catechetics held at Medellin, Colombia, August 11-17, 1968*, eds. Johannes Hofinger and Terence Sheridan (Manila: East Asian Pastoral Institute, 1969), 30-31.

the Jesuit Jose Maria Calle, and a lay woman, Teresita Nitorreda. According to Gomez, the EAPI's offerings in catechetics completely stopped when Nitorreda left the institute in the late 1980s.

When asked to explain this change in direction, Gomez replied that by the late '70s the Philippines already had other publishers able to continue catechetical publications, such as the newly established publishing house of the Society of St. Paul. Furthermore, several catechetical formation institutes had been started, and were more geared towards developing Filipino catechists. The view was that catechetical training had to be done in the local languages, and had to be more country-specific rather than regional or international.

A surprising observation about both the EAPI and Hofinger, is that today, both do not seem to be as well-known in the Philippines as they are in other countries. Even the Study Weeks, which were widely known in international circles, were viewed locally as Hofinger's "personal affair" and only affiliated with the EAPI by name.⁶⁸ The situation could be partly explained by the fact that both the EAPI and Hofinger have deliberately sought an international, as opposed to a local, Filipino audience. Moreover, the institute's student population has always been overwhelmingly non-Filipino. According to Gomez, when the occasional Filipino did enroll, he or she was rarely from Manila, or Luzon, for that matter.⁶⁹ In spite of these reasons, one would still not expect an almost complete disappearance of Hofinger's name from the catechetical scene in the Philippines and more so, within the

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

EAPI's courses itself. This situation leads one to wonder why, "there is not even an echo of Hofinger"⁷⁰ in Philippine catechesis today.

Highlights from the Six International Catechetical Study Weeks

Hofinger's most significant contribution to catechetics is the holding of the six International Catechetical Study Weeks: Nijmegen (1959), Eichstätt (1960), Bangkok (1962), Katigondo (1964), Manila (1967), and Medellín (1968), that decisively shaped and changed the direction of catechetics in the post-Vatican II years.

Still under the auspices of the *Institute for Mission Apologetics*, the Study Week at Nijmegen (1959) was organized and focused on the theme "Missions and Liturgy." This study week was inspired by Hofinger's attendance at the liturgical congress in Assisi (1956), upon the invitation of Jungmann who gave the keynote address.⁷¹ The Nijmegen sessions brought together leading liturgical experts, missionaries and bishops who discussed the urgency of a liturgical revival in the missions, the goal of active participation in the liturgy as basis for participation in the apostolate, and the need for using vernaculars in certain parts of the liturgy,⁷² among other themes. The connection and need for a concomitant renewal in catechetics was later expressed at Eichstätt.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ George Delcuve, "First International Congress of the Liturgical Pastorate: Assisi, Rome (18-22 September 1956)," *Lumen Vitae* 9, no. 3 (July-September 1956): 506-18.

⁷² George Delcuve, "International Session: Missions and Liturgy (Nijmegen-Uden, 12-19 September 1959)," *Lumen Vitae* 15, no. 1 (March 1960): 153-58.

The study week at Eichstätt held in July 1960 brought together bishops, missionaries, experts on catechetics and related fields from both home and mission countries. Significant too was the unprecedented presence of the rival French and German catechetical schools. The collaboration of this international group of prominent and highly qualified people was one of the much-touted strengths of this event. The summary report of this study week contains the key insights achieved at this meeting. In paraphrase, they are the following:

The aim of catechesis is to proclaim the message of salvation. This message is God's message of love and the Good News of the Kingdom prefigured in the Old Testament, begun by Christ, and calling for a response of faith. Catechesis is Christ-centered, and attentive to God's design, emphasizing that Christ continues to be present in the Church, through the Holy Spirit, and the ministry of his shepherds. This message thus demands a method that follows God's own method, and embraces a four-fold presentation of the faith through liturgy, Bible, systematic teaching, and the testimony of Christian living. Further, catechesis "adapts itself to the life and thought of peoples, shows due appreciation of their laudable views and customs and integrates them harmoniously into a Christian way of life." Finally, for catechumens, "catechesis introduces them into a living community and helps them strike root in it."⁷³

This session was later called the "climax" of the kerygmatic phase in catechesis for its achievement of articulating and promoting the principles of the kerygmatic renewal. These were later reaffirmed and complemented by the next study week held at Bangkok in 1962,

⁷³ "Appendix III: Programme of the Catechetical Apostolate," in *Teaching All Nations: A Symposium on Modern Catechetics*, ed. Johannes Hofinger, trans. Clifford Howell (London: Burns and Oates, 1960), 394-400.

but with the addition of new emphases that would challenge the proponents of kerygmatic theology.

The Study Week in Bangkok held from 31 October to 3 November 1962, was able to focus more directly on finding out ways in which the principles of modern catechetics were to be applied to the missions. While this was the same objective laid out for Eichstätt, the presence of such a big group of experts and luminaries led Hofinger to think that focusing first on reaffirming the principles of the modern catechetical renewal was more beneficial overall.⁷⁴ Also, at Bangkok, there were no papers and talks delivered, only a summary introduction of the topics to be discussed followed by the actual discussions on the following topics: (1) main difficulties of the catechetical apostolate in the missions, (2) the missionary value of modern catechetics, (3) how to adapt modern catechetics to the special missionary conditions prevailing in East Asia, (4) catechetical problems of the catechumenate, (5) the necessary training for the catechetical apostolate, (6) how to promote mutual collaboration in the field of mission catechetics.⁷⁵

The participants at Bangkok discovered that while modern catechetical principles were indeed valid for and applicable to the missions, greater emphasis on certain aspects was needed to address the specific situations of missionary catechesis. First, the concern for addressing the adult unbeliever in the context of the missions led to the realization of the need for “pre-evangelization,” “a stage of preparation for the kerygma which, taking a man

⁷⁴ Alfonso M. Nebreda, “East Asian Study Week on Mission Catechetics,” *Lumen Vitae* 17, no. 4 (December 1962): 717-30.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 718.

as he is and where he is, makes a human dialogue possible and awakens in man a sense of God, indispensable for opening his heart to the Message.”⁷⁶ Second, adaptation came to the fore again, and recommendations were made to discuss doctrine through analogies and images of a given culture or region; third, even more than in Christian countries, in mission countries, catechesis had to focus on building up a community of faith which is able to sustain commitment to Christ.⁷⁷

The Study Week in Katigondo, held at the end of August 1964 repeated and rearticulated the principles taken up at Eichstätt and Bangkok, but this time devoting greater attention to adaptation in the African context. The position papers dealing with this very issue highlighted distinctive characteristics of African religiosity and explicitly dealt with and illustrated how these may be put into dialogue with Christianity’s worldview and teachings.⁷⁸ This led to the realization that adapted catechesis demanded solid grounding in both anthropological and catechetical knowledge. At the same time, the participants at Katigondo, some of whom were periti at the Second Vatican Council, already felt affirmed in the similarity of directions that they at the study weeks, and the Council were taking.

⁷⁶ Nebreda, “Fundamental Catechesis,” 31.

⁷⁷ Nebreda, “East Asian Study Week on Mission Catechetics,” 722.

⁷⁸ B. Mangematin and Xavier Seumois, “How to Adapt Modern Catechesis to the Africa of Today,” *Teaching All Nations* 1 (October 1964): 418-33. For example, the belief in “a God who lives,” and the invisible world of spirits, ancestors, other occult powers that serve as intermediaries between God and man, are shown to be “beneficial” for pre-evangelization but at the same time, it is a worldview that can conflict with, but also fulfillment in Christ. *Ibid.*, 421-27. Also see B. Mangematin, “Biblical Catechesis in Africa Today,” *Teaching All Nations* 1 (October 1964): 434-46.

Examples of these are the openness in dialoguing with the world, the new theological climate, and the newly-approved Constitution on Sacred Liturgy.⁷⁹

The Study Week in Manila was held in April 1967 was described by Hofinger himself as “a culminating point of this new concern with man and his role, just as the Eichstätt meeting is looked upon as a climax of the kerygmatic phase of the catechetical movement.”⁸⁰ The focus on “starting with Man as he is today” is not meant to be “a condescension but rather an attentiveness to realities in which seeds of the Word are hidden.”⁸¹ Hofinger furthermore cautions that “this deep concern for man never distracts from the Mystery of Christ: it rather opens for Christ the door to man.”⁸² Related to the study week’s anthropological concern was the matter of the religious value of non-Christian religions, which was also a hot topic in the sessions.

On the first day of the study week, after listening to the opening address of Archbishop Stanislaus Lokuang of Taipei, the position paper of Delcuve on renewal in catechetics, and Labelle’s “An Appraisal of the Catechetical Situation in Southeast Asia,” the participants formed working groups by geographic area, and discussed their own contexts in light of Labelle’s report. The second day was spent reporting on their respective areas. These reports brought to light several common deficiencies such as the need for updated, adapted catechetical materials, the need for better ministering to non-Christians. The rest of

⁷⁹ Joseph Bournique, “Catechesis after the Council,” *Teaching All Nations* 1 (October 1964): 499-506.

⁸⁰ Johannes Hofinger, “Editorial,” *Teaching All Nations* 4 (July 1967): 268.

⁸¹ George Delcuve, “Suggestions for Renewal in Catechetics,” *Teaching All Nations* 4 (July 1967): 281-82.

⁸² Hofinger, “Editorial,” *Teaching All Nations* 4 (July 1967): 268.

the week was spent on thematic workshops on a range of topics, the underlying theme of which was clearly that of the anthropological approach.⁸³

A report of the discussion groups entitled “The Implications of Vatican II for the Mission in Asia,”⁸⁴ contained the radical call to reorient theology and catechesis in order to highlight “the universal dimension of the reality of God revealed in Jesus Christ.”⁸⁵ This emphasis was deemed important and necessary in order to help Christians in Asia become “aware of the spiritual riches of all mankind and at the same time make others see in Christianity the fulfillment of their own highest aspirations.”⁸⁶ If these were the new directions for catechetical content, with regard to method, the report calls for greater cultural and religious sensitivity, and for catechesis to be “expressed in the terminology and cultural context of the Asian countries.”⁸⁷ The report sets these priorities against the backdrop of the perceived foreignness of the Church in Asia, and the common identification of the institutional Church with the rich, and its perceived function as a mere distributor of services. The report ends with final recommendations such as the creation of smaller groups so as to

⁸³ See Joseph Bournique, “The Word of God and Anthropology,” *Teaching All Nations* 4 (July 1967): 371-76. This paper focuses on the question of how human experience is to be used in catechesis, and the new challenges opened up by this matter. Duraisamy S. Amalorpavadass, “Workshop on Recent Developments in Catechetics,” *Teaching All Nations* 4 (July 1967): 377-79 emphasizes that the use of anthropology is not a mere technique or pedagogical device but an attitude or approach meant for all levels of catechesis. Maurus Heinrichs, “Workshop on the True and False Adaptation of the Christian Message,” *Teaching All Nations* 4 (July 1967): 338-39 focuses on the term “adaptation” and gives the following guideline: “Genuine adaptation is had so long as the necessary elements of Christianity are not abandoned. The hierarchy acting collegially should determine what truly belongs to the message by the norm of the Holy Scripture and the Christian sense of the faithful.” *Ibid.*, 338.

⁸⁴ Tissa Balasuriya, Duraisamy S. Amalorpavadass, Hans Staffner, Engelbert Zeitler, “The Implications of Vatican II for the Mission in Asia,” *Teaching All Nations* 4 (July 1967): 319-26.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 324.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 325.

more effectively witness and the establishment of an All-Asian Bishops' Conference. On hindsight, the report is strikingly programmatic of mission in Asia in the years to come. The emphases on "small groups," i.e., the *Basic Christian Communities* (BCCs) and the triple dialogue with the poor, with cultures, and other religions were the very directions adopted at the founding of the FABC in 1974.

Finally, the study week at Medellín in August 1968 was held, amidst great political unrest and "an atmosphere of near revolution."⁸⁸ In their various position papers and conclusions, the participants of this study week reflect the acceptance and exercise of the anthropological concern set forth at Bangkok and Manila.⁸⁹ By doing so, they paint a picture of a society in great flux, and characterized by the concurrent experience of secularization and the survival of popular religion, the strength yet gradual erosion of the unity of the family, the mood of rebellion against authority, and the idea that the Church can be both a sign and an obstacle in proclaiming the gospel, were all brought up and tackled forcefully. The position papers of eminent catechetical scholars, Jacques Audinet and Joseph Bournique were particularly insightful in this regard. Audinet speaks of the challenge posed by the move to more inductive approaches and states, "The process has begun: either our catechesis accepts fearless questioning and responsibility or it will fail."⁹⁰ In this vein, he calls for

⁸⁸ Terence J. Sheridan, "The Occasion," in *A Selection from the Proceedings of the Sixth International Study Week on Catechetics held at Medellín, Colombia, August 11-17, 1968*, eds., Johannes Hofinger and Terence Sheridan (Manila: East Asian Pastoral Institute, 1969), 11.

⁸⁹ For example, see Luis Maldonado, "Actual Condition of Catechesis in Latin America," *Teaching All Nations* 5 (October 1968): 415-17.

⁹⁰ Jacques Audinet, "Catechetical Renewal in the Contemporary Situation," *Teaching All Nations* 5 (October 1968): 424.

catechesis to take social issues (racism, poverty, underdevelopment, etc.) more seriously and likens this attentiveness to the world to the “Shepherd knowing his sheep.”⁹¹ Finally, the urgent task is “to discover with people entrusted to our care the originality of the Christian way of existence linked to the person of Jesus.”⁹² This originality opens the door to the call for “pluralism within . . . the unity of Faith.”⁹³ Bournique, for his part, spoke of the “pedagogy of God” that is, “to incorporate Himself into human reality and History,”⁹⁴ as the key principle and basis for the catechetical process. Through catechesis, Christianity incarnates itself in the human, and at the same time, “Christianity has something to say to the human: the whole revelation of what is Man. Christianity says to man: Your plan must be centered on Christ.”⁹⁵

After taking cognizance of the ambiguity of the current situation and a restatement of the unity of God and humanity’s plan, the study week’s General Conclusions name the following challenges for catechesis:

how to promote the evolution of traditional forms of faith characteristic of a great part of the Christian people and to bring about new forms

how to evangelize and catechize masses of simple people, frequently illiterate; and at the same time how to meet the needs of the students and intellectuals who are the most alive and dynamic sectors of society

⁹¹ Ibid., 429.

⁹² Ibid., 431.

⁹³ Ibid., 426.

⁹⁴ Joseph Bournique “Present Realities in Catechesis as a Basis for Reform in Latin America,” *Teaching All Nations* 5 (October 1968): 455.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 461.

how to purify traditional forms of influence and at the same time how to discover a new way of influencing contemporary forms of expression and communication in a society which becomes increasingly secularized

finally, how to put to use all the resources of the Church in accomplishing these tasks and at the same time how to renounce forms of power and prestige that are not evangelical.⁹⁶

Taken together, these six International Catechetical Study Weeks do for catechesis what a prism does to a ray of light; they put on display the full spectrum of elements that comprise the catechetical process as we know it today. Another view is that the Study Weeks suggest a “progression” in the sense of an unfolding of an idea, and a “parabola which, beginning on the earth and rooted in man, rises almost vertically to the Word of God then drops back again to man.”⁹⁷ However they are viewed, the Study Weeks were programmatic of catechesis in the decades to come, and were influential in the budding catechetical renewal taking place in the Philippine context.

The Institute of Catechetics of the Archdiocese of Manila (ICAM)
and the Christian Communities Program (CCP)

Both the *Institute of Catechetics of the Archdiocese of Manila* and the *Christian Communities Program* were started by Jose Maria Calle, a Spanish Jesuit and one of Hofinger’s companions exiled to Manila from China in 1949.⁹⁸ In the 1950s, Calle took

⁹⁶ “General Orientations of the International Study Week on Catechetics (Medellin),” *Teaching All Nations* 5 (October 1968): 514.

⁹⁷ Luis Erdozain, “The Evolution of Catechetics: A Survey of the Six International Study Weeks on Catechetics,” *Lumen Vitae* 25, no. 1 (1970): 20, 31.

⁹⁸ Hofinger’s companions and his closest collaborators during the early years of the EAPI were the Jesuits Martin Ramsauer, Alfonso Nebreda, Paul Brunner, and Jose Calle. Calle is the only surviving member

notice of the complete absence of any organized religious education for Catholic students enrolled in public schools, whereas the private Catholic schools that educated a small, elite minority employed a relatively large number of religious men and women to take charge of their students' catechetical formation. This observation was confirmed by his exchange with Msgr. Mariano Gaviola, (now Archbishop of Lipa), then Secretary General of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, who informed him that "the main pastoral problem of the Church in the Philippines was the lack of religious instruction in the public high schools, where the great majority of the Filipino youth were educated."⁹⁹ At the time, Teresita Nitorreda, a lay woman, educator, and volunteer catechist involved with the Student Catholic Action was conscripted by Calle to draft a letter of request to Rufino Cardinal Santos, Archbishop of Manila.¹⁰⁰ The letter contained a plea to assign two sisters from each religious congregation in the Archdiocese of Manila to teach religion in public high schools. To their surprise, Cardinal Santos granted their request.

Realizing that these sisters and Catholic Action volunteers were going to need catechetical formation, Calle and Nitorreda began planning for the in-service training of the new catechists—38 religious sisters and 22 students from the Catholic Action, to be assigned to teach around 45,000 high school students.¹⁰¹ In 1964, Cardinal Santos asked Calle to

of the original founding team, and is currently based at Fu Jen Catholic University in Taipei, where he is in charge of Jesuit scholastics' spiritual formation.

⁹⁹ Calle, "Remembering Some Highlights," <http://www.jceao.net/content/first-ten-years-eapi-0> (accessed 23 September 2009).

¹⁰⁰ Teresita Nitorreda, interview with author, Quezon City, Philippines, 24 September 2009.

¹⁰¹ Calle, "Remembering Some Highlights," <http://www.jceao.net/content/first-ten-years-eapi-0> (accessed 23 September 2009).

establish and head a catechetical institute for the Archdiocese of Manila, which they named the *Institute of Catechetics of the Archdiocese of Manila* (ICAM), and housed at the Pius XII Catholic Center in Manila.¹⁰² This institute replaced the Archdiocese of Manila's *Confraternity of Christian Doctrine* (CCD) established in 1953. Initially, Calle dealt with catechetical content, and Nitorreda, with her background in education and psychology, did the courses on methodology.¹⁰³

When the EAPI opened its doors at the Ateneo de Manila campus in 1965, Nitorreda took the EAPI's diploma course in Religious Education in 1966 to 1967. Her timing was providential, for in 1967, the Study Week in Manila was held, and in 1968, she attended Medellín, where she was a rapporteur.¹⁰⁴ At the same time, she kept abreast of newly emerging techniques such as "group dynamics," pioneered by Filipino Jesuits Jaime Bulatao, a "founding father of Philippine psychology" and Eugene Moran, an economist and specialist in organizational development.¹⁰⁵ She experimented with the use of inductive methods in her teaching at the Far Eastern University in Manila, a post which she left when she was invited to the EAPI's faculty at Nebreda's invitation.

