



Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)
Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)

500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines (1521-2021)

CATECHETICAL MODULES

Christian Faith: Call, Gift, Mission



A *Research-based Intervention Outcome (RIO)* of selected catechetical leaders inspired by the findings of the *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2016-2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project* implemented by the Research Center for Social Sciences & Education (RCSSD), University of Santo Tomas (UST).





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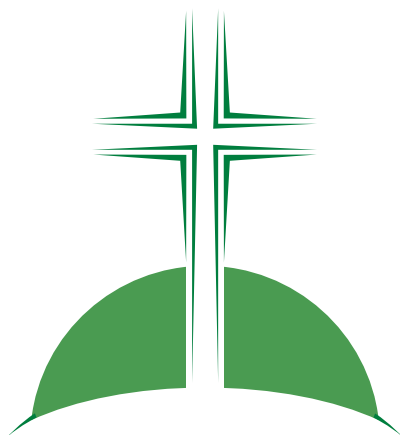
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*For the Faith-driven Servants, Front-liners,
and who may be considered the hidden
treasures of the Philippine Catholic Church,
our beloved Filipino Catechists*

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OUR GRATITUDE, OUR MODULE STORY

By: Sr. Ma. Jesusa G. Enginco, O.P. & Dr. Clarence M. Batan



Inspired by the call for a *New Evangelization* of our Holy Fathers, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI and Pope Francis, and on the occasion of celebrating our *500 Years of Christianity (YOC) in the Philippines*. Our journey to produce a new set of *Catechetical Modules (CM)* for our faith-driven servants - our Filipino catechists, was made more meaningful by the overflowing support of the many people and organizations, whose passion and love to the catechetical ministry deserve our utmost gratitude and respect.

Maraming salamat po sa lahat ng tulong, malasakit, at pagmamahal.

The inspiration of this project roots from the CBCP *Pastoral Exhortation on the Era of New Evangelization* entitled, “Live Christ, Share Christ” (Looking Forward to our Five Hundredth) released last July 23, 2012, by Most Rev. Jose S. Palma, DD, the then *CBCP President*. This

ushers the start of the nine-year spiritual journey that will culminate with the *Great Jubilee of 2021*, the 5th centenary of the coming of Christianity in our beloved land.

Thus, these Catechetical Modules (CM) respond to the call of the Spirit for a New Evangelization by utilizing the *nine pastoral priorities as key module themes of this project*. These are *Integral Faith Formation* (2013); *Laity* (2014); *The Poor* (2015); *The Eucharist and of the Family* (2016); *The Parish as a Communion of Communities* (2017); *Clergy and Religious* (2018); *Youth* (2019); *Ecumenism, Interreligious Dialogue, and Indigenous Peoples* (2020); and, *Missio ad Gentes* (2021).

Contextually, these themes reflect the Filipino concepts of *Pananampalataya* (2013); *Mga Layko* (2014); *Ang Mga Mahihirap* (2015); *Ang Eukaristiya at Pamilya* (2016); *Ang Parokya Bilang Komunion ng mga Pamayanan* (2017); *Klero at Mga Relihiyoso* (2018); *Mga Kabataan* (2019); *Ekumenismo, Diyalogo sa Pagitan ng Mga Relihiyon, at mga Katutubo* (2020), *at Misyon sa mga Bansa* (2021), which these modules hope to bring forth in various spaces of catechesis in the country.

Our gratitude goes to all our Filipino bishops, the *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)* led over the past nine years by Archbishop Jose S. Palma, DD (CBCP President 2011-2013), Archbishop Socrates B. Villegas, DD (CBCP President 2013-2017), and Archbishop Romulo G. Valles, DD (CBCP President 2017-Present). The CBCP, through the *500 YOC Executive Committee entrusted the CBCP - Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)* under the chairmanship of Bishop Roberto C. Mallari, DD to spearhead in the preparation of the catechetical instruction materials (both in print and electronic forms) as formation tools for prayer, study, and reflection. Initially, CBCP-ECCCE's idea was to produce a three-year intensive formation program across Ecclesiastical Territories covering 2018 until 2021. Our gratitude goes to the *CBCP - Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)* under the leadership of Bishop Roberto C. Mallari, DD (Chair); Msgr. Gerardo O. Santos and Fr. Ernesto B. De Leon (Executive Secretary) as well as to the former *ECCCE Technical Working Group (TWG)* composed of Fr. Rene De Guzman, SDB; Dr. Caridad Barrameda; Fr. Salvatore Putzu, SDB, and Dr. Lysander Rivera, Sis. Rhea Castillo, OP and Sis. Silvestra Orbigo, FMM; who initially conceptualized and designed this project. Thank you for the inspiration, persistent nudge, and prayers.

The initial outputs of the *ECCCE TWG* were shared with various catechetical offices, centers and institutions offering Catholic religious education. We are thankful to catechetical leaders and catechists from the following institutions who responded to our call for module contributions: *Archdiocese of Caceres; Archdiocese of Cebu; Archdiocese of Manila; Diocese of Cubao; Diocese of Novaliches; Diocese of Parañaque; Diocese of Pasig; Mother Francisca Catechetical & Missionary Formation Center, and the University of Santo Tomas' (UST) Institute of Religion, Research Center for Social Sciences and Education, and the Office of the Vice Rector for Religious Affairs.*

After the production of initial modules, the CBCP 500 YOC Executive Committee suggested to prepare more catechetical lessons which can be used even beyond the 500 YOC 2021. This project evolved as a *Research-based Intervention Outcomes (RIO) activity of the National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project team*. This initiative responds to one of the salient NCS findings that catechists in the ground are in dire need of fresh and relevant catechetical sources. To ensure the quality of these modules, the NCS Research Team solicited the assistance of education practitioners as reviewers whose valuable insights led to the process of rethinking the general module design of this project. We owe our deepest thanks to Dr. Joan Christi Trocio-Bagaipo, Cecilia Balajadia, Pamela Avellanosa, Mc Kenneth Baluyot, Fr. Christian Buenafe, O' Carm, Fr. Antonio Zamora and Fr. Eliseo Mercado, OMI.