¹⁰² Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education, "Institute of Catechetics of the Archdiocese of Manila Brief History," <http://www.eccceonline.org/ministry/formationcenters/icam/history.htm> (accessed 29 September 2009).

¹⁰³ Teresita Nitorreda, interview with author, Quezon City, Philippines, 24 September 2009. This "experiential methodology" is described in her articles, "The Human Approach in Religious Education," *Good Tidings* 7 (May-June 1968): 63-71; "A Sample Thematic Development Using the Human Approach," *Good Tidings* 7 (May-June 1968): 72-77; and "Meeting Christ through Group Discussion," *Good Tidings* 8 (July-August 1969).

¹⁰⁴ Teresita Nitorreda, "The Last Ten Years in Catechetics: A Report from the Philippines," *Lumen Vitae* 30, nos. 3-4 (1975): 422-28.

¹⁰⁵ Their contributions are summarized in Carmela Ortigas, *Group Process and the Inductive Method: Theory and Practice in the Philippines*, rev. ed. (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1999).

In 1969, the stage was set for Calle and Nitorreda's legacy, a coordinated catechetical plan which they called the Christian Communities Program (CCP). Setting up the program involved the preparation of monthly catechetical booklets and training seminars for catechists. The vision underlying the publication and seminars was that of "environmental, experiential and communitarian catechesis,"¹⁰⁶ influenced by Hofinger and the Study Weeks' catechetical emphases, and the growing use of inductive, "group discussion" methods. A yearly theme would be selected and gradually unfolded in 20 fortnightly messages. The messages were communicated through a teacher's guide (the monthly catechetical booklet), a letter to the parents, a radio program, and liturgical guide for the parish priest. The idea was to reinforce the whole community's learning through the use of coordinated materials for use in the students' classes, at home, through the radio program, and the Sunday homilies at the parishes. The teacher's guide is strong in its experiential approach, i.e., each lesson would open with a liturgical song and an activity that would draw out the students' and catechists' own experience of the matter at hand. The lesson was followed by guidelines on analyzing student responses, a development of related biblical content, and the examination of implications for life through exercises like "journaling" among the students.¹⁰⁷

The program and publication were first used in Catholic secondary schools and colleges, then quickly spread to the dioceses. In 1970, the first CCP diocesan teams were

¹⁰⁶ Background and details of the programme are outlined in Jose M. Calle, "Catechesis for the Seventies," parts 1 and 2, *Teaching All Nations* 7 (April 1970): 91-113; (July 1970): 234-40. These features were also described by a former CCP catechist-trainee, now Auxiliary Bishop Teodoro Bacani of Manila, Cf. Teodoro Bacani, interview by author, Makati City, Philippines, 19 January 2006.

¹⁰⁷ Nitorreda, "The Last Ten Years," 424-27.

formed, and by 1975, more than 30 dioceses had adopted the CCP.¹⁰⁸ Through the students of the EAPI, the CCP was also known and copied in other Asian countries, and was publicized through international venues such as the Medellín Study Week,¹⁰⁹ and later, the 1971 Catechetical Congress in Rome.¹¹⁰ In the late '70s, the CCP national team headed by Nitorreda saw that the diocesan teams they had trained were beginning to develop their own materials and programs based on the CCP. The team felt that their “centralized” effort was no longer needed, and happily ended the work with the knowledge that the vision of the CCP had multiplied and continued to proliferate under different names and variations.¹¹¹

A Filipino Jesuit, Lino Banayad, succeeded Calle as head of ICAM, where he served from 1968 until his death in 1992. Like Nebreda and Calle, Banayad also trained at *Lumen Vitae* in Brussels, where he was exposed to the principles of the modern catechetical movement. His contribution to Philippine catechesis is a continuation of the CCP’s focus on the inseparable elements of scripture, liturgy and the propagation of a concrete, experiential approach.¹¹² However, unlike the CCP pamphlets which were in English, Banayad was able

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 427.

¹⁰⁹ Jose Gabriel Calderon, “The Family and the Faith in Latin America: Summary of and Comments on the Paper read by Jose Gabriel Calderon,” *Teaching All Nations* 5 (October 1968): 440-43. In this report, Calderon comments on the value of the CCP for catechizing the family as a unit. Ibid., 441-42.

¹¹⁰ Duraisamy S. Lourdasamy, “Needs and Priorities Set By the Asian Bishops’ Conferences: Report for the International Catechetical Congress, Rome, September 21-25, 1971,” *Teaching All Nations* 9, no. 1 (1972): 9-10.

¹¹¹ Nitorreda, interview with author, Quezon City, Philippines, 24 September 2009.

¹¹² Isabel Dalawangbayan, interview by author, Makati City, Philippines, 19 January 2006. His contributions can be found in the posthumously published collection of lectures and speeches: Lino Banayad, *A Second Look at the Apostolate of Catechizing* (Manila: Excel Printing Services, Inc., 2000).

to write, publish, and lecture in Filipino, a boon to the explicit focus on inculturation in those years.

Joseph L. Roche and The Formation Institute
for Religion Educators (FIRE)

In the 1970s, American Jesuit Joseph L. Roche would join the ranks of these catechetical pioneers. Born in Brooklyn, New York in 1928, Roche joined the Society of Jesus in 1945. He arrived in the Philippines in 1949 for his regency, taught for a few years, and returned to the U.S. for theological studies at Woodstock College, Maryland from 1955-58. After his ordination in New York in 1958, he left for Belgium to do a doctorate in Philosophy at Louvain. In 1963, Roche returned to the Philippines to teach philosophy, and in a few years, shifted to teaching graduate-level theology at the Loyola School of Theology to seminarians, and college theology at the Theology department of the Ateneo de Manila University in Quezon City, Philippines.¹¹³

In 1970, Roche began to teach theology to catechists at the *Mother of Life Catechetical Institute* in Novaliches, north of Manila.¹¹⁴ His study of John Paul II's *Catechesi Tradendae*¹¹⁵ led to a recommendation to be on the drafting team of the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (NCDP) in 1978. His involvement with the

¹¹³ "Appendix B: Citation for the Award of Recognition presented on 25 May 1991 by the Ateneo de Manila University, on the 500th anniversary of the birth of Ignatius of Loyola," in Vitaliano Gorospe, ed. *Go and Teach: A Festschrift in Honor of Joseph L. Roche, S.J.*, (Quezon City, Philippines: Office of Research and Publication, Ateneo de Manila University, 1997), 228-30.

¹¹⁴ Joseph L. Roche, interview by author, Quezon City, Philippines, 20 December 2005.

¹¹⁵ Joseph L. Roche, "What is Catechesis?," in *Word, Memory, Witness: The 1977 Bishops' Synod on Catechesis*, Loyola Papers 11, eds. Pedro de Achutegui and Joseph L. Roche (Quezon City, Philippines: Cardinal Bea Institute, Ateneo de Manila University, 1978): 59-81. At the time, Roche's fellow Jesuit, Pedro de Achutegui was working with Legaspi and made the recommendation.

NCDP later led to his being selected as General Editor of the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (CFC) approved in 1997. While at work on the NCDP, Roche founded the Formation Institute for Religion Educators (FIRE) in 1979, as the graduate program of the Ateneo de Manila's Theology department, in collaboration with the Loyola School of Theology located on the same campus.

Since its founding, FIRE has focused on training religion teachers and catechists to be competent in the inter-related areas of catechetical content, methodology, and actual practice. The key principle underlying the FIRE program is “integration,” based on the fact that faith itself is an integral whole (Doctrine-Moral-Worship), addressed to human persons in community. The goal of educating for maturity in faith is therefore to be carried out in an “integrated, inculturated, community-forming” method as well (NCDP Preface, I).¹¹⁶ In Roche's own words, the motivations behind the institute were the following:

1) get beyond the single summer seminar sessions, to a 4-summer degree program that educates professional catechists and religion teachers; 2) go beyond forming individual religion teachers with professional degrees, and work toward an institutional impact; 3) produce local catechetical materials that are inculturated and orthodox.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ This principle translates into the following structure for the institute's program: each summer, the courses are focused on Catholic Doctrine, then Catholic Morality, then Catholic Liturgy/Worship. The M.A. in Theological Studies (with thesis) or M.A. in Religious Education (non-thesis option) both take 4 to 5 summers to complete. Morning classes are focused on content courses (Scripture courses, Christology, Church, Ethics, Liturgy, etc.) and afternoon classes, on methodology (catechetical principles/theory), and practice (running model classes, syllabus-production, etc.). With the approval of the NCDP in 1985 and the CFC in 1997, the use of these sources in teaching, textbook and module production has been a focus of the program.

¹¹⁷ Joseph L. Roche, “Acceptance Speech at the Conferment of the Papal Award *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice*, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, 18 August 2006,” <http://www.ateneo.edu/index.php?p=120&type=2&sec=0&aid=2698> (accessed 28 September 2009).

In the thirty years of directing and teaching at FIRE, Roche has constantly emphasized the need to understand the distinctive vocation and profession of religious educators and catechists. The holistic view of faith, and the intersecting contexts of school and parish that ground the catechists' and religion teachers' point of view serve as a challenge to those academically trained in highly specialized theological disciplines, a point which Roche sums up in the following quote:

The FIRE experience has so deepened the FIRE faculty member's perspective as a Catholic religious educator that he or she makes bold to advise the professional exegete on some missing aspects of present Scripture courses; or suggest to the professional moral theologian that Catholic morality is more than making decisions, or what is needed by the average Catholic college student or seminarian regarding human freedom and the actual operation of conscience. As a religious educator, the FIRE faculty member has the temerity to suggest to the sacramental theologian that more can and should be done to bring the adolescent as well as the mature adult Catholic to a better understanding and more fruitful active participation in the Eucharist.¹¹⁸

Roche's experiences in teaching on the college and graduate levels, and in his work with catechists and religion teachers hailing from all parts of the Philippines have brought him to see a most basic and common catechetical problem: the students' lack of ability to think about, much less communicate the faith in terms of their own experiences and life. His own background in Thomism, existential philosophy, and contemporary theologies that engaged the subject more seriously gave him a handle on these catechetical issues and led him to directions that followed closely the findings of the catechetical movement.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Though Roche did not work with Hofinger, Calle, and others at EAPI (with the exception of Paul Brunner), his emphases are strikingly similar to theirs. A closer study looking at the continuity and discontinuity in their catechetical writings could start with their shared Post-Vatican II theological context.

Therefore, by the late 1960s and 70s, the Philippines had a small group of catechetical experts who shared the ideals of the Council and the principles of the modern catechetical movement through the work of Hofinger and company at the EAPI and the Belgian catechetical institute *Lumen Vitae*. Their leadership and presence in the catechetical scene also extended beyond the Philippines. In 1971, Calle was one of the presentors at the Second Catechetical Congress in Rome 1971.¹²⁰ By the time of the Synod on Catechesis in 1977, Nitorreda, was invited to serve as a “special assistant” to the Synod Secretariat.¹²¹ Banayad’s assistance was also enlisted by Cardinal Sin at the 1977 Synod on Catechesis.¹²²

During the 1977 Synod, both Cardinal Sin and Auxiliary Bishop Alberto Piamonte of Davao both made suggestions toward the creation of a catechism. Sin recommended “a catechism which formulates the experience and mind of the living Church, one which clearly and simply states the outstanding and essential elements of the Christian message,” and Piamonte, “a catechism which the average Christian can understand and easily commit to memory.”¹²³

¹²⁰ Sacra Congregazione Per Il Clero, *ATTI del II Congresso Catechistico Internazionale, Roma 20-25 Settembre 1971* (Rome: Editrice Studium, 1971).

¹²¹ Her observations are published in Teresita Nitorreda, “A Laywoman Goes to a Synod,” *Teaching All Nations* 15 (January 1978): 3-16.

¹²²“Speeches of the Philippine Delegation to the Synod of Bishops on Catechetics,” *Boletin Ecclesiastico de Filipinas* 52 (April-May 1978): 231-38, and Felix Bautista, “RP Synod Contribution Analyzed,” *Boletin Ecclesiastico de Filipinas* 52 (April-May 1978): 247-50.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 250.

Leonardo Z. Legaspi and the Episcopal Commission for
Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)

Through the leadership of Legaspi, the call for a catechism would be realized a full twenty years later. In the interim, plans began to emerge to compose a national catechetical directory for the Philippines. In December 1977, Legaspi sent out a nationwide survey to assess the catechetical situation in the Philippines,¹²⁴ one of the first steps he took to prepare for the creation of the NCDP. In 1978, consultations began to be held, and catechetical experts began to be invited to work on the NCDP. Though coming from different academic and pastoral backgrounds, their work was united by a desire to take *aggiornamento* to Philippine catechesis. This involved a reliance on the Council documents, new approaches to scripture, liturgy, theology, and a deep concern for inculturation.

The institution that initiated and oversaw at least some aspects of the ongoing renewal was the *Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education* (ECCCE). It is the national coordinating and consultative body for the catechetical ministry and Catholic education in the Philippines. It is one of many commissions of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP). Among its functions are the following:

. . . to assist and serve the dioceses regarding all aspects of the catechetical ministry nationwide, including new trends, new programs and materials, improved training programs, etc. (GDC 269); . . . (to evaluate) catechetical materials and religious education textbooks and various catechetical projects; . . . to supervise the *National Catechetical Office of the Philippines* (NCOP), which is responsible for catechetical

¹²⁴ Results of this survey are summarized in Pedro S. de Achutegui, "Catechetical Situation in the Philippines Tentative Report on the Initial Survey," *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* 52 (December 1978): 705-21.

publications, and (to make) recommendations for the promotion of an effective Campus Ministry.¹²⁵

Upon the CBCP's founding, two departments were created to deal with catechetical concerns, one named the *Episcopal Commission on Education and Religious Instruction* (ECERI) and the other, *Commission on Catechetical Texts*. In 1966 the latter commission was subsumed into ECERI. In 1988, ECERI was renamed *Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education* (ECCCE) to reflect a renewed emphasis on catechesis.

Legaspi was at the helm of ECCCE from 1975-87, then again in 1995-2003. The NCDP and CFC, respectively, were conceived and approved during both these terms, an example of his great leadership qualities that manifested all throughout his life. Legaspi was born in 1935 in Bulacan, a province directly north of Manila. He joined the Dominicans and was ordained a priest in 1960, and bishop in 1977. His priestly formation and studies took place at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila, where he took his Licentiate and Doctorate in Sacred Theology. His academic background also includes degrees in Education, and Business Administration. His academic career involves years of teaching at the University of Santo Tomas Seminary, the editorship of their academic journal, *Boletin Eclesiastico de Filipinas* and several published articles on Philippine Church history. He also held several administrative posts at the same seminary and university.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ ECCCE, "Functions of ECCCE," <http://www.eccceonline.org/commission/function.htm> (accessed 29 September 2009).

¹²⁶ CBCP, "Archbishop Legaspi-Curriculum Vitae," <http://www.cbcponline.net/bishops/archbishops/legaspi.html> (accessed 29 September 2009).

Some of his achievements as head of ECCCE include the publication of the quarterly catechetical review *Docete*, the establishment of the annual *National Catechetical Week*, the *Philippine Catechists' and Religion Educators' Foundation*, and his unprecedented nationwide surveys on the catechetical ministry.¹²⁷ His leadership was likewise evident when he served as president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference from 1975-77, and then as president of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines in 1991 (PCP II). Today, he is Archbishop of Caceres, where he continues to play a major role in the life of the Philippine Church.

In conclusion, the presence of new catechetical thinking inspired by the catechetical movement, and the Second Vatican Council, the leadership of Legaspi at ECCCE, and the availability and collaboration of catechetical experts and theologians enabled the Church in the Philippines to respond to the need for greater direction in catechesis and better catechetical materials. As will be shown in the following section, PCP II names catechesis as a priority for the Church in the country, and mentions the ongoing work on the national catechism among its decrees.

The Second Plenary Council of the Philippines of 1991 (PCP II): Directions for Evangelization and Catechesis

The reception of the Second Vatican Council, the vision of integral evangelization, and a distillation of new catechetical directions find their clearest articulation in the acts and

¹²⁷ Gerardo O. Santos, "Tribute to the Architect of Philippine Catechesis in Our Time, Archbishop Leonardo Z. Legaspi," <http://www.ecceonline.org/commission/tributetolegaspi.htm> (accessed 29 September 2009).

decrees of PCP II. As early as the 1980s, there had been a desire among the bishops to take stock of new pastoral issues that had emerged since the First Plenary Council of the Philippines in 1953. Among these were the changes resulting from Vatican II and the promulgation of the 1983 Code of Canon Law. Some demographic and socio-political changes also motivated the calling of a council; namely, the dramatic increase in the Catholic population in the country since the 1950s, the end of two decades of dictatorship, and the 1986 EDSA revolution that began a new era of democracy marked by a new administration and national constitution.¹²⁸

The final council document represents a unification of seven “Working Papers” that were prepared based on seven general groupings of concerns that emerged from a nationwide survey and various interviews.¹²⁹ At the council, these seven documents were brought together to comprise (1) a general “national situationer,”¹³⁰ (2) the Acts, containing the council’s vision and theological bases, and (3) the Decrees, the proposals for implementation.¹³¹ These Decrees later obtained the *recognitio* from the Holy See in April

¹²⁸ Pedro S. de Achutegui, “The Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, (20 January-17 February 1991): A Brief Account,” *Landas* 5, no. 2 (1991): 201-07.

¹²⁹ More information on these consultations can be found in Pedro S. de Achutegui “Historical Overview of the Preparation and Celebration of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines,” 1-12, in *Journeying with the Spirit: A Commentary on PCP II*, eds. Paul Bernier and Manuel G. Gabriel (Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Publications, 1993). These seven concerns and their corresponding commission and documents are as follows: (1) revitalization of Christian life, (2) religious concerns, (3) social concerns, (4) Church and society, (5) the laity, (6) the religious, (7) the clergy.

¹³⁰ Claver states that this portion contains “conventional wisdom . . . hardly controversial,” the intent of which was to “paint in broad strokes the actual reality on which the theologizing and reflecting (the deciding too) of the Council would be based.” See “Our World—The Philippines: Lights and Shadows,” in *Journeying with the Spirit*, 13-22.

¹³¹ One effect of this decision to separate the Acts from the Decrees is the lack of coherence between the Council’s vision and the agenda for renewal. Cf. Lode Wostyn, “The Way of Jesus,” in *Journeying with the Spirit*, 31.

1992. The document is divided into five major parts and is summed up in the following paragraphs:

Part I *Our World—The Philippines: Lights and Shadows*, describes the country's socio-cultural, political, economic, and religious context. Here, basic values such as family-centeredness, stress on authority and respect for elders form the “common structuring of social relations” (PCP II 19). In spite of their “basic soundness,” these values are nevertheless “too particularistic, too focused on the good of small social groups (the extended family, the clan, little in-groups of all kinds)” (PCP II 21). Hence the call to see “how the values . . . from our Christian faith can strengthen the good . . . or correct what is excessive” (PCP II 22). Regarding the political and economic context, the massive poverty and the scandalous inequality between a handful of elite families and the poor masses is the considered the greatest, most pervasive problem (PCP II 24). As regards the religious context, the document laments the inadequacy in number and, at times, of leadership, among the clergy, and the insufficiency of witnessing and direction among religious and laity (PCP II 30).

It is against this backdrop that the document proceeds with Part II *Envisioning a Church Renewed*. This part contains the theological bases for renewal of the Church in the Philippines, i.e., the way of Jesus and various aspects of his call today. This part focuses on faith as a personal response, which is then immediately followed by the treatment of the Church as community of disciples responding to his call.¹³² The emphasis in the section on

¹³² One criticism of this section's focus on faith as personal response is that “the theme of discipleship . . . receded into the background.” This critic would have preferred the section, “community of disciples—the

the Church is undoubtedly on the church of the poor,¹³³ defined as “a Church that embraces and practices the evangelical spirit of poverty, which combines detachment from possessions with a profound trust in the Lord as the sole source of salvation” (PCP II 125). It is also one “whose members and leaders have a special love for the poor. (PCP II 126).” Discipleship is further developed in the context of Mary as model of discipleship. A further highlight in the treatment of Church is the emphasis on the creation of BECs as the locus for these renewals.

Following this vision is Part III *A Renewed Integral Evangelization*, which in turn, is comprised of two sections, first, “Announcing A Message of Salvation,” containing the mandate for a triple renewal of catechesis, social apostolate, and worship. Among the three, the document states “a renewed catechesis is the first element of a renewed evangelization.” (PCP II 156). The document emphasizes this while asserting the inter-connectedness of these renewals in the following manner:¹³⁴

... the most basic area of renewal, and the one that must receive first priority is catechesis. Without education towards maturity in the faith, the social apostolate will become activism and will fall prey to the temptations of unchristian ideologies. Without catechesis, worship will degenerate into formalism and will slide into superstition and magical mentality (PCP II 183).

On the other hand, catechesis without the social apostolate will lack the power of Christian witness and transformation. And without worship, catechesis will become indoctrination (PCP II 184).

Church” to have followed “the way of Jesus.” Cf. Maria Anicia Co, “The Call of Jesus Today,” in *Journeying with the Spirit*, 35-36.

¹³³ Tagle regretfully observes that while strongly emphasized, “church of the poor” does not serve as the “main interpretative key for understanding the Church.” Cf. Luis Antonio G. Tagle, “Discipleship in Community—the Church,” in *Journeying with the Spirit*, 54.

¹³⁴ “... it must be stressed that no true renewal can happen in one area (e.g. catechesis) in isolation from the other areas. Any genuine renewal must affect all three areas in their inter-relationship.” PCP II 182. For a commentary on PCP II from the optic of catechesis, see Joseph L. Roche, “Catechesis/Religious Education in the Spirit of PCP II,” *Landas* 6, no. 2 (1992): 145-65.

Finally, the social apostolate without worship will lose its source of strength, while worship without the social apostolate will turn into worship divorced from life (PCP II 185).

Given this scheme, characteristics of renewed catechesis are laid out; namely, Christocentric, rooted in the Word of God, authentically Filipino, and systematic (PCP II 156-164). These characteristics were drawn from the NCDP published six years earlier, which in turn were based on John Paul II's *Catechesi Tradendae* and the *General Catechetical Directory*.

The second section, entitled "Announcing A Message of Liberation," deals with the social apostolate in a more in-depth manner, emphasizing a "spirituality of social transformation" (PCP II 262-282).¹³⁵ Then Part IV *The Community of Disciples: Workers for Renewal*, describes the agents of evangelization and their respective vocations within the larger universal vocation and mission of the Church; i.e., the lay faithful, religious, and clergy. Finally, Part V *Agenda Towards Renewal: Resolutions Approved by the Council* comprise the decrees enacted by the Council. In terms of catechesis, the following articles are of greatest significance:

All Catholics of the Philippines should be given systematic and progressive instruction on the doctrines of the Catholic faith through a National Catechism drawn up by the appropriate ecclesiastical authority, based on the Second Vatican Council, the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, the National Catechetical Directory, and in accord with the text of the Catechism for the universal Church and the prescriptions of Canon 775. (PCP II Decrees, Article 11)

¹³⁵ This is the section's "synthesizing principle," Cf. Orlando Quevedo, "Announcing a Message of Liberation," *Journeying with the Spirit*, 68. Another author adds that this spirituality would have to involve the creation of "mechanisms for assuring genuine participation and dialogue of key actors in the communion's transformative involvement in politics." Cf. Joel Tabora, "The Political Issue: From Spirituality to Social Transformation," in *Journeying with the Spirit*, 78.

Aside from alluding to the ongoing work on the catechism, the following more general principle was also decreed: “Catechetical re-evangelization should be given the first priority in renewal, a priority which should be reflected in the allocation of personnel and resources.” (PCP II Decrees, Article 13).

After the holding of PCP II, a *National Pastoral Plan* was drawn up to reflect the priorities set at the council. Ten years later, the *National Pastoral Consultation on Church Renewal* drawn up in 2001¹³⁶ affirmed the importance of integral faith formation, and recognized that integral faith formation remained among the priorities in the country, to which the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* would contribute greatly.¹³⁷ At the same time, the document regrets the unchanged situation in many aspects of Filipino Church life, especially the failure in living up to the challenge of becoming a “church of the poor.”¹³⁸ On a more positive note, the document acknowledges the “perseverance and increase of movements . . . promoting the causes of women, youth, farmers, laborers, tribal communities, and the environment, . . . the commitment to faith formation, BECs, . . . to name a few.”¹³⁹

¹³⁶ National Pastoral Consultation on Church Renewal Delegates, “Message of the National Pastoral Consultation on Church Renewal,” *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* 77 (March-April 2001): 164-70.

¹³⁷ Additional commentary on this topic is provided by Joseph L. Roche, “Toward ‘Maturing in the Faith’ Today,” *Landas* 18, no. 1 (2004): 3.

¹³⁸ Teodoro Bacani, “Church of the Poor: Church of the Philippines’ Reception of Vatican II,” *East Asian Pastoral Review* 42, nos. 1-2 (2005): 147-64.

¹³⁹ NPCCR Delegates, “National Pastoral Plan on Church Renewal,” 167.

Conclusion

Integral evangelization and integral faith formation were the key notions around which *aggiornamento* in the Philippine context was conceived. The confluence of Vatican II reforms, the creation of new ecclesial structures, such as the FABC and the emerging BECs, and the social, political, economic problems in the country, all shaped the process of discerning what it meant to be Church in the Philippines at PCP II.

While theological ferment brought about by Vatican II was slow to take in the country, by the 1970s, an increase in theological publications finally signaled the emergence of theology that was more reflective of Conciliar directions and Philippine concerns. Also within these decades, the *Federation of Asian Bishops Conferences* (FABC) was formed, giving the bishops of Asia “horizontal lines of communication,” and a means to consolidate their vision of evangelization for the entire region. In the area of liturgical reform, the work on vernacular translations was relatively quick, but the efforts for more “radical adaptation” of the liturgy came to a halt in the approval stage. In the realm of catechesis, the fruits of the worldwide catechetical movement had been making their way in the Philippines through the introduction of new catechetical approaches and publications since the 1960s, spearheaded by the *East Asian Pastoral Institute* (EAPI) founded by Johannes Hofinger. Though acting independently of the EAPI, the *Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education* (ECCCE), along with a handful of catechetical experts, began to work towards creating locally produced materials for catechesis and religious education.

With this context as backdrop, the following chapter will describe the NCDP and CFC’s creation more fully. Both documents will also be shown to reflect directions taken by

the Second Vatican Council, PCP II, and the various other magisterial documents, both local and universal that have shaped catechesis and its inculturation.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE *NATIONAL CATECHETICAL DIRECTORY FOR THE PHILIPPINES* (NCDP) AND THE *CATECHISM FOR FILIPINO CATHOLICS* (CFC)

The creation of the NCDP was guided by the conviction that “the overriding problem of catechesis is that of relating the essentials of the faith to the daily life experience of the people.”¹ This challenge of “bridging the gap” is addressed by “constantly integrating doctrine, morals, and liturgy, and communicating this at the level of the age and experience of the catechized” (NCDP 166). Envisioned to implement the directives of the NCDP, the CFC describes itself as following an integrated and inculturated approach—focused on the essentials, experiential/Filipino, Catholic, and practical (CFC 12-15).

Throughout the development of the NCDP and especially the CFC, the concern for integration and inculturation was concretized in the following norm: “Does this represent the common teaching of the Church and its direct impact on Filipinos’ living out their Catholic faith?”² This present chapter will describe and analyze the attempts to answer this deceptively simple question by discussing the planning, drafting, and approval processes of both NCDP and CFC. In doing so, the chapter will show that these processes involved negotiating the limits of acceptable theological diversity in a national catechism, and raised the more fundamental issues of understanding faith and its communication in catechesis.

¹ Joseph L. Roche, “The ‘Reality Principle’ in the CFC’s Communicating the Faith,” *Landas* 12 (1998): 4.

² Joseph L. Roche, “The Theological Concept of the CFC,” *Docete* 26 (January-March 2003): 20.

The Development of the NCDP

Planning the NCDP (1977-1979)

Under the leadership of Bishop Leonardo Z. Legaspi, the *Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Religious Instruction* (ECERI) of the *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines* (CBCP) began the planning process with an initial nationwide survey on the country's catechetical situation in December 1977. Among the major findings of this survey were a general lack of awareness of the 1971 *General Catechetical Directory* among catechists,³ and the desire for a catechetical directory adapted to the Philippine situation.⁴ The need for a directory was supported by the overall lack of coordination and knowledge of what others were doing in the catechetical ministry,⁵ and the inadequacy of catechetical materials used on the diocesan level. According to the study, these materials were mostly self-published mimeographed copies of imported texts, replicated without much adaptation, or in very few cases, original diocese-produced materials were utilized. The lack of materials and overall coordination played a role in a further problem: the perceived "unrelatedness" between ECERI and actual catechists in the field.⁶

Regional catechetical consultations were held in 1978 in order to bring ECERI and catechists from all over the country closer together and to facilitate their collaboration on the

³ Pedro S. de Achutegui, "Catechetical Situation in the Philippines: Tentative Report on the Initial Survey," *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* 52 (December 1978): 705-21.

⁴ Linda Tacorda, "History and Development of the NCDP," *Docete* 9 (January-March 1987): 17.

⁵ Achutegui, "Catechetical Situation in the Philippines," 717-18.

⁶ Leonardo Z. Legaspi, "The Growth of the Catechetical Ministry in the Philippines," *Docete* 9 (July-September 1986): 3-4.

proposed NCDP. An initial topic outline of the NCDP was discussed at these meetings.⁷ In March 1979, Bishop Legaspi called for a National Catechetical Consultation to be held in Silang, Cavite, in the outskirts of Manila. This meeting brought to light two pressing issues: the need for better coordination of catechetical efforts, and the desire for inculturated catechesis. In January 1980, recommendations for chapter authors were drawn up and approved. The team of drafters was comprised of the following: Rev. Joseph Roche, S.J., Teresita Nitorreda, Dr. Lourdes Lapuz, Dr. Lourdes Quisumbing, Rev. Lino Banayad, S.J., Rev. Teodoro Bacani (now bishop), Rev. Pedro de Achutegui, S.J., Rev. Moises Andrade, S.J., Rev. Eduardo Hontiveros, S.J., Rev. Antonio B. Lambino, S.J., Rev. James Meehan, S.J., Mathilde Beckers, Teresita Giron, Rev. Salvatore Putzu, S.D.B., and Virginia Almario.⁸ In 1981, an editorial board was set up to take care of uniformity in style, terminology, and documentation among the chapters. This smaller team was headed by Legaspi himself and comprised of Roche, Putzu, and Beckers.⁹

Drafting and Approval (1979-1985)

In the early stages, the major catechetical sources consulted by the drafters and the editorial board were the 1971 *General Catechetical Directory*, *Catechesi Tradendae*, *Evangelii Nuntiandii*, and *Sharing the Light of Faith*. Though the thrusts of these documents are evident in the NCDP, John Paul II's *Catechesi Tradendae* emerged as the main influence

⁷ Tacorda, 18. Preface, Part I Faith-Catechesis, Part II Ministry of the Word and Revelation, Part III Catechesis in the Pastoral Mission of the Philippines, Part IV The Christian Message, Part V Catechesis towards Maturity in the Faith, Part VI Pastoral Action in the Ministry of the Word.

⁸ Tacorda, 20.

⁹ Joseph L. Roche, interview with author, Quezon City, Philippines, 11 February 2009.

for the working document because of its Christocentricity, a major priority for Philippine catechesis. For the directory's theological content, the chapter authors were instructed to use Vatican II documents as their primary sources.

The team of chapter authors was able to agree on the following aims for the NCDP:

First, there is need to set our catechetical work throughout the Philippines in context—giving an overview of the situation in the Philippines as well as of solid contemporary theory on the practice of catechesis, as it pertains to our Philippine situation now, and in the years to come. Secondly, the directory tries to “direct,” to offer practical guidelines regarding the essentials in catechetical background, content, methodology, organization and resources. Thirdly, it attempts to stimulate and inspire new and creative efforts in catechesis while, fourthly, highlighting the general pastoral needs of the Church in the Philippines in some prioritized order. These last two aims combine to create a fifth: to offer clear directives regarding specific catechetical goals, and the practical means of accomplishing them, together with certain norms for critical evaluation and renewal. (NCDP Preface, E.)

Having clarified the directory's purpose, the work that began in 1979 steadily proceeded and was completed in July 1982. This First Draft was presented to the Philippine bishops and approved during their July 1982 meeting. A Second Draft incorporating the bishops' feedback was presented and approved by the CBCP in January 1983. Then, a second National Catechetical Consultation was held in Manila on 6-8 April 1983 for the purpose of obtaining feedback on the draft from catechists. The preparation of a Third Draft incorporating the catechists' input was underway, and a deadline was set for final approval by the CBCP on July 1983, when the NCDP received unexpected criticism.

An eighty-page dossier on the NCDP draft was distributed to all the Philippine bishops in June 1983, just one month before the meeting at which the Philippine bishops expected to approve the NCDP's third (and final) draft. The dossier was authored by Rev. Roberto Latorre of the *Opus Dei* and contained a serious critique of the NCDP. His general remarks are summed up in the following two points: “first, that the NCDP contains personal

theological reflections not grounded in magisterial teaching; and second, that the NCDP counterposes the doctrinal and pastoral approaches of pre- and post-Vatican II times, along with too much criticism of our predecessors.”¹⁰ Following the general remarks are specific remarks on the errors and deficiencies in the way that NCDP tackled the following fourteen topics:

(1) Revelation was too “experiential” and “evolutionistic”; (2) Theology of Liberation obscured the supernatural aspect of Christian liberation; (3) Fundamental Option theory neglected the traditional basis of the teaching of morality; (4) Original Sin was presented only partially and in a fragmentary way; (5) Angels were not mentioned; (6) lack of distinction between ministerial and common priesthood; (7) mention of the evolution of dogma was misleading; (8) not enough focus on the sacrificial character of the Holy Eucharist; (9) horizontalist tendency in the presentation of love of God and love of neighbor; (10) lack of precision in the use of “Grace”; (11) not taking seriously unwarranted criticisms of “saving one’s soul mentality”; (12) ambiguity in presentation of infant baptism; (13) the possibility of undesirable consequences due to the explanations of the sacrament of penance and reconciliation; (14) misleading position with respect to the Church and other religions.¹¹

To Latorre’s criticisms, ECERI responded with a twenty-four-page document,¹² as required by the *Episcopal Commission on Doctrine and Faith* of the CBCP. Among the key points of this response was explaining the difference between a theological manual and a catechetical directory, and criticizing Latorre’s “biased, prejudiced reading”¹³ while defending their original emphases. ECERI made minor revisions to the current draft, which the Philippine bishops unanimously approved at their July 1983 meeting. A Third Draft

¹⁰ Tacorda, 23.

¹¹ Tacorda, 23, quoting Roberto Latorre, “A Theological Study of the NCDP Draft: Maturing in Christian Faith, National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines, Revised Draft of February 1983. Based on Selected Texts of Important Documents of the Magisterium of the Church.”

¹² Editorial Board of NCDP, “Response to Dossier by Roberto A. Latorre, M.S., S.T.D.,” (mimeographed, ECCCE office files, Manila, 28 June 1983), 1-24.

¹³ Tacorda, 24.

incorporating final modifications was prepared and submitted to the Congregation for the Clergy in Rome on October 1983.

The NCDP editorial board waited for a year to get a response from the Congregation of the Clergy, during which, the first meeting on the CFC was held. Then on 10 October 1984, the NCDP draft was granted approval for a five-year experimental period and ten comments asking for clarifications on individual paragraphs:

(1) use DV 9's position in tackling of Scripture and Tradition; (2) distinguish, between public revelation and other manifestations in natural religions; (3) misleading distinction between Jesus of history and Jesus of faith; (4) present the mystery of the Trinity clearly; (5) specify the nature of original sin; (6) give more attention to objective moral criteria in the formation of conscience; (7) participation and responsibility of parents in the sexual education of their children need to be brought out more strongly; (8) role of ministerial priest in the sacrament of the Mass, and (9) the Real presence in the Eucharist need to be expressed more directly and clearly; (10) do not emphasize the difference between the "old" Church and the "new."¹⁴

Roche drafted ECERI's response to these ten items which resulted in the following minor revisions: (1) add a footnote quoting DV 9 to situate the tackling of Scripture and Tradition more broadly; (2) replace section on revelation with a direct quote from DV 3; (3) change "revelation" to "manifestation"; (4) delete the phrases "of history" and "of faith" after "Jesus"; (5) incorporate Trent's definition on original sin; (6) add footnote citing CT 53 on inculturation; (7) insert a new sentence on the "objective moral criteria"; (8) insert "the participation and responsibility of parents in the sexual education of their children must be insisted upon more strongly"; (9) clarify the role of ministerial priest by inserting "by virtue of their royal priesthood" . . . and "acting in the person of Christ"; and finally, (10) delete footnote no. 1 to NCDP 115 on Revelation and footnote no. 4 to NCDP 201 on the Church in

¹⁴ Tacorda, 26-27.

order to minimize the de-emphasize the difference between the “old” Church and the “new”.¹⁵ Once these minor revisions were incorporated into the text, the definitive version of the NCDP came out in January 1985.

Final Text and Structure of the NCDP

The 1985 definitive version is 328 pages in length,¹⁶ including eight illustrations dividing the main sections and chapters. The cover’s graphic element is a circle divided into three sections, each representing the vision of faith’s dimensions, and containing photographs depicting different aspects of the catechetical ministry. The first illustration found beside the title page is a reproduction of the cover of the first catechism published in the Philippines in 1593. According to the caption, its purpose is “to underline the ideal link binding together the first catechetical publication and this Directory” (NCDP, iv).

The NCDP’s first section (Context and Background) opens with a description of different aspects of the Philippine context (Chapter 1: Today’s Filipino), and a presentation of the Magisterium’s teachings on the nature, goal, sources, and forms of catechesis (Chapter 2: Today’s Catechesis). The third chapter, Foundations of Catechesis: Revelation and Faith closes the first section and serves as a bridge to the second section which is devoted to the content of catechesis. The presentation of content follows the Doctrine-Morals-Worship scheme; which corresponds to Creed-Commandments-Sacraments and Prayer. The breakdown of topics is as follows:

¹⁵ Tacorda, 25-27.

¹⁶ i-x; 1-271, Analytical Index, Index of Bible verses used, comparative table of paragraph numbering.

Doctrine: Jesus Christ, Trinity, Holy Spirit and Christian Spirituality, Creation, Original Sin, Church, Mary, Death, Judgment and Eternity

Moral: General (Commandments, Conscience), Specific (Family, Youth, Social Justice)

Worship: Prayer, Worship, Liturgy, Liturgical Year; Word and Sign in the Liturgy; Sacraments

Finally, the directory's third and final section contains Chapter 7: Methodology; and Chapter 8: Organization, Personnel, and Resources.

The NCDP's Christocentric focus is evident in its use of CT's goal for catechesis, "to put people not only touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ" (CT 21). Furthermore, the text states, "The heart of catechesis is not a doctrine, or a moral principle, or an act of worship, but 'a Person, the person of Jesus of Nazareth' (CT 5)" (NCDP 77). This Christocentricity has added relevance for inculturation efforts. The Jesus Christ of Filipino folk Catholicism is "predominantly the Christ Child of Christmas, the *Santo Niño*, and the suffering Christ of the Passion" (NCDP 41). In light of this, the directory calls for the following:

. . . an opening up of the traditional images to an equally concrete picture of the living Christ today—the Christ who listens and loves and is present to us in word, sacrament and Spirit within the Christian community. Rather than try to "tone down" the realistic concreteness of the crucified Christ, it would be better to stress the presence of the living, loving Christ among us today, calling us to mature discipleship and realistic service (NCDP 42).

Thus in the doctrinal section, primary place is given to Jesus Christ, about whom the directory emphasizes the following:

Jesus Christ is the center of the life of faith, and thus of all catechesis. The many popular Filipino images of Jesus can be used to bring out his true humanity and true divinity, thus helping the catechized to personally respond to Christ's perennial question: "Who do you say that I am?"—But the essential task of catechesis is to bring today's Filipino in close contact with the Christ of the Gospels, of the Creeds

and of the liturgy. This foundation must form the basis for the contemporary images of Christ the liberator, teacher, man-for-others (NCDP 249).

The chapter on Doctrine is followed by the treatment of Christian Morality under the premise that in the Philippines, “communicating the moral vision of the Gospel seems to be less effective” because, “. . . morality is often misunderstood as something flowing from faith as a second moment but not intrinsic to authentic belief itself” (NCDP 251). The purpose of the structure was to be able to show more closely and immediately, that our Christian convictions (embodied in our doctrines), demand commitment to a particular way of life (morality). Hence, the opening paragraphs on morality proceed to explain that Scriptures “provide a more integral view of faith and morality,” (NCDP 251) and therefore, “a return to our moral foundations in Scripture is the first step toward a more balanced, authentic catechesis of Christian moral life” (NCDP 255). Following this line of thought, the great biblical theme of the Kingdom of God, especially in relation to the Decalogue, Sermon on the Mount, and the grace of the Holy Spirit as promised by Jesus in the discourse at the Last Supper, are presented as points of emphases that can help catechists unite beliefs and practice (NCDP 256-257). This Creed-Code-Cult structure of the NCDP was criticized immediately after publication as disrupting the unity between Church and sacraments,¹⁷ to which Roche’s response was that the Directory “takes a practical stance,” whose “over-riding concern is the actual state of catechesis/religious education in the Philippines.”¹⁸

Finally, Christian doctrines and morality are linked to Christian worship, of which “the liturgy is the summit toward which the Church is directed . . . the fountain from which

¹⁷ Jose M. Calle, review of *Maturing in Christian Faith National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines*,” *Docete* 8 (April-June 1986): 30.

¹⁸ Joseph L. Roche, “Comments on the Review,” *Docete* 8 (April-June 1986): 32.

all her power flows” (SC 10, NCDP 318). After a description of Filipino Catholicism’s stress on rites and ceremonies, the directory acknowledges that “much of what (Filipinos) know of Christian doctrinal truth and moral values is learned through these sacramental and devotional practices” (NCDP 319). What follows is the directory’s treatment of prayer, worship and liturgy, and sacraments. The rationale for bringing together these topics under a single chapter is expressed by the directory itself: “While often in the past, liturgy and sacraments have been treated separately, both are taken together in this chapter since they really constitute one integral reality: worship-life of the Christian community” (NCDP 320).

The directory is replete with instances in which context and content are inter-related, creating a text that is practical and focused on its audience. The text goes through the process of describing problems and features of lived Christianity encountered by catechists in the country, and providing them with tools to bridge the gap between the faith and ordinary life. Aside from the directory’s Doctrine-Morals-Worship structure, these orientations will become more apparent and more controversial in the CFC.

The Development of the CFC

Planning the National Catechism (1983-84)

While at work on the national directory, ECERI already acknowledged the need for a book that implemented the vision of catechesis set out by the NCDP. While waiting for final approval of the NCDP from Rome, the first meetings on the national catechism were held from October 1983 to June 1984. At this early stage, the National Catechism Committee was formed. Committee head Archbishop Leonardo Legaspi appointed the following: Rev. Joseph L. Roche, S.J., Rev. Salvatore Putzu, SDB, Rev. Vicente Cervania, SDB, Rev. Pedro

Sevilla, S.J., Rev. Herbert Scholz, S.V.D., Mathilde Beckers, Sr. Isabelita Riego de Dios, R.V.M., Msgr. Sabino Vengco, Rev. Ruben Villote, Bishop Teodoro Bacani, Rev. Guido Everaert, C.I.C.M., Rev. Frank Vargas, C.M., and Rev. Van Parijs, C.I.C.M.¹⁹ A smaller Editorial Committee was formed later, comprised of Legaspi, Putzu, Roche, and Scholz.²⁰ The National Catechism Committee recognized that first on the agenda was agreeing on the following: (1) what kind of text was envisioned, and what were its goals; (2) how to organize the catechism; and (3) what sources to use for its content.²¹

Guided by the directory and consultations among themselves and with catechists, the National Catechism Committee determined that the main criteria for these preliminary decisions would ultimately have to be the catechism's projected use. Hence, they agreed on planning for "a brief, clear response to basic questions on doctrine, morals, and worship, and a simple explanation of the essentials of our Faith in terms of Vatican II thrusts."²² Furthermore, they opted for a single-volume work that was "concise yet comprehensive, directed generally to a national audience, but written specifically for adults."²³ The format was to include both essay explanations and question-and-answer portions. The intended

¹⁹ ECCCE Secretariat, "The Launching of the *CFC* in Tagaytay: A Dream Come True," *Docete* 19 (July-September 1997): 11-12.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Joseph L. Roche, "The National Catholic Catechism Project," *Landas* 1, no. 2 (July 1987): 165-82. This article was reprinted in *Docete* 10 (July-September 1987): 2-10.

²² Joseph L. Roche, "Initial Suggestions of Fr. Roche on the National Catechism," (photocopied hand-out, ECCCE office files, Manila, January 1984), 1.

²³ *Ibid.*

general goal of the national catechism was “to show how the essentials of the Catholic faith can be presented to Filipinos today following NCDP guidelines.”²⁴

With regard to content, the National Catechism Committee stressed the need for an inculturated and up-to-date Catholic catechism solidly grounded on Scripture and church teachings, especially Vatican II and contemporary Church pronouncements. Still, they needed to translate and reflect this guideline adequately in the catechism’s structure. Various organizing principles were discussed, such as the use of scripture and salvation history, as Wilhelm does in *Christ Among Us*,²⁵ or a sacramental/liturgical approach that uses parish and family life as pattern. Another idea was to use a scriptural text like Christ the Way, Truth, and Life, or Faith, Hope, and Love, as Max Thurian does in *Our Faith*.²⁶ Several other models were discussed, the foremost of which was found in *Credo: A Catholic Catechism*, for its similarity with the NCDP.²⁷

In earlier meetings, Roche had already suggested “a more traditional organization based on Creed, Commandments, and Sacraments in the optic and methodology of the NCDP, i.e., integrated, inculturated, and community-forming.”²⁸ By March 1984, Roche

²⁴ Roche, “The National Catholic Catechism Project,” 5.

²⁵ Anthony Wilhelm, *Christ Among Us: A Modern Presentation of the Catholic Faith for Adults* (New York: Harper Collins, 1967).

²⁶ Max Thurian, *Our Faith: Basic Christian Beliefs* (New York: Crossroad, 1982).

²⁷ German Catechetical Association, *Credo: A Catholic Catechism*, [English translation of *Gundriss des Glaubens*] trans., Sr. Benedict Davies, O.P. (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1983). Other texts consulted were the following: John Hardon, *The Catholic Catechism* (New York: Doubleday, 1975); Ronald Lawler, Donald Wuerl & Thomas Comerford Lawler, eds., *The Teaching of Christ: A Catholic Catechism for Adults* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1976); Jesús Ma. Cavánna, *Basic Christian Doctrine* (Manila: Vera-Reyes, 1983); Hoger Katechetisch Instituut, Nijmegen, *A New Catechism*, trans. Kevin Smyth, (London: Burns and Oates/New York: Herder and Herder, 1967); Johannes Feiner and Lukas Vischer, *The Common Catechism: A Book of Christian Faith* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975). Roche, “Initial Suggestions,” 2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.

presented two schemes for the planned catechism. One scheme followed the NCDP and *Credo*'s structure: Creed, Commandments, Sacraments and Prayer. The second scheme used a more Trinitarian ordering: The Father Almighty (Creation, Fall), Jesus Christ (Part 1: Incarnation, Public Life, Paschal Mystery; Part 2 Jesus the Way: Commandments and Beatitudes), The Holy Spirit (Grace, Church, Sacraments), Mystery of the End (Kingdom of Heaven, Amen).²⁹ This latter structure, approved in June 1984, also corresponds to NCDP's Doctrine-Moral-Worship, but with the major difference of the insertion of the discussion on Commandments after the creedal articles on Jesus Christ.

The rationale for this structure was the felt need to "integrate morality more closely with both doctrine and worship."³⁰ Hence, the commandments are placed in the context of following our Lord Jesus Christ, the second article of the Creed. Sacraments are explained in terms of the Holy Spirit and the Church, the Creed's third article.³¹ This was done based on the team and the NCDP's acknowledgment that the major problem in the Philippine context was the need to show more directly, the connection between the Christians' individual and corporate moral life with their worship. This overall pattern, and the many other initial decisions made by the team were among the first steps taken toward a more integrated and inculturated catechism.

²⁹ Joseph L. Roche, "Sharpening the Focus of the National Catechism for the Philippines," (photocopied hand-out, ECCCE office files, Manila, 23 March 1984).

³⁰ Joseph L. Roche, "The 'Reality Principle' in CFC's Communicating the Faith," in *A Companion to the CFC: A Collection of Essays on the History, Features, and Use of our National Catechism*, vol. 1 (Manila: ECCCE / Word and Life Publications, 1998), 141.

³¹ Ibid.

Drafting of the Catechism Begins (1984-1994)

Having formulated the foregoing desiderata for the national catechism, the National Catechism Committee proceeded to composition of individual chapters. Specific instructions given to chapter authors were “not to enter into theological debates,” “to take middle-ground positions on disputed matters,” and to follow the “orientations of the NCDP and Vatican II,”³² in keeping with their earlier deliberations. The plan was for these chapters to be brought together as a first draft that would be tested during a three-year experimental period. After experimentation, the revised draft would be submitted to Rome for approval, then translated and published in Filipino.

Preliminary drafts of majority of the chapters were already completed when political turmoil hit the country early in 1986. The work was abandoned at this time, and was only picked up again in 1987, at the January meeting of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines. At this meeting, a revised Preamble and the first two chapters of the catechism were presented. The bishops endorsed the project, and the catechism’s writing was resumed in 1987. As the original members of the National Catechism Committee gradually dropped out of the project, the writing and re-writing of the rest of the chapters ended up in the hands of Roche, except the first chapter, entitled “Who is the Filipino Catholic?” authored by Villote, and the chapter on the Church, written by Scholz.³³

By July 1989, the first draft’s part one was published as a book under the title *The Catholic Faith Catechism, Part I: Doctrine*. This part contained the first twelve chapters of

³² Leonardo Z. Legaspi to chapter authors of the National Catechism, 6 February 1984 (photocopied letter, ECCCE office files, Manila).

³³ Joseph L. Roche, interview by author, Quezon City, Philippines, 15 December 2008.

the catechism, a section that received a positive and enthusiastic response from the team. In July 1990, the first draft's Part Two was published, under the title *The Catholic Faith Catechism, Part II: Moral Life*. This part contained chapters 13-21. In between these two landmark dates, in November 1989, the revised draft of the "Universal Catechism" was distributed to all the bishops. Roche was assigned the task of writing the Philippine bishops' critique of the text. His study of the universal catechism's Revised Draft helped clarify the difference between the emphasis on faith-as-lived that he and the rest of the team had adopted vis-a-vis the CCC's theological bent.³⁴

A further insight came to the fore after the publication of *Part II: Moral Life* in 1990. Compared to the generally positive response of the editorial team to the first part, the second part's reception was more troublesome, owing to the more controversial nature of the topics. The main fruit of these discussions was the clarification of the distinction between an academic theologian discussing issues of morality and a catechist communicating the Church's moral teachings. It became clear to the editorial team that the foremost point of view that they needed to adopt was that of catechists.

In October 1992, Pope John Paul II issued his *Fidei Depositum* announcing the publication of the CCC, and on December 8 of the same year, the French edition was launched. A few weeks after this launch, in January 1993, the third part of the Philippine catechism was published under the title *The Catholic Faith Catechism, Part III: Worship/Sacraments*, completing chapters 22-29. Thus, by the time the CCC's first French edition came out, the CFC was almost complete.

³⁴ The major points of the Philippine bishops' critique are reflected in Joseph L. Roche, "Catechisms for the Post-Vatican II Church," *Landas* 4 (1990): 222-41.

In May 1993, the editorial team was informed that Roman approval needed to be obtained for the publication of experimental drafts of national catechisms. This policy entailed delaying the publication of a single volume that incorporated the three parts. More importantly, it became necessary to change their original plan of experimenting with, and revising the text before submission to Rome for approval and final publication. More intensive efforts were therefore exerted to incorporate references from the CCC and PCP II.

By the end of 1993, the thirtieth and last chapter on the Lord's Prayer had been completed. Also, the revised parts, now with references to the CCC, PCP II, and with more material on the Blessed Mother, were all brought together and published in a single bound volume, entitled *The Catholic Faith Catechism*. On 29 January 1994, this text was distributed to all the Philippine bishops and approved unanimously. After their annual meeting, minor revisions were made to incorporate some more feedback from the bishops. The catechism's title was also changed to *Catechism for Filipino Catholics*, to distinguish it from the CCC which had just been promulgated.³⁵ This version of the CFC was submitted to the Congregation for the Clergy and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) on 5 April 1994.³⁶

³⁵ Joseph L. Roche, "Revised Proposed Revisions of CFC: Response to Requests by Bishops," (photocopied document, Salvatore Putzu's personal files, Makati City, 7 March 1994).

³⁶ Carmelo Morelos (Bishop of Butuan and President of the CBCP) to Jose Cardinal T. Sanchez (Prefect, Congregation for the Clergy), 5 April 1994 (photocopied letter, Salvatore Putzu's personal files, Makati City, Philippines). In this letter, Morelos writes "Our efforts to come out with a catechism for our country has been largely inspired and assisted by the CCC, to which we have faithfully adhered as an authentic norm." Enclosed was Final Draft of the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics*, approved by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines in January 1994.

Gaining approval from Rome (1995-1997)

The *Primer* on the CFC states that from 1995 to 1996, “intensive written dialogues took place between ECCCE and the two Vatican Congregations charged with the responsibility of approving national catechisms.”³⁷ These written dialogues began in January 1995, right at the time when the bishops were occupied with the World Youth Day celebrations in Manila, and the whole country was in a frenzy over the impending arrival of Pope John Paul II. The process and content of this approval process involved the following sets of documents:³⁸

1. CBCP, “Catholic Faith Catechism final draft,” with cover letter dated 5 April 1994, 507 pages (i-xxi, 1-486)³⁹
2. Congregation for the Clergy, “Catechism for Filipino Catholics (*Bozza finale approvata della Conferenza dei Vescovi Cattolici delle Filippine nell’Assemblea del 29 gennaio 1994*),” 10 pages; and Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Some Observations on the Catechism for Filipino Catholics (draft),”⁴⁰ with cover letter dated 5 December 1994, 9 pages
3. CBCP, “Response of the CBCP to the Congregation for the Clergy and Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith,”⁴¹ with cover letter dated 5 May 1995, 35 pages
4. Congregation for the Clergy, “Catechism for Filipino Catholics,” 3 pages; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Evaluation of the CBCP Response to the ‘Observations of the CDF on the Catechism for Filipino Catholics (draft)’ with some additional observations,”⁴² with cover letter dated 5 August 1996, 21 pages

³⁷ ECCCE, *The CFC: A Primer* (Manila: ECCCE / Word and Life Publications, 1997), 6.

³⁸ All documentation on these “written dialogues” were obtained by the author from Salvatore Putzu’s personal files at the Don Bosco Compound, Makati City, Philippines. Other documents that were consulted but no longer listed and cited here were the comments of Luis Antonio Tagle, Bishop of Imus, Miguel V. Cinches, Bishop of Surigao, and Putzu’s two letters addressed to Legaspi dated September 1996. Their contents were incorporated into the responses of the CBCP.

³⁹ Hereafter cited as “CFC draft”.

⁴⁰ Hereafter cited as Congregation for the Clergy, “First set of observations,” and CDF, “First set of observations,” respectively.

⁴¹ Hereafter cited as “Response of the CBCP.”

⁴² Hereafter cited as Congregation for the Clergy, “Second set of observations,” and CDF, “Second set of observations,” respectively.

5. Leonardo Z. Legaspi to Pro-prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy and Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, "Basis for Oral/Written Dialogue between ECCCE and the SCC/SCDF," 25 September 1996, 4 pages
6. Two memos on the results of the meeting between Legaspi and Congregation for the Clergy and Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on 27 September 1996,⁴³ 1 page each
7. ECCCE, Dossier for Presentation by ECCCE Bishops to the CDF at the Meeting in Rome, 14-15 January 1997, dated 24 December 1996, 24 pages⁴⁴
8. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, "Synthesis of the principal shortcomings of the Catechism for Filipino Catholics (draft) with suggested corrections,"⁴⁵ with cover letter dated 8 January 1997, 14 pages
9. Congregation for the Clergy, Letter of Approval, 6 March 1997; with enclosed *Verbale* of the 14-16 January 1997 meeting, 7 pages

Highlights from the "Written Dialogues"

General observations

Negotiation and compromise characterize the written dialogues between the CBCP on the one hand, and the Congregation for the Clergy and CDF on the other. Differing priorities, expectations, and plain misunderstanding led to such a wide assortment of disagreements, all revolving around the allowable limits of pluriformity in catechesis. The first set of observations sent by the Roman congregations in December 1994 were especially important because they set the agenda for the ensuing conversation. Unfortunately, the CDF gave such a scathing critique of the CFC draft, beginning with a perfunctory statement on

⁴³ Leonardo Z. Legaspi, "Resumé of the results of my dialogue with SCC/SCDF," (facsimile, personal files of Salvatore Putzu, 27 September 1996); and Crescenzo Sepe, Secretary of the Congregation for the Clergy to Oscar Cruz, President of the CBCP, 27 September 1996 (photocopied letter, personal files of Salvatore Putzu, Makati City, Philippines). In these memoranda, the Congregation for Clergy agreed that the CFC structure and methodology were acceptable, and that their second set of comments were their last. Their approval depended on the results of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's (CDF) study of the draft. The CDF agreed that the Congregation for the Clergy was the competent dicastery on structure and method, and they would answer the CBCP's basis for oral/written dialogue, draw up an elenchus of doctrinal problems, and would arrange meeting in Rome.

⁴⁴ Hereafter cited as ECCCE, "Dossier for Presentation."

⁴⁵ Hereafter cited as CDF, "Synthesis."

this “meritorious undertaking” and continuing with the assertion that the CFC “fails to be in full correspondence with the CCC.”⁴⁶ The following opening paragraph captures the tone and content at the beginning of the discussions:

The CFC, however, in its efforts to be relevant tends to relativize doctrine, reducing it to the experience of the individual or local community. The historical mediation of Christ, the Church established by Christ, and the objectivity of the moral law can easily lose their normative functions. The hierarchy is seen more as the necessary internal structure of the believing community than as an office established directly by Christ to proclaim infallibly his message and assure the proper administration of the sacraments. In the CFC, the Sacraments are seen more as expressions of the community’s faith than as instruments of supernatural grace, moving, comforting, and challenging the believer from without. Moreover the role of sin tends to be downplayed since the theology from below starts from the experience of the believer and tries to make sense of it; since sin is senseless, it tends to be overlooked. The CCC, on the contrary, sees sin as the preeminent reason for the Incarnation and the Cross. It indicates the need for a divine, supernatural intervention from beyond human experience.⁴⁷

To this opening salvo, the CDF adds that there is a “general lack of dogmatic and apologetic grounding of Catholic positions . . .”. Hence, readers might “get the impression that there is no strong intellectual foundation to Catholic doctrine.”⁴⁸ Furthermore, the draft contains “frequent antithetical presentation;” “a tendency to promote liberation theology, and in some sections, feminism;” “an excessive reference to Filipino Catholics when the points in question so often apply equally to all Catholics;” and the inappropriate use of the *New American Bible* as opposed to translations using “standard, classical English” such as the *Revised Standard Version*.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ CDF, “First set of observations,” 1.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 2.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 3.

The Congregation for the Clergy had milder comments to offer; however, they touched on a major aspect of the CFC, its structure, which was unlike that of the CCC. In contrast to the CCC's Creed-Sacraments-Commandments-Prayer outline, the CFC follows a Doctrine-Moral-Worship-"Our Father" sequence, with the final Our Father part serving as an epilogue and synthesis to the whole text. Later on, the CFC's divergence with the CCC on structure was also picked up by the CDF in relation to morality. This matter was thought to be resolved at the meeting between Legaspi, the CDF and the Congregation for Clergy in September 1996, but was revived at the face-to-face meeting in Rome, and debated for two solid hours.⁵⁰

The content and tone of these general observations, especially those from the CDF were found insulting by the team of drafters as well as by other members of the CBCP, so much so that the suggestion was made that the bishops not respond to the observations.⁵¹ Nevertheless, a formal letter of reply was presented to the bishops by the editorial committee in June 1995 and was shortly sent to Rome. Toward the beginning of this response, the CBCP candidly expressed their negative reception of the observations by stating that "serious charges and generalizations were made . . . with little or no regard either for critical accuracy, or for the provenance of the CFC as approved by the Philippine hierarchy."⁵²

Overall, the Philippine bishops felt that key aspects of this inculturation project were either misinterpreted or misunderstood. First, the primary criticism that the CFC draft was "not in full correspondence with the CCC" led the CBCP to re-assert that local catechisms

⁵⁰ Salvatore Putzu, "Life at ECCCE and NCOP," *Docete* 19 (January-March 1997): 27-30.

⁵¹ Bishop Miguel V. Cinches to Archbishop Leonardo Z. Legaspi, 25 January 1995 (photocopied letter, personal files of Salvatore Putzu, Makati City, Philippines).

⁵² CBCP, "Response of the CBCP," 3.

were never meant to be clones of the CCC, citing John Paul II's statement on the use of the CCC as a sure point of reference,⁵³ and the Congregation for the Clergy's instruction that "local catechisms are to show creativity in fidelity, (to) devise ways to inculturate the manner in which the faith is passed on and taught."⁵⁴ Second, the sweeping criticism that the CFC draft "relativized doctrine" was not supported by the specific observations that comprised the bulk of the documents, and could have well been the CDF's "mistaking inculturating for relativizing."⁵⁵ Third, the "antithetical presentation" relates to the manner in which the CFC draft presented and sought to address typical misunderstandings and erroneous practices of the faith in the Philippines. Such misunderstandings were juxtaposed with an explanation that would get the reader to see where the gaps in knowledge and communication of the doctrines lay. The CDF, however, strongly disapproved of the style of contrasting erroneous or outdated beliefs and practices with "corrected" ones because this manner of presentation allegedly denigrated practices and theologies of the past. Fourth, the alleged "excessive reference to Filipino Catholics," and "tendency to promote liberation theology and feminism,"⁵⁶ are all denied in the CBCP's response, calling them "misreadings of the text or

⁵³ Aside from his *Fidei Depositum*, John Paul II reiterates this idea in "Communion Must Inspire Catechists," (speech at the symposium *Catechism on the Catholic Church and the Catechetical Apostolate*, Rome, 29 April 1993), reprinted in *L'Osservatore Romano* 19 (12 May 1993): 6.

⁵⁴ CBCP, "Response of the CBCP," 3, citing Crescenzo Sepe, "*Catechism of the Catholic Church* must serve as a model and exemplary (?) for local catechisms," (Concluding Report at the Symposium *Catechism on the Catholic Church and the Catechetical Apostolate*, Rome, 29 April 1993), reprinted in *L'Osservatore Romano* 19 (12 May 1993): 6.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 4. Also mentioned by Bishop Luis Antonio Tagle, "Response to the Observations of the CDF," (photocopied document, personal files of Salvatore Putzu, Makati City, Philippines, February or March? 1995). Tagle states, "...we cannot agree with the idea that the effort of the CFC to be relevant to the Filipino context amounts to relativizing doctrine." Cf., 1.

⁵⁶ CDF, "First set of observations," 2.

the concrete Philippine scene.”⁵⁷ Furthermore, this caution is also said to be motivated by fear of promoting ideologies, a nationalistic church, or of causing confusion about “change” in the Christian faith. Fifth, the issue of which Bible to use came up because of the existence in some versions of “mistranslations . . . in the effort to arrive at more ‘inclusive’ formulations.”⁵⁸ The CDF makes an example of the CCC’s decision to use the RSV over the NRSV precisely to avoid such mistranslations. In reply, the drafters defend their use of the NAB by virtue of its wide use as “the officially approved English translation for the liturgy in the Philippines,” and relative to the NAB, the unavailability of the RSV in the country.⁵⁹

Specific observations

The contours of the disagreement between the Roman congregations and CBCP become more obvious in the specific observations and the concomitant replies. These comments included a few relatively minor revisions to the text such as the addition of more content on angels and devils, changing “presider” to “priest who presides,”⁶⁰ and “the Spirit itself,” to “the Spirit Himself.”⁶¹ The majority of the observations asked for better clarity and more caution in terms of wording and theological position. Many of these revolved around matters of morality; such as, “be(ing) careful about berating ‘legalism’ in sexual matters. People, especially youth, need the strong backing of laws to resist the power of the sexual

⁵⁷ CBCP, “Response of the CBCP,” 5.

⁵⁸ CDF, “First set of observations,” 3.

⁵⁹ CBCP, “Response of the CBCP,” 6.

⁶⁰ CDF, “First set of observations,” 5.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

drive . . . ”.⁶² “Promoting social justice is a moral obligation but it is not a commandment (better to say *precept*) of the Church.”⁶³ Another observation urged greater conservatism in dealing with religious pluralism; such as, “Is it sure that non-Christians ‘receive’ God’s revelation?,”⁶⁴ which was later cited as an example of using theological opinion. Other tendencies mentioned were sexism, which “has often been used to criticize acknowledging any difference between the sexes and the legitimate distinctions that flow from it . . . better to employ a term that is not so ideologically charged;” and feminism, which should not influence the choice of bible translations (as in “avoid a feminist translation of Scripture”).⁶⁵ In the final draft, the CBCP conceded these points and accommodated the revisions recommended by the CDF.

⁶² CDF, “First set of observations,” 4. The original text states, “Second, through history human sexuality has attracted more than its share of taboos, restrictive customs, and laws. Licentious practice in society on one side frequently gave rise on the other to a quite unbiblical hostility among the “pious” toward sexuality and sex. Third, these two abusive trends tended to develop into a moralistic, legalistic rigidity regarding sexuality . . . ” (CFC draft 844).

⁶³ Ibid., 4. Original paragraph states, “A common complaint today among those plagued with difficult moral decisions is the lack of rootedness . . . For Filipinos, the Catholic Church can supply their solid point of reference, where they feel at home in continuity with their family and community traditions. The constancy of the Church’s moral tradition through changing times helps Filipino Catholics: 1) by grounding their own moral development with moral instructions, customs, and ways of acting; 2) by supplying much of the content of a Christian morality—The Ten Commandments, Christ’s Sermon on the Mount, the Commandments of the Church*; and 3) by serving as the structure or framework for their moral accountability as disciples of Christ. [footnote: *Commandments of the Church include: to assist at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of obligation; to fast and abstain on the days appointed; to confess one’s sins at least once a year, and receive Holy Communion during Easter time; to contribute to the support of the Church and promote social justice; and to observe Church laws concerning marriage.]” (CFC draft 595).

⁶⁴ Ibid., 3. Original paragraphs states, “But many Filipino Catholics ask if non-christians receive God’s revelation. The answer is surely Yes . . . Thus, even non-Christians ‘who do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and moved by grace, try in their actions to do His will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience—*may* achieve eternal salvation’ (LG 16)” (CFC draft 68).

⁶⁵ Ibid., 3. CFC draft 273 quotes Ps. 8: 5-7 What are we that you should be mindful of us; or our sons/daughters that you should care for them? You have made us a little less than the angels, and crowned us with glory and honor. You have given us rule over the works of your hands, putting all things under our feet.

Emphasizing the experiential dimension of doctrine

The lengthier and more serious observations involved ascribing major errors and difficulties on key doctrinal issues. The most problematic cluster of difficulties involved the sacraments, grace, and original sin. With regard to the sacraments in general, the CFC draft follows post-Vatican II emphases in sacramental theology; first, on Christ as Primordial Sacrament and Church as Fundamental Sacrament;⁶⁶ and second, on the essential role of symbols in daily life. As symbolic acts, sacraments are “performative word events . . . real happenings that make present the spiritual reality they express” (CFC draft 1210). This aspect of sacraments was emphasized to correct what the CFC drafters viewed as a prevalent error in the Philippine pastoral context:

. . . an overly materialistic view that locates the sacred solely in the objectified, mechanical elements. It is not the isolated, objectified, physical baptismal water, or the oil/chrism that mechanically sanctifies but rather their use in the total symbolic action of washing/bathing and anointing when celebrated in faith in the liturgical ritual (CFC draft 1212).

Another key component of the draft’s approach to the sacraments is its explanation of how sacraments “give grace,” as follows:

This simple description of the sacraments’ effect is perhaps the most widely understood part of the traditional definition. “Give grace” is usually taken to mean “automatically produce,” an impersonal, mechanical image confirmed by the

⁶⁶ The paragraph of concern states, “The idea that the Church is “sacrament” may sound strange at first to many Filipinos. We have been used to thinking of “sacrament” solely as the “seven sacraments” . . . But if we focus on the essentials of “sacrament,” we find both Christ Himself as well as the Church fulfill the notion perfectly. A sacrament is basically a material sign or symbol which effects, or makes present a spiritual, grace-filled reality. So Christ, the eternal Word made flesh, is the visible sign, the sacrament of God. So too the Church, with her visible, institutional structure, is for us the sacrament of Christ, representing him, making him present . . . (CFC draft 1081).

Also see CFC draft 1157: “In the last chapter we saw that both Christ and the Church are truly ‘sacraments.’ Both are sensible signs making present a spiritual reality . . . Therefore the seven ritual sacraments we all know as Catholics must be seen as flowing directly from the broader ‘sacramentality’ of Christ and the Church.”

common description of sacraments as instruments of grace. Grace is spoken of as some thing that one loses by sin and gains by receiving the sacraments (CFC draft 1216).

The liturgical renewal stresses that grace is not a quantifiable thing, but God's personal presence, liberating action, and loving relationship with us through the Risen Christ in the Spirit. The Sacraments, therefore, are not mechanical instruments producing some product, but symbolic actions that make present the saving actions of God in Jesus Christ. They "activate" Christ's great saving deeds of the past and make them present through the Spirit-filled symbolic actions that effect what they celebrate/signify (CFC draft 1217).

These paragraphs were criticized for "attack(ing) a previous theology of grace" and for not distinguishing between uncreated and sanctifying grace. Aside from being erroneous, this conflation allegedly causes greater difficulty in explaining an increase of grace and the effect of a sacrament.⁶⁷

The CDF makes this criticism in spite of the fact that the draft devotes the following two full paragraphs to explaining the effect of sacraments:

The effect of the sacraments is twofold: to draw us into a closer relationship to the Church, and thereby to relationship to Christ himself, in the Spirit, and to the Father. How do the sacraments effect this? . . . when we fully, consciously and actively celebrate the sacraments, they exercise all our powers—mind, heart, affections, will, imagination, and behavior. This gives the sacraments their special power to shape our imaginations, develop our affections and direct our behavior . . . in brief, to gradually transform us into Christ's way of thinking . . . acting . . . praying and loving, forgiving, and serving . . . (CFC draft 1218)

But sacraments can effect this only if celebrated in faith, for without faith, no saving personal relationship can be established or strengthened... "They do, indeed, confer grace, but in addition, the very act of celebrating them most effectively disposes the faithful to receive this grace to their profit, to worship God duly, and to practice charity" (SC 59). (CFC draft 1219)

These paragraphs emphasize the experience of sacramental grace, how it works, and the need for active participation in the sacraments. The implication that the fruitful reception of grace

⁶⁷ CDF, "Second set of observations," 14.

among those celebrating the sacraments depends upon their dispositions too is hardly debatable; however, according to the following comment from the CDF, too little focus was given to God: “It seems as though the sacraments just affect us insofar as they develop our inherent potential . . . The power that the sacraments have comes from God.”⁶⁸

To all these issues, the Philippine bishops made the clarification that no attack on a previous theology was intended, and that grace as quantified and automatically produced by sacraments is a common misunderstanding of the meaning of *ex opere operato*. Furthermore, the prime analogate for understanding “increase of grace” is our human relationships of love whose deepening and “increase” we understand without difficulty. The emphasis on the concrete dimension of faith is also evident when the bishops explained that the categories “uncreated” and “sanctifying” grace were intentionally skipped in order to lessen abstract terminology.⁶⁹

The end result of the exchanges on this issue is the following modified paragraph, which sheds light on the root of the disagreement:

To give grace: The Church has always taught that the sacraments give grace *ex opere operato*. This means that any lack of holiness on the part of the minister does not prevent grace from being offered. For Christ himself acts through his Spirit when the sacraments are celebrated properly, i.e., according to prescriptions and with the intention of doing what the Church intends to do. Christ is active in all the sacraments, most especially in the Holy Eucharist, when his Body and Blood are made present under the appearances of bread and wine, through the priest’s words of consecration and the power of the Holy Spirit. He offers himself and effects a response from us, since we cannot remain neutral before a sign of God’s love. He initiated a saving encounter with men through his Incarnation, and he continues the activity of his initiative through the Church’s ministry. (CFC 1527)

⁶⁸ CDF, “First set of observations,” 6.

⁶⁹ CBCP, “Response of the CBCP,” 14.

This completely new paragraph indicates that it was sacramental causality that was at issue, and it was the objective truth that sacraments cause grace, regardless of the participants' or the ministers' dispositions that the CDF wanted to protect and emphasize. However, by merely repeating the formula *ex opere operato* and its definition, the new paragraph misses the opportunity to correct the misconceptions that the draft points out. More seriously, it loses the focus on the subjective and participatory dimensions; i.e., the actual people celebrating the sacraments.

A similarly lengthy and heated discussion took place on the matter of original sin. In order to present the topic more concretely, the CFC drafters opted to define original sin as encompassing both the sinful state that Adam and Eve's originating sin caused, and its consequences, namely, the sinful structures/sin of the world and concupiscence, the internal disorder experienced within, as the following paragraph shows:

Baptism is often reduced in the popular religious imagination to wiping away some mysterious dark reality inherited from Adam and Eve called "original sin." The renewal clarifies this misconception: "original sin" in the context of Baptism refers not to the personal originating sin of the first humans (Adam and Eve), but to the sinful state resulting from that first sin. This sinful state includes both the sinful situation into which we are all born (the "sin of the world"), as well as that interior disorder we experience within us (CFC draft 1261).

In the first set of observations from the CDF, the paragraph elicited merely the following correction; namely, not to identify original sin with concupiscence nor the "sinful situation" into which we are born. Rather, original sin should be defined clearly as a lack of supernatural grace. The CBCP replied that the desired emphasis was to describe what this privation of supernatural grace meant *for us*—stating, "in following GS 13, the CFC draft

was explaining this privation in terms of its consequences.”⁷⁰ The CDF found the explanation unacceptable, saying, “the present draft . . . offends grievously against the Catholic faith in ignoring (and as appears from the Response, deliberately so) the notion of original sin as a lack of sanctifying grace.”⁷¹

The final paragraph written by Roche is three times as long as the original, but it spells out the complete theological definitions recommended by the CDF:

Original sin in the context of Baptism refers not to the personal sin committed by the first human beings and described figuratively in Gen. 3: 1-7, but rather to the sinful condition into which all human beings as descendants of Adam and Eve are born, with the exception of Jesus and Mary Most Holy. Such an inherited “sinful condition or state” consists essentially in the privation of sanctifying grace.

The “originating sin” committed by Adam and Eve had and continues to have also other disastrous consequences, both within each human being and on the environment in which we live. Thus, not only do we experience moral weakness . . . but also a certain inclination to evil, which has traditionally been called concupiscence.

As a consequence of concupiscence and our moral weakness and personal sins, we find ourselves in a society which is characterized by sinful structures, injustices, suffering, frustrations and moral aberrations, which clearly stand against God’s original plan for mankind. (CFC 1601)

As a fourth, and final example, the CDF reviewers took issue with the paragraphs describing moral decision-making.⁷² After a discussion of “foundations of morality,” i.e., the human person as moral agent, possessing freedom and conscience (Chapter 13), the social context of morality (Chapter 14), and the meaning of moral norms (Chapter 15), the section on moral decision-making outlines the following three steps comprising its process: (1)

⁷⁰ CBCP, “Response of the CBCP,” 18. “The CFC, following GS 13, concentrates on the human condition as it is experienced today, i.e., the effects of the state ensuing from the First Sin. It does not identify original sin with concupiscence nor “sin of the world,” but both are needed to make meaningful any definition of “originated sin” described solely in terms of privation of grace.” Ibid.

⁷¹ CDF, “Second set of observations,” 1.

⁷² These were incorporated in the final version of the CFC, paragraphs 830-842.

discernment; (2) demand, i.e., the work of conscience in applying moral norms to our situation; (3) judgment or decision (CFC draft 661-668). The CDF criticized this structure for making “conscience appear more important than the moral norm”⁷³ and effectively diminishing the binding power of the Church’s interpretation in faith and morals. The CDF recommended a change in order, i.e., to start with the Church’s role in presenting moral norms, then afterwards, to discuss formation of conscience and moral decision-making in the following quote:

. . . in forming his conscience the Christian looks first to the Church’s teaching . . . then when difficult situations arise, he tries to see how the Church’s teaching applies to his particular circumstances. In this way the Christian conscience is never considered apart from the concrete order of salvation established by Christ.⁷⁴

Then, a more serious suggestion is offered as a follow-up: “Such a change would even be easier if the CFC, like the CCC, were to present the Church (and before the Church, the Holy Spirit) prior to following of Christ in discipleship.”⁷⁵ The insinuation to restructure the catechism was all the more disturbing at this late stage, considering the Congregation for the Clergy’s readiness to approve the text. In the end, the present structure of the catechism and this particular section was kept, but with the addition of several caveats—the CFC’s section on morality needed to show much greater emphasis on the role of the Church in decision-making.

Again, a difference in priorities is evident in this example. The Philippine editorial team wanted to highlight the role of persons and the action of conscience in order to explain how conscience operates vis-à-vis moral laws. The CDF placed this section among the

⁷³ CDF, “Second set of observations,” 10.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

weakest parts of the catechism, whereas the CBCP considered it one of the strongest parts precisely because it tries to relate more directly, church teaching on conscience and moral norms, with the everyday experience of making moral decisions.

Summary Observations on the “Written Dialogues”

These discussions on grace, sacraments, original sin, and moral-decision making disclose the difference in the CDF and the CFC editorial team’s approach toward communicating doctrine. On the side of Philippine bishops and the CFC drafters, the main priority was directly relating the faith to the catechists’ work and what they typically encounter in the Philippine pastoral context. Hence, their emphasis was on faith as an integral whole that is experienced and lived by ordinary Filipino Catholics. The consequence for this priority is highlighting the role of the person living the faith and downplaying the abstract, albeit traditional categories such as uncreated/sanctifying grace, and the privation of grace. On the side of the Roman congregations, the priority seemed to be communicating the integrity of faith’s objective truths as handed down in the Roman Catholic tradition, and as encapsulated in the CCC. Hence, the critiques repeatedly stressed the inclusion of classical terminology for the sake of accuracy and emphasizing continuity.

A telling sign of the CDF’s predisposition toward continuity is the criticism pertaining to “antithetical presentations” in the CFC. This was restated more acutely in the second set of observations: “Particular care should be taken to eliminate from the text any antithetical presentations of the doctrine and practice of Christian faith. Filipino Catholics

should not get the impression that there has been any change in the faith.”⁷⁶ Remarkably, this sentiment was echoed more than a decade before this exchange, in both Latorre’s dossier, and the Congregation for the Clergy’s criticism of the NCDP draft. This brings out the need to acknowledge legitimate development of doctrine, and a more positive attitude toward the issue of change in the faith. To end their rejoinder, the Philippine bishops state, “the identity of Catholic Faith is NOT achieved by static repetition of the same formulas, but by “the unceasing interplay of the Gospel and of man’s life, both personal and social (EN 29).”⁷⁷

Another difference lies in both sides’ perception and understanding of where they diverged. In the second set of observations, which repeats and elaborates much of the points covered in the first set, the CDF states that the CFC draft’s major flaws were the interweaving of Church teaching and theological opinion, and the inappropriate blending of Church teaching and the pastoral context, as the following quotes show:

As it is the function of a catechism to expound the faith of the Church and not the interpretations of some theological current, the interweaving of these two levels (Church teaching and theological opinion) is not only methodologically incorrect, but also damaging to the faith each time an opinion presented contradicts the Church’s own teaching.

Perhaps the authors of the CFC considered that the combination of Church doctrine with modern theological interpretation was the appropriate way to present to Filipino Catholics an inculturated faith. . . . The CFC, like any other catechism, must certainly take the culture of those to whom it is addressed, but it will have to *completely prescind from anything which is not the Church’s own explanation of the Christian faith* (emphasis mine).⁷⁸

⁷⁶ CDF, “Second set of Observations,” 3.

⁷⁷ CBCP, “Dossier for Presentation,” 3.

⁷⁸ CDF, “Second set of Observations,” 2.

The Philippine bishops could not subscribe to these statements, arguing that their continued work on the CFC was premised on the possibility of using current philosophical and theological insights, and that, while they did not “prescind” from anything that was not the Church’s own explanation, there was no inappropriate blending, interweaving, or subordination of Church teaching to either context or theological opinion. The examples discussed above (grace, sacraments, original sin, and who “receives” Revelation) were cited by the CDF as instances where the inappropriate intermingling of Church teaching and theological opinion occurred; whereas for the editorial team, they were interpreting and explaining Church teaching by using “middle-of-the-road” points of view, and taking the subjects and lived faith into account. In their third and final written response, the Philippine bishops made the clarification that,

despite stern declarations to the contrary, the dialogue over the CFC has never been, nor is it now, a question of *Depositum Fidei*. Rather, it is a question of interpretations of the CFC’s exposition of the Catholic Faith, at the catechetical level, and in the Philippine context.⁷⁹

On the one hand, both the CDF and CFC editorial team would agree that catechisms should neither “subordinate” Church teaching, nor include theological debates, and promote particular theological schools. The instruction to leave open contentious topics was explicitly known by both the CDF and CFC editorial team. In fact, after the publication of both CCC and CFC, their authors articulated a common principle used in writing the texts, that of the *regula fidei*.⁸⁰ On the other hand, it is another thing to say, and perhaps

⁷⁹ ECCCE, “Dossier for Presentation,” 2.

⁸⁰ Cristoph Schönborn, “The Theological Concept of the CCC,” *Docete* 25 (October-December 2002): 7-14; Joseph L. Roche, “The Theological Concept of the CFC,” *Docete* 26 (January-March 2003): 19-25. Also see Cristoph Schönborn, “By Whose Authority?,” introductory essay to *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*

impossible to enforce the idea of “completely prescinding from anything which is not the Church’s own explanation of the Christian faith.” Such a claim assumes too clear and great a separation between theology, as faith seeking understanding, on the one hand, and the deposit of faith on the other.

These disagreements raise several fundamental questions: (1) What is considered acceptable theological pluralism in national catechisms vis-à-vis the CCC?, (2) Who are the more authoritative interpreters of national catechism drafts?, and ultimately, (3) What does communicating the faith involve in a national catechism?

Final Meeting in Rome, Official Approval

In October 1996, approval of the CFC was obtained from the Congregation for the Clergy, dependent upon the final approval of the CDF. On 8 January 1997, a twelve-page “Synthesis” was received from the CDF containing observations and changes to be made to the catechism. On the same date, a meeting was set between the CDF’s Panel of Reviewers and a Philippine delegation comprised of Archbishop Leonardo Legaspi, Bishop Manuel Sobreviñas, Rev. Salvatore Putzu, S.D.B., Bishop Honesto Pacana, and Bishop Benjamin de Jesus.⁸¹ This meeting was scheduled for 14-15 January 1997 at the CDF headquarters in Rome.⁸² On January 11, Roche and the Philippine delegation held a preliminary meeting to

and the Craft of Catechesis by Petroc Wilely, Pierre de Cointet, and Barbara Morgan (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008), xxxi-xxxii.

⁸¹ On 4 February 1997 Bishop Benjamin de Jesus was assassinated in front of the cathedral in Jolo, Sulu. As bishop of this majority Muslim area, and advocate of peace and inter-religious dialogue, he was a prime target for extremists groups. He was a member of ECCCE as the representative for Mindanao-Sulu.

⁸² Salvatore Putzu, “Life at the ECCCE and National Catechetical Office of the Philippines,” *Docete* 19 (January-March 1997): 27.

prepare for the encounter in Rome. Though Roche did not go to Rome, he presented the response to the CDF's "Synthesis" at this preparatory meeting.⁸³

On 14 January 1997, the first day of the meeting in Rome, two requests from the Philippine delegation were granted. The first was Legaspi's appeal that the Philippine delegation's response be made the basis for discussion rather than the CDF's "Synthesis." The second was the CDF's "admission in principle that the structure of the CFC could be retained if the Reviewers failed to show that the present structure entailed doctrinal difficulties, and if (our) delegation was amenable to introduce the necessary changes in specific paragraphs."⁸⁴ On the second day of the meeting, the Panel of Reviewers dropped the request for a change in structure.

The meetings proceeded very slowly on the first and second days, so Legaspi asked for an extension of the meeting for half a day more. Putzu worked round the clock as he prepared updated responses on the night of January 13, before the meetings even began, and on the evening of January 15, as he and Legaspi prepared new formulations of contested paragraphs of the CFC.⁸⁵ On the morning of January 16, the Panel of Reviewers approved these new formulations "without much opposition or substantial changes."⁸⁶

At the end of the meeting, the CFC was approved in principle, "on the basis of all the corrections agreed upon by the two bodies, including the corrections that had been accepted

⁸³ The replies to the "Synthesis" were grouped into three categories: corrections accepted completely (22 items), suggested corrections accepted with modifications (22 items), and suggestions not accepted (13 items). The most significant of the CDF's recommendations that the team rejected was to change the structure of the CFC and follow the CCC.

⁸⁴ Putzu, "Life at the ECCCE," 30.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 30-31.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

earlier by the CBCP.”⁸⁷ In closing, Archbishop Tarcisio Bertone, moderator of the meeting and Secretary of the CDF, “pointed out that the CFC was the first national catechism to be granted formal approval by the CDF since the promulgation of the CCC. This explained why things had to be scrutinized so thoroughly.”⁸⁸ In response, Legaspi “expressed the gratitude of the delegation and the CBCP for the understanding and collaboration found in the CDF.”⁸⁹

There was much rejoicing upon the delegation’s return from Rome. Legaspi reported on the event at the CBCP’s general assembly in January 1997. Putzu immediately began the revision of the CFC according to the agreed upon recommendations, and Roche began working on the Analytical Index. At the beginning of February 1997, this revised text was sent to the Congregation for the Clergy and the CDF.

While waiting for formal approval, plans were made to launch the CFC, and other ideas to promote the new catechism were discussed. Finally, on 6 March 1997, formal approval of the CFC came in the form of a letter signed by Archbishop Dario Castillon and Msgr. Crescenzo Sepe, Pro-Prefect and Secretary of the Congregation for the Clergy, respectively.

CFC’s Final Text and Structure

The final, approved catechism is a book of 704 pages (i-xxvi, 1-678), and 30 chapters. The cover depicts a bamboo cross, the text’s year of publication and title, 1997 *Catechism for Filipino Catholics*. Inset is a small graphic of the cover of the Tagalog *Doctrina Christiana*

⁸⁷ Ibid., 32.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

of 1593 which also appears on the title of the NCDP. The juxtaposition of the two catechisms illustrate both continuity and renewal of the catechetical ministry in the country.

The overall structure is as follows:

Preface
 Foundations
 Who is the Filipino Catholic
 God's Call: Revelation
 Our Response: Faith
 Our Unbelief
 Part I: Christ, Our Truth (Doctrine)
 Part II: Christ, Our Way (Moral Life)
 Part III: Christ, Our life (Worship/Sacraments)
 Epilogue: The Lord's Prayer (Synthesis of whole work)

The catechism opens with a preface that gives the book's context, rationale, characteristics, and provides some instructions on its use. Then, the first four introductory chapters lay the foundation for the whole work: Revelation, Faith, and the context and manner through which Revelation and Faith are experienced in the concrete Philippine setting.

The structure of the catechism from this point on, has been described as Christocentric and Trinitarian.⁹⁰ In Part I: Christ Our Truth, Jesus is portrayed as Revealer of God our Father and Creator, and Incarnate Son, who died for our salvation, resurrected, and will come again at the Parousia (Chapters 5-12). In Part II: Christ, Our Way, Jesus' life and ministry is shown to be the basis for a Christian life of virtue and obedience of the commandments (Chapters 13-21). Once more, the catechism makes explicit the rationale for this much-contested arrangement of material in the following quote:

The main purpose for introducing Catholic Morality here, immediately following the Creed's article on Jesus Christ, is to stress the fact that living morally for Catholics cannot be reduced to a series of do's and don'ts. Rather, it centers on

⁹⁰ CFC 18. Also see Joseph L. Roche, "The Making of the CFC, " in *A Companion to the CFC*, 13.

our daily following of Jesus Christ as his disciples. With all the difficulties, challenges, and ambiguities of moral life today, “the following of Jesus Christ” may be the best single expression for catching the core of “the good life.”⁹¹

Part III: Christ, Our Life begins with a chapter on the Holy Spirit, the Giver of Life (Chapter 22). This is followed by chapters on the Church, prayer, worship, and the sacraments (Chapters 24-28). The idea for linking these chapters in this way may be stated in two ways. First, “the Holy Spirit gives life and empowers the Church, its sacramental life, and resurrection to life everlasting” (CFC 1265). Second, Christ is encountered in our life in the Spirit and through the Church, its worship and sacraments. The final goal of this life in Christ is also the last article of the creed and the catechism, Resurrection of the Body and Life Everlasting (Chapter 29). Finally, the *Our Father* is used as a synthesis for the entire catechism (Chapter 30). It begins with St. Augustine’s explanation of the Our Father in terms of the Beatitudes, Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and Commandments. Then, the “You Petitions” and the “We Petitions” are explained in terms of moral life, sacraments, and doctrine. Finally, the final doxology’s key words, God’s kingdom, power, and glory are explained in relation to what they mean for us.

Another way of speaking about this tripartite division of the catechism is in terms of the following questions: “What can I know?” “What can I do?” and “What can I hope for?”. Part I replies to the first question, Part II responds to the second question, and Part III responds to the third question.

⁹¹ CFC, Introduction to Part II, page 186.

Chapter Structure

Each chapter begins with quotes from scripture and magisterial teaching that pick up the chapter's theme. The first section, the *Opening* identifies the topic and situates the chapter within its Part. This is followed by the *Context* portion that “focuses on the topic precisely in terms of our specific Filipino situation, with its particular problems, attitudes, values, and weaknesses,”⁹² and picks up an aspect of the “cultural, historical, and ecclesial context within which the faith is lived at present in our country.”⁹³

After introducing the topic through the sources of the faith—Scripture, church teachings, and human experience—each chapter's *Exposition* develops the subject matter, using the same sources of the faith. Then the *Integration* section “offers one explicit example of interrelating the doctrinal, moral and worship dimensions of the topic in question.”⁹⁴ Finally each chapter ends with a *Question-and-Answer* section that serves to summarize the main points of each chapter and provide a glimpse of the chapter's content in condensed form.

The CFC on Doctrine

Entitled “Catholic Doctrine: Christ Our Truth,” the CFC's fifth chapter serves as a bridge between the preliminary matter, that is, on the Filipino context, Revelation and Faith on the one hand, and the individual creedal truths to be tackled in the forthcoming chapters, on the other. In the *Opening*, this chapter qualifies the kind of truth that doctrines represent.

⁹² Roche, “The Making of the CFC,” 14.

⁹³ ECCCE, *The CFC: A Primer*, 12.

⁹⁴ Roche, “The Making of the CFC,” 14.

“Catholic doctrine expresses the truth that Christ our Lord brings us. This truth does not resolve all the problems and riddles of our daily lives . . . But, as Christians who are open to Christ’s truth in faith, we have a direction and a basic insight into life” (CFC 217). In the *Context* section, the urgent need for understanding the practice of the Catholic faith in the Philippines is illustrated. The *Exposition* begins by stating that Filipinos receive the rule of faith, the summary of doctrines at baptism, through the Creed. The discussion proceeds accordingly: first, some historical background is given. This includes an explanation of biblical, liturgical and catechetical creeds, and the Creed today. Second, objections to the Creed are raised, namely, the seeming irrelevance of it for many Filipino Catholics, and related to this objection, a tendency to falsely oppose doctrine on the one hand, with moral and pious living on the other. Third, functions of the Creed as a summary of beliefs, a pledge of loyalty to God and the Church, and a proclamation of identity are explained. In the Integration section, the CFC points out the Creed’s historical connections with the liturgy, as well as the inner link between Christian truths and moral behavior as many scriptural texts show. Finally, the *Q&A* reviews the above points.

The next seven chapters tackle the articles of the Creed on “God the Father Almighty” (Chapter 6), “Creator” (Chapter 7); “The Fall from Glory” (Chapter 8), “God Promises a Savior” (Chapter 9), “Jesus Christ: Mission and Person” (Chapter 10), “Christ has Died” (Chapter 11), and “Christ is Risen and Will Come Again” (Chapter 12). A notable feature of these chapters is the explicit focus on the practical dimension of our believing in these truths. This way, the relevance for life is brought out from the very beginning and throughout the chapter, not only at the end. For example, after describing the context of

Filipinos' faith in Jesus in particular, Chapter 10 "Jesus Christ: Mission and Person" emphasizes that "the irreplaceable starting point for knowing Christ is the historical Jesus" (CFC 475). Similarly, Filipino Catholics today "come to personal faith through the Christian community's witness . . . with the help of inspired Scriptures and of the continued inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the living Tradition of the Church" (CFC 475). Then, the CFC explains Jesus' Public Ministry before it goes into Chalcedon's "True Man, True God, One Person." Finally, the *Exposition* closes with "Mary, Mother of the Son of God," that is, in relation to the plan of salvation through Christ. Finally, in the *Integration* section, Jesus as the fundamental moral norm and the central role of Christ in all our worship is described. This manner of presentation contrasts with the CCC's expositions on Jesus, which follows this order: (1) his names, Jesus, Christ, Son of God, and Lord; (2) Chalcedon's "True God, True Man;" (3) the Blessed Virgin Mary (CCC 430-483); then finally, (4) the Mysteries of Christ's Life (CCC 512-570). This last section on the mysteries of Christ's life is then structured chronologically beginning with the infancy narratives, the "hidden life," then his public ministry.

The CFC on Christian Morality

The CFC treats Christian morality immediately after the chapter on the Creedal statement on the Resurrection to emphasize Christian moral life as the following of Christ. Hence, Chapter 13 entitled "Living As Disciples of Christ" discusses constituent elements of personal Christian living: the moral agent, human persons; dignity and freedom, personal moral responsibility, and conscience. This is followed by Chapter 14 "The Challenge of Following Christ" which develops the social context of Christian morality (CFC 729).

Chapter 15 “The Christian Law of Life-Giving Love” focuses on the function of moral norms and law in Christian morality. Taken together, these three chapters sum up key aspects of “general morality.” Then Chapters 16 through 21 discuss specific morality in terms of the individual commandments, similar to the CCC.

In the *Context* sections of these chapters, the CFC describes Catholic Filipinos’ fondness for “religious processions, novenas and numerous devotions to Christ our Savior, to Mary, and the other Saints;” the presence of growing religious movements (CFC 679); the Church’s influence on social awareness and concern for justice and the poor (CFC 731); and several traditional values such as personalism, safeguarding one’s *amor propio* (dignity) and avoiding *hiya* (shame). These positive aspects of Filipino culture and faith are then juxtaposed with the following negative aspects, indicating the challenges for moral catechesis ahead. Relative to popular piety and devotions, the CFC states that these have often “fail(ed) to produce acts of loving service, forgiveness, and sacrifice.” This predicament reveals “a serious gap between external ritual expression of Christian faith, and authentic discipleship: following Christ in action” (CFC 680). Regarding the institutional Church’s positive role in addressing poverty and social injustice, the CFC points out the ever-wide and shameless gap between the rich and poor, the “persistence of widespread graft and corruption, and the continued ruthless destructive exploitation of our natural resources” (CFC 732). Finally, the CFC describes the Filipino’s seeming ambiguity toward moral norms. On the one hand, their personalism weakens commitment to the following of laws, and on the other hand, one’s *amor propio* and *hiya* demand external compliance with the law.

Against this backdrop, each of these chapter's *Exposition* sections develop their subject matter accordingly. Chapter 13 "Living as Disciples of Christ" begins by identifying the dignity of the human person as the key aspect in any discussion of moral living. This dignity is revealed by Christ to be "grounded directly on their origin, meaning and destiny" (CFC 685). Then drawing from philosophy, other aspects of persons as social beings are put forth—i.e., as open and relational, conscious and possessing self-awareness, embodied spirits, historical realities, unique yet fundamentally equal. Freedom is shown to be an essential component of this view of the human person—both "freedom from everything that opposes our true self-becoming with others in community" especially sin (CFC 696); and "freedom for growing as full persons and children of God, sharing in the life of Christ our Liberator through his Spirit. It is the freedom found in authentic love" (CFC 697). Conscience is then discussed as necessary in the responsible exercise of freedom (CFC 700).

The *Exposition* section of Chapter 14 "The Challenge of Following Christ" begins by enumerating the ways by which Christian Faith radically influences the moral life of the Filipino: "By giving reasons for acting in a Christian way, . . . by developing the attitudes and dispositions of Christ . . . by inspiring "Christ-like affections" (CFC 738). It then proceeds to a description of the essentials of Christian moral living which are "neatly summarized in 'the Kingdom of God,' the central image of Christ's teaching in the Gospels" (CFC 739). After explaining various aspects of the Kingdom, the exposition moves on to the Church as the community within which a response to the Kingdom is made. Then, the mystery of sin is discussed—its scriptural bases and images, some new models of sin that show the social effects on the sinners are presented, and social sin is defined.

The *Exposition* section of Chapter 15 “The Christian Law of Life-Giving Love” explains moral norms and their role in relative to our freedom. First, “they provide criteria for judging who we are and how we should act . . . Second, they help our moral development, especially in the formation of conscience . . . Third, they provide stability and consistency in our lives by acting as a constant and reliable point of reference” (CFC 803). Then, the Law in the Old Testament and Christ’s fulfillment of the Law in the New Testament are discussed (CFC 805-823). Finally, natural law is explained, and its unity with God’s law is shown to be ultimately achieved in Christ (CFC 829). To conclude the exposition, the process of moral-decision making is described.

The uniqueness of these foundational chapters on morality is most apparent in their *Integration* sections. The seeming remoteness of the doctrines of our faith grounding intrinsic human dignity reveal a need for “a more direct and personal experience and motivation,” that prayer and sacramental worship can supply. Furthermore, “prayer and an active sacramental life are the necessary means not only for clarifying the Christian vision, but especially for motivating responsible moral decisions and acts” (CFC 844). As regards the social context of morality, doctrinally, they are based “on the correct understanding of original sin and especially of grace” (CFC 776). The Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing are mentioned here precisely because “they are directly concerned with healing and strengthening the disciples of Christ in their spiritual combat against the malice and evil of sin.” Moreover, an “ever-deepening prayer-life” and “the ecclesial context of the Church,” are shown to be key elements in sustaining us against sin (CFC 777).

The CFC on Worship

“Part Three: Christ Our Life,” returns to the Creedal statements on “The Holy Spirit, the Giver of Life” (Chapter 22) and “The Catholic Church: Nature and Mission” (Chapter 23). It is in the context of these two chapters that the chapters on worship (i.e., Liturgy, Sacraments, and Prayer) are tackled.

The chapters on worship begin with a description of the Filipinos’ spirit-orientedness, a natural openness to the transcendent, and love for celebrations are cited as indications of a “cultural basis for Christian worship.” Furthermore, the celebration of sacraments and devotional practices are considered the most common source of the Filipinos’ knowledge of doctrinal truth and moral values (CFC 1469). Then, the positive and negative aspects of Filipinos’ worship and sacramental life are highlighted. Among the difficulties, the greatest is the “separation is between our prayer/worship life on the one hand, and our moral life on the other” (CFC 1472). Another major problem is the gap—sometimes competition—between private devotions and the Church’s liturgy. The CFC responds to these challenges by calling for “a more active, more affective worship that can inspire and lead Filipino Catholics by actual exercise and practice, *to ground their personal devotions and piety on Scripture and the Church’s liturgy*” (CFC 1473).

Chapter 24 “Catholic Prayer and Worship” begins with the practical dimension, i.e., what praying does for the person, i.e., “develops conscious awareness of our relationship with God” (CFC 1476). This is followed by sections on how to pray, prayer in Scripture, (where the role of the Holy Spirit is highlighted), Christian prayer, and private and public prayer. Throughout this section, the interplay between personal and communal prayer is

emphasized. Second, excerpts of the Gloria sung at Mass are quoted. Then scriptural passages focused on worship are explained, pointing out that authentic worship involves daily moral living. Finally, rituals are defined, with the caveat that “mixed among authentic religious rituals are numerous superstitious practices—forms of magic that try to control divine power, or taboos that seek to protect the ritual performers from the fearful, dangerous Holy” (CFC 1500).

Third, to highlight our post-liturgical renewal context, the subsection begins by contrasting the old misunderstanding of liturgy as “rubrics” and “what the priest does” to the early Church’s understanding of liturgy as “everything that all Christians did in taking part in God’s work.” The value of this broad sense of liturgy is important in pointing out the essential connection between liturgy and social action, though it is more precisely understood as the Church’s “official public worship.” Then, the Eucharist is introduced as the center of the Church’s liturgy (CFC 1502-1504).

In an effort to explain “what we are doing and why” the text proceeds to outline the essential qualities of the liturgy and the need for active participation which “can only come about when ordinary Filipino Catholics grasp personally how their personal lives, especially their prayer lives and the Church’s liturgy are mutually entwined and inseparable” (CFC 1515). Then several obstacles to participation are enumerated: those stemming from human persons and their cultures, as well as from the performance of the liturgy itself (CFC 1516).

As an overview to sacraments in general, the CFC chooses to define them as actions of Christ and of the Church following two Post-Vatican 2 emphases; the first, on Christ as Primordial Sacrament and Church as Fundamental Sacrament; the second on

“drawing the sacraments closer to everyday life by recognizing the essential role of symbols in our daily life. Then the traditional formula is used as a point of departure, “a sensible sign, instituted by Christ, to give grace,” then substantially developed in CFC 1520-31. Fifth, sacramentals and popular religiosity are explained, especially Marian devotions, with a focus on their proper place within the context of Christian worship.

Finally, the *Integration* section offers one example of how to bring out the doctrinal bases and moral implications of a particular “worship” topic. For example, this particular chapter, in dealing with Christian prayer, worship, and sacraments in general, is related to Christ’s Paschal Mystery and the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It also highlights the ethical orientation of the liturgy and cites as an example the peaceful 1986 “EDSA revolution” where prayer and social justice were evidently linked.

Relative to the CCC’s sections on liturgy, sacraments, and prayer, the CFC’s treatment offers the advantage of uniting these three more closely. Also, in its treatment of sacraments in particular, the CFC moves away from the schematic logical structure of “What? Who administers,” etc. While this scheme chosen by the CCC is excellent for clarity and memorization, the Philippine bishops considered it rather “weak on communicating the reality of the sacraments, and inspirational motivation to develop a sacramental life.”⁹⁵

CFC Launch and Initial Criticisms

The CFC was formally launched in Tagaytay, a city outside of Manila, on 9 July 1997, in a relatively small and simple ceremony involving the Philippine Bishops and the

⁹⁵ CBCP, “Response of the CBCP,” 31.

catechism's contributors. The event took place at the end of the annual bishops' retreat, and at the beginning of the business meeting of the CBCP. The celebrations began with a thanksgiving mass, with a homily by Legaspi entitled, "CFC: A Catechism with a Brown Skin."⁹⁶ Legaspi states, "We, the Bishops, have the duty to catechize in a way that the Filipinos will find resonance of their "Filipino-ness" in the universal message of salvation."⁹⁷ Also within the mass, a copy of the CFC was offered along with the bread and wine. After the Eucharistic celebration, Legaspi gave a speech marking the significance of the CFC relative to evangelization in the Philippines in the past and in light of the coming Jubilee celebrations in the year 2000.⁹⁸ His speech was followed by the distribution of copies of the CFC to the bishops. Then all the contributors to the CFC were acknowledged and given plaques of appreciation. A small press conference followed this solemn presentation, followed by a larger press conference in Manila led by Archbishop Oscar Cruz, the president of the CBCP at the time.⁹⁹

In the following months, numerous talks were given on the CFC by those involved in the preparation of the text. Within the next year, a Speaker's Bureau was established. A pamphlet entitled *The CFC: A Primer* was prepared and accompanied the first issues of the catechism sold in 1997. In 1998, a Bicolano translation¹⁰⁰ and a companion volume¹⁰¹ were

⁹⁶ Published in *Docete* 20 (July-September 1997): 4-5.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁹⁸ Leonardo Z. Legaspi, "The CFC is our Gift to the People," *Docete* 20 (July-September 1997): 6-8.

⁹⁹ ECCCE Secretariat, "The Launching of the CFC in Tagaytay: A Dream Come True," *Docete* 20 (July-September 1997): 9-13.

¹⁰⁰ *Catecismo para sa Filipinong Catolico* (Naga City, Philippines: Caceres Catechetical Ministry Publication, 1998). This Bicolano translation was prepared by Gilbert A. Garcera, Director of the Caceres Catechetical Ministry at the time.

published. In 2000, the Tagalog/Filipino translation of the CFC came out,¹⁰² and in 2003, the Ilocano translation followed.¹⁰³

More guidelines on the use of the CFC, as well as news of parish and diocesan-level seminars on the CFC were published in *Docete*, ECCCE's official quarterly magazine. Based solely on published materials, the impression one gets is that the CFC received a generally positive response among its target readers. To date, there have been only two negative reviews of the CFC published.¹⁰⁴ Among the criticisms he levels at the text, Lode Wostyn, CICM, a professor at Maryhill School of Theology in Quezon City, highlights the CFC's conformity to the CCC as its major flaw.¹⁰⁵ Because of the alleged "CCC straitjacket," the Filipino catechism bears the same information-overload, and neoscholastic theological approach of the CCC, according to him. While the efforts at integration and inculturation are lauded, he thinks that the "Context" and "Exposition" sections are not dialogical enough. To end the review, he picks up the title of Legaspi's homily at the CFC

¹⁰¹ Joseph L. Roche and Leonardo Z. Legaspi, *A Companion to the CFC: A Collection of Essays on the History, Features, and Use of our National Catechism*, vol. 1 (Manila: ECCCE / Word and Life Publications, 1998).

¹⁰² *Katesismo para sa Pilipinong Katoliko* (Manila: ECCCE/Word and Life Publications, 2000). This translation is a composite work of several Jesuit scholastics working under literary scholar and Jesuit, Rene Javellana, and Mar Arenas of the diocese of Malolos, Bulacan. Salvatore Putzu, e-mail message to author, 27 March 2009.

¹⁰³ *Katesismo para Kadagiti Pilipino a Katoliko* (Manila: CBCP/CICM Missionaries, 2003). This Ilocano translation was prepared by Marcelo Llarenas.

¹⁰⁴ Lode Wostyn, "The *Catechism for Filipino Catholics*: Some Considerations," *MST Review* 2, no. 2 (1999): 133-44; and Rafael Dy-liacco, "Catechesis is a Practice of Faith: A Critique of the National Catechism," *Diwa* 33 (2008): 88-108.

¹⁰⁵ "The CFC tells us in its Preface that it is a new type of catechism and it stresses four characteristics: focus on the essentials, experiential and Filipino, Catholic, and practical. These 'new' characteristics, however, are not evident enough, perhaps because the authors had to follow a master-controller, the CCC." Cf. Wostyn, 133.

launch, and says that the CFC, while it may have, “brown skin” is still in need of a Filipino *loob* (inside/interior).

Roche quickly responded to Wostyn’s critique, placing its main argument within the perspective of the CFC’s genesis.¹⁰⁶ First, there was no such “straitjacket,” because the CFC grew organically out of the NCDP and was practically finished when the CCC came out. Second, the “neoscholastic” attack was more “passionate than reasonable, continuing the rejection of Creed, and of theologians using Conciliar and Papal teaching.”¹⁰⁷ Third, if the reviewer found there to be an “overabundance of information,” it is because as a sourcebook, catechists are meant to select and adapt from the CFC, not to give it directly.¹⁰⁸ More points were raised between the two articles, revealing, more than anything, Wostyn’s desire for a more “grassroots” source, which was never the intention with the CFC.

Though not in print, this sentiment is echoed by several others. That the CFC is “too heavy” or “too academic” for the ordinary catechist is a common criticism. Others ask how inculturated the texts are, when, in agreement with Wostyn, they see a mere juxtaposition of the Philippine context and various cultural elements with “Western” theological expositions.¹⁰⁹ A further criticism is that contemporary Filipino theologians’ works were not consulted in the writing, and that a “foreigner” even headed the editorial committee.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ Joseph L. Roche, “Evaluating the CFC’s Pastoral Validity,” *Docete* 21 (April-June 1999): 13-21.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

¹⁰⁹ Jose Mario Francisco, S.J. (former president of East Asian Pastoral Institute and current president of Loyola School of Theology, Quezon City, Philippines), interview with author, Boston, MA, September 2005.

¹¹⁰ Bishop Teodoro Bacani (contributor to the NCDP and CFC), interview with author, 19 January 2006, Makati City, Philippines; Lode Wostyn, interview with author, 20 January 2006, Quezon City, Philippines.

The second critique of the CFC published nine years after the first one, takes a different point of view. Its basic argument is that the CFC “replaces existential self-understanding in faith with general philosophical analysis,”¹¹¹ and reduces catechesis’ aim to mere formation of “virtuous philosophers.”¹¹² In response to these criticisms, Roche explains that CFC’s account of Christian life as both “following Jesus” and “life in the Spirit.”¹¹³ He addresses each point, stating they are serious misunderstandings of the text, stemming from a lack of appreciation for the ramifications of the subjective dimension of catechesis.¹¹⁴

The bases and motivations behind these criticisms need to be examined in light of the CFC’s genesis. The view that the CFC is not sufficiently inculturated, held by Wostyn and others, as well as Dy-liacco’s stance that “horizontalist” tendencies went unheeded in the CFC both need to be evaluated in light of the principles set out by the NCDP, and the constraints and objections that the CFC’s editorial team received throughout the redaction. At the same time, these criticisms are reminders of the difficulty of finding a middle-ground in the efforts to present the faith in terms of concrete Philippine catechetical challenges. Any catechism has its own share of merits and shortcomings, but the CFC lives up to its self-description as “focused on the essentials, Filipino and experiential, Catholic, and practical” (CFC 10-15). As such, its genesis, and that of the NCDP is a worthy example of catechetical inculturation.

¹¹¹ Dy-liacco, 98.

¹¹² Ibid., 108.

¹¹³ Joseph L. Roche, “Catechesis as Ministry of the Word: A Defense of the National Catechism,” *Landas* 23, no. 1 (2009): 135-137.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 14.

Conclusion

Both the NCDP and CFC, and the process of their development, provide us with a glimpse of the complex processes involved in inculturating catechesis. In the planning stages, the desire for inculturated documents involved focusing on the primary users of the texts, and keeping their point-of-view foremost as decisions were made to further limit the work. As writing progressed for both documents, the authors' practical orientation became more obvious as they sought more concise, contemporary expositions.

The effort to consult practitioners and catechists was also apparent in both projects, but was much more obvious in the NCDP. The planning process for the NCDP began with a nationwide survey, several regional consultations, and a national catechetical consultation. For the CFC, consultation was much smaller in scope, in the form of getting feedback from bishops and catechetical leaders.

Another difference is that the drafting and approval process of the NCDP was relatively smoother than ECERI/ECCCE's experience with the CFC. No major theological debates occurred in the process of creation of the NCDP, with the exception of the vehement objections from the Opus Dei group represented by Latorre. Some of Latorre's criticisms on the NCDP were shared by the Congregation for the Clergy, but none as "scrupulous and radical."¹¹⁵

In contrast, the approval process for the CFC took much longer and was much more painstaking. On the one hand, this was to be expected considering the content and length of the CFC. After all, this was the book that was envisioned to implement the guidelines in the

¹¹⁵ Tacorda, 27.

NCDP. On the other hand, there were unexpectedly stringent measures imposed by the CDF that were simply not applied during the NCDP approval process. For example, the instructions to “prescind completely from theological opinion,” to use the NRSV as opposed to the NAB, to avoid inclusive language and feminism did not come up in the NCDP dossiers but became larger issues in the CFC critique. The use of the Doctrine-Moral-Worship structure, as opposed to a Creed-Cult-Code arrangement became an issue in the approval of both the NCDP and CFC, but the editorial team of the NCDP was able to defend their position with much more ease than the team handling the CFC. Furthermore, the criticism of the documents’ rhetorical style of contrasting erroneous or outdated beliefs and practices with improved or renewed ones, was also more exaggerated in the CFC than the NCDP.

The disagreements between the Roman congregations and the Philippine bishops on the CFC especially, indicate that either side came from different theological viewpoints and were motivated by different goals. The CDF’s comments, for instance, expressed an attitude of extreme caution in the following respects: (1) admitting change or any contradiction in the faith, (2) incorporating anything that was “not the Church’s own teaching,” and (3) diverging from precedents established by the authors of the CCC. Examples of these precedents are the CCC’s structure, the choice of bible version to use, avoidance of inclusive language, and contemporary theologians. On the other hand, the CFC authors and editors felt free to make their own decisions with regard to these aspects because they had in mind the creation of a truly inculturated text, a follow-up volume to the NCDP, and not an “adaptation” of the CCC. They felt the necessity to use a different overall structure, a different bible translation, and to draw from more contemporary theologies because they wanted to reflect beliefs and

explanations that were going to be helpful, if not, already being used in the present-day Philippine context. Thus, the choices of the CFC's editorial team were governed by the concern for providing explanations and examples addressing the lived faith in the Philippines, as stipulated by the NCDP's directives.

For the most part, the team headed by Legaspi was able to defend these choices at the final meeting in Rome, with the exception of the treatment of sacraments and original sin. In spite of the rocky start and increasing difficulty as the written dialogues progressed, the CFC's editorial team and the Roman congregations concerned were able to agree and compromise, producing the first national catechism in the post-CCC era.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing chapters discuss the broader context and creation of the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (1985) and the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (1997). In doing so, this dissertation articulates relationships between the Philippines' history and culture and its catechesis, and grounds the need for an understanding of the theological underpinnings of catechesis and inculturation.

Chapter One gives a bird's eye view of Philippine history and culture, with a focus on the Church's catechetical ministry. Philippine Catholicism today is the legacy of the Spanish missions and colonial rule; Americans and their modern institutions of economics, education, and government; the project of independence and self-determination among Filipinos; and underneath and intermingled with all this, the diverse pre-hispanic cultural and religious substrate. This context has given catechesis in the Philippines its particular shape and exigencies. During the Spanish regime, recitation of the catechism was incorporated into Sunday worship, and formed but one aspect of the total evangelizing effort of the colonial church-state institution. The number and variety of catechisms produced during this period indicate the attention given to it by the missionaries. Even so, the lack of catechetical personnel was a constant problem and highlighted the significance of informal occasions for catechesis, such as the practice of popular piety whose role cannot be underestimated even

today. During the American regime, catechesis suffered from the Church's displacement and decline as broader social and cultural shifts began to take shape. A new form of government, economic structure, system of education, and language were all introduced so that by the end of American rule and the Second World War in 1946, the Church and its catechetical ministry were still catching up. Among the notable characteristics of this time was the increase of lay involvement in Church ministries, the gradual shift to English as a language of education, hence the use of catechetical materials in English, and the organization of the Philippine bishops into the Catholic Welfare Organization, precursor to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

With this history as backdrop, the renewal occasioned by the catechetical movement and Vatican II in the Philippines took a particular shape and focus. Chapter Two provides a broader understanding of catechetical renewal by describing developments in catechetics occasioned by and reflected in the Second Vatican Council, key Synods and papal documents twenty years hence. The major advances were the rediscovery of catechesis as a ministry of the Word, an emphasis on adult catechesis, a more biblical, liturgical, and person-centered inspiration, adaptation and inculturation, and flexibility in terms of starting points and method in catechetical texts. With these shifts came the struggle to interpret and implement these new directives, which in turn exposed differences in the understanding and expectation of the contents and methods used in catechisms and the involvement of ecclesiastical authority in their preparation.

Chapter Three investigates the Church's teaching on inculturation by tracing the term's roots in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, key synods and papal

documents, especially its adoption at the 1977 Synod on Catechesis. The research undertaken shows the following recurring tension in the Church's rhetoric: the challenge to make use of various cultural elements in catechesis is almost always accompanied by a warning not to endanger the deposit of faith. The legitimacy of cautioning against "endangering" the deposit can hardly be questioned; however, it alerts one to the other opposite temptations of reducing faith and revelation to abstract essence, or reifying the deposit of faith and neglecting the fact that it is always expressed and interpreted in human words. The constant nuancing required serves as a reminder that faith, doctrine, the Gospel message, can and need to be distinguished from their expression, without this being tantamount to either reification or relativistic presentation of the faith. These point to the need for an adequate theological understanding of the deposit of faith, and of Christian faith as a lived reality that is always in some concrete form.

One of the most significant developments in the areas of catechesis and inculturation was the mandate to create the CCC. Expressing a desire for a clear articulation of the faith for the universal Church, the participants of the 1985 Extraordinary Synod agreed to embark on the preparation of the CCC in the face of mixed reactions. Concerns over the proposed text's future use as "an obstacle, rather than a catalyst"¹ for inculturation were voiced early on and made real impact in the Philippine catechetical scene a decade later, when the CFC was submitted to the Congregation for the Clergy and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for approval. Before going into the story of the NCDP and CFC, the next chapter

¹ Alberich, "Is the Universal Catechism an Obstacle or Catalyst," 95.

continues the discussion by seeing how the *aggiornamento* begun at Vatican II made its way to the Philippines.

Chapter Four provides a sketch of the reception of Vatican II in the Philippines by investigating the Council's initial implementation, and identifying areas where renewal has occurred, or has not taken place sufficiently. Special attention is given to developments in catechesis such as the impact of the international catechetical movement and the factors that shaped catechetical priorities in the country. In doing so, the chapter introduces new directions, institutions, and key actors who would later influence the NCDP and CFC.

A summary of the documents of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II) of 1992 comprises the final section in this chapter because they served as key sources for the CFC, and contain valuable insights into the Philippine Church's self-understanding and priorities. The centrality of "integral faith formation" and directions in the renewal of catechesis, the social apostolate, and worship are explained in order to provide the necessary background to understanding the emphases of the NCDP and CFC.

Finally, Chapter Five tackles the immediate history of the two documents, and highlights the practical and theoretical difficulties in undertaking the distinct yet overlapping tasks of catechesis and inculturation. The chapter uncovered that the basic causes for the disagreement over the NCDP and CFC are due to tensions intrinsic to both catechesis and inculturation, and differing tendencies in communicating the faith.

First, the age-old concern of communicating the faith, whether viewed from the lens of catechesis or inculturation, involves understanding what faith is, and how it is received and lived by people of different, ages, cultures, contexts, throughout the world. Faith, our

response to Revelation, God's Self-manifestation and Self-communication in Scripture and Tradition (DV 5, 7, 8), is both *fides qua* and *fides quae*. Faith is a gift-yet-our-doing, (CFC 149-150), an act-yet-a process, (CFC 148), a relationship with God whereby graced humanity exerts its own agency in response. Hence, inherent in communicating the faith is the tension grounded in the nature, characteristics, and sources of faith itself.

The development of the NCDP and CFC offers a first-hand look at this struggle for balance in presenting the faith in terms of the Filipino catechist's point of view. The approach taken was to focus on a holistic view of faith as "lived" reality. This necessitated the use of theological language that stresses the human person living out the faith, and hence, the inclusion of Filipino "cultural elements" into explanations of faith in the CFC. The possibility of diverging from the CCC's emphases was a great point of contention in the preparation and approval of the CFC, and the Philippine bishops and editorial teams had to take great pains to show that this pluralism did not necessarily "erode into relativism," alleged by the CDF early on.

Second, the CDF showed a strong focus on faith's objective content as expressed and interpreted in classical formulas, and as presented in the CCC. On the other hand, the NCDP and CFC editorial teams strove to present the faith's content in terms of its subjective (not subjectivistic) dimension, i.e., how faith is lived and received by human persons. This latter approach presumes faith's tripartite structure as comprised by believing (doctrine), doing (moral), entrusting/hoping (worship), and proceeds to a judicious selection of emphases based on actual problems and misconceptions. Contrary to CDF's charges, this approach does not "subordinate doctrine" to the Philippine context, or to theological opinion. Rather,

its tendency is to concentrate on addressing persons living out their faith. The value of this approach surely goes beyond the local context, but is deemed particularly useful in the Philippines where Catholicism is centered on external practices of piety without necessarily seeing the connections with authentic discipleship (CFC 1472).

Theoretical Contributions to Catechetics and Inculturation

The creation of national catechetical documents was based on and shaped the development of a particular theological approach in direct response to challenges posed by catechesis and inculturation. To conclude this study, a preliminary exploration into the contours of this method will be undertaken, followed by the identification of future areas of research.

The work on the NCDP and CFC helped sharpen the understanding of “the foundational elements constitutive of all adequate catechetical approaches,” which Roche sums up in five questions; namely, What? (the message/content); Why? (the mission given by Christ to his disciples to teach his Gospel) How? (by using the basic sources of Scripture, Tradition, Human Experience and appropriate methods and means for communication); By whom? (the communicators); For whom? (all who are called to be “hearers of the Word,” disciples of Christ in his ecclesial community, in their proper national culture and religious context).² Hence, while it is one catechetical and theological approach among many others, its distinctiveness lies in that it is comprehensive enough to synthesize other approaches as well.

² Joseph L. Roche, *Practical Catechesis: The Christian Faith as a Way of Life* (Quezon City, Philippines: Phoenix Publishing House, 2008), 8-9.

Several steps were taken to arrive at these insights. With post-Conciliar developments in catechesis and inculturation in the backdrop, the first step taken was the NCDP's recognition of the need to "bridge the gap," so as to integrate faith and life. The immediate shift this involved was toward a mindset that focused on the objective and subjective dimensions of revelation and faith. These emphases highlighted actual problems encountered in catechesis and how to respond to them. The term "integration" came to be used as the primary lens through which catechesis was envisioned. Integration, in its many levels and modes, is an activity involving "distinguishing the different essential components of the whole in order to unite (them)."³ The premise for this idea is the "wholeness" of faith itself. To communicate faith holistically demands a means for taking into account its intrinsic unity with our daily life (life integration); within itself (inter-relationships within and among doctrines, Christian moral code/living, and liturgy/worship); among its sources (inter-relatedness of scriptures, Tradition, and human experiences, past and present); its subjects or agents, the catechists and catechized, and their contexts. Integration, as a point of emphasis and optic used in the writing of the NCDP and CFC, turned the attention to the gaps between Filipino Catholics' professed beliefs, moral attitudes, prayer and devotions and daily life, and therefore allowed them to focus more immediately on how to strive towards more coherent Catholic practice.

The second step in the development of this approach was brought to light, most of all, by the work on the CFC. Soon after the CFC's approval, Roche coined the term "reality principle," which states that all theological terms and phrases, "point to a reality which

³ Joseph L. Roche, "Multiple Integrations in the NCDP and CFC," in *A Companion to the CFC*, 38-39.

resonates in concrete ways in the historical, . . . reality of the faithful, . . . hence involves constant renewing and adapting . . .”⁴ He presents this as “the unifying rationale for the multiple positions taken or defended”⁵ in the writing of the CFC. What this principle emphasizes is the absolute need for catechists to remind themselves that the theological terms they use (eg. Trinity) refer to a reality, (God) in order to keep in check, sheer academic abstraction, and to put potential “jargon” in proper perspective. The other dimension to this principle is that catechists must know exactly who they are talking to, so that they have a sense of how their words are going to be received by their listeners.

The third step involved focusing on the religious educator’s or catechists’ point of view, as a consequence of Roche’s attempt to theologically ground the insights contained in “integration” and “the reality principle.” The following quote indicates the shift:

Perhaps our single most significant insight into what is most needed for catechetical progress is to shift the focus from “what” to “who” (the religious educators), and “how” they work . . . The religious educator is related to, but clearly distinct from, the professional biblical exegete, the systematic, sacramental, or moral theologian, the liturgist, and other “experts.” These experts often become so specialized that they fail to treat, or even intend to treat, the most common needs and difficulties of daily living out of the Christian Faith. This cannot be true of the religious educator, whose real, unique, and holistic vocation has made possible a much sharper focus on the essential aspects of effectively communicating the Good News. . . .⁶

Religious educators, by the very nature of their work, have to consider as their primary task, all the factors and elements intrinsic to communicating/teaching the Good News and its living out in daily life.⁷

The field of practical theology offered help in this regard, so Roche began to call this approach “practical catechesis.” The hallmarks of practical catechesis are the following: for

⁴ Joseph L. Roche, “The ‘Reality Principle’ in CFC’s Communicating the Faith,” *Landas* 12 (1998): 6.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁶ Roche, *Practical Catechesis*, 3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

doctrine, the “proper focus for content and perspective is practice,” for morality, it’s “how disciples of Christ discern the good and authentically exercise their freedom,” for worship, it’s a “realism . . . safeguarded in part by their focus not only on the nature, function, and valid celebration of the sacraments, but especially on their equal interest in Catholic laypersons’ celebrating the sacraments.”⁸ With regard to sources in catechizing, practical catechesis reveals the inadequacy of the sole use of the historical-critical method in interpreting Scripture, and proposes a way of encompassing both historical-critical and more patristic/pneumatic exegetical methods for the specific purposes of religious education and catechesis.⁹

The value of these insights also lies in the attention it gives to *doing* catechesis; i.e., developing the skill of catechizing. Notions such as integration, the reality principle, and practical catechesis, emphasize what catechists do—the discipline and activity involved. This is an important focus for catechist-formation, just as it is in the development of catechisms and other catechetical materials. Shifting our view to “doing catechesis,” also places more weight on developing catechists’ skills in evaluating various catechetical and theological approaches, teaching, and self-critique.

The approach also has implications on inculturation. First, the focus on the human person living the faith offers a natural way for catechists to make use of cultural elements, and provides a focus in selecting them. Second, the approach contributes a specific direction and focus in understanding culture. Viewed from the lens of a catechist, Filipino history,

⁸ Ibid., 234.

⁹ Joseph L. Roche, Markus Locker, and Lucia L. Natividad, “The Use of Scripture in Theology and Religious Education: A Holistic Approach,” *Loyola Schools Review* 3 (2002): 3-32, and “Grounding A Holistic Approach to Scripture in ‘Practical Theology’,” *Loyola Schools Review* 5 (2006): 57-72.

culture, and life are dynamic forces that actively shape people's faith, the environment in which this very faith is lived, which are also judged by faith.

The development of the NCDP and the CFC illustrate a way of doing catechesis and inculturation and exposed the issues involved in undertaking both. The central concern of communicating the faith while preserving its unity and diversity necessarily brought into light the place of fundamental theology and the role of theological method.

Further Areas of Research

History of Catechesis

First, in the area of catechetical history, a more comprehensive cataloguing of the drafts, dossiers involved in the preparation of the NCDP, and especially the CFC would be a logical follow-up to this study. Since such a work requires comparing a few hundred pages of work spanning a decade, the present dissertation only covered the "highlights."

Nevertheless, this future catalogue and comparison of primary sources would be of potential value to future scholars. Second, certain gaps in current historical knowledge were uncovered and need further study. For example, catechisms and catechetical texts produced during the Spanish regime need to be accounted for and examined. The work to be done in this area is very basic; that is, determining which of these texts are still surviving, and analyzing what value they are as sources of Philippine literature in general, and religious and catechetical literature in particular. Another task is to account for the entrance of the *Baltimore Catechism* into the country, and to search for other American-produced catechetical material used in the country. Finally, historical research in catechesis on the diocesan level is rare and needs to be undertaken if we are to understand the diverse local

catechetical milieux. In the Philippines, these areas of research are generally considered uncharted territory and deserve greater attention.

Catechetical Theory

First, the creation and approval of the NCDP and CFC pointed to the need for theological acuity in understanding what catechesis and inculturation involve. The role of fundamental theology is indispensable ground for understanding the bases of catechesis and inculturation, and justifying the use of one catechetical approach over another. This calls for more explicit articulation of the relationships between catechesis, inculturation, and theology.

A second trajectory for research in catechetical theory is to study the new *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* of 2007 and the other post-CCC national catechisms, such as the *United States' Catholic Catechism for Adults* (2005). The development of these documents, their emphases and problems encountered are worth studying on their own and in comparison with the present dissertation.

A third avenue for study would be a more in-depth comparison of the CFC's contents with the CCC and other catechisms as sources for assessing the extent of theological pluralism expressed across these catechetical documents. This could serve as a concrete measure of the Church's advance or stagnation in keeping unity-in-diversity in the catechetical field.

Inculturation

Another area of research is a more detailed look at other inculturation projects to see what made it possible to get them off the ground, what obstacles blocked their approval, and

to understand factors for their success. In the Philippines alone, the *Misa Ng Bayang Pilipino*, and the Ilocano marriage rite are worth studying especially in light of the difficulties encountered throughout the approval of the CFC.¹⁰ Furthermore, reflecting on the “practice” of inculturation is an area of research that is only in its beginning stages. African theologian Laurenti Magesa suggests that studies in inculturation “have relied mainly on intellectual imagination about how inculturation needs to proceed . . . and have not been grounded enough in the reality of how inculturation has been, and is, taking place in a given area.”¹¹ Hence, the theoretical studies already available need to be complemented by more historically grounded, and possibly, empirical research.¹²

Fundamental Theology

This dissertation opened up the enduring relevance of the systematic study of the nature of revelation, faith, sources of faith, and the understanding of the Person, Jesus Christ. The impact of practice as a category for theological reflection in general and fundamental theology in particular deserves greater attention especially in light of difficulties that came up repeatedly in the CFC and NCDP. Examples of these problems are the fear of “endangering” the deposit of faith and of admitting change in our beliefs and formulations, the paranoia over

¹⁰ See Anscar J. Chupungco, “A Filipino Attempt at Liturgical Indigenization,” *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 91 (1977): 370-76; and David William Antonio, *An Inculturation Model of the Catholic Marriage Ritual* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2002).

¹¹ Laurenti Magesa, *Anatomy of Inculturation: Transforming the Church in Africa* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004), 5.

¹² For example, see T. Frank Kennedy, ed. *Inculturation and the Church in North America* (New York: Crossroad, 2006). Another dimension of this area of study is highlighted in the Protestant ecumenical work of Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Hendrik Vroom, eds. *One Gospel—Many Cultures: Case Studies and Reflections on Cross-cultural Theology* (Amsterdam/New York: Editions Rodopi B.V., 2003). This latter work explores the examples and conditions for possibility of sharing and unity among diverse, contextual Christian practices.

losing “transcendence” in our language about God, the fear of losing the emphasis on the role of the Church in morality, and even the rejection of inclusive language. These leanings all came up in the CDF’s critique of the CFC draft, and these problems are not limited to the Philippines alone. The view that all theology presumes and aims at practicing faith helps put these concerns in perspective.¹³

In the end, a model for doing both catechesis and inculturation is offered by this study. Taking stock of catechetical history in the Philippines and analyzing key issues in the development of the NCDP and CFC have proven to be useful in identifying problems and opportunities for catechetics and inculturation that may be operative in other places and situations as well.

¹³ Examples of works that develop practical theology are the following: Don S. Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991); Miroslav Volf and Dorothy Bass, *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Daily Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002).

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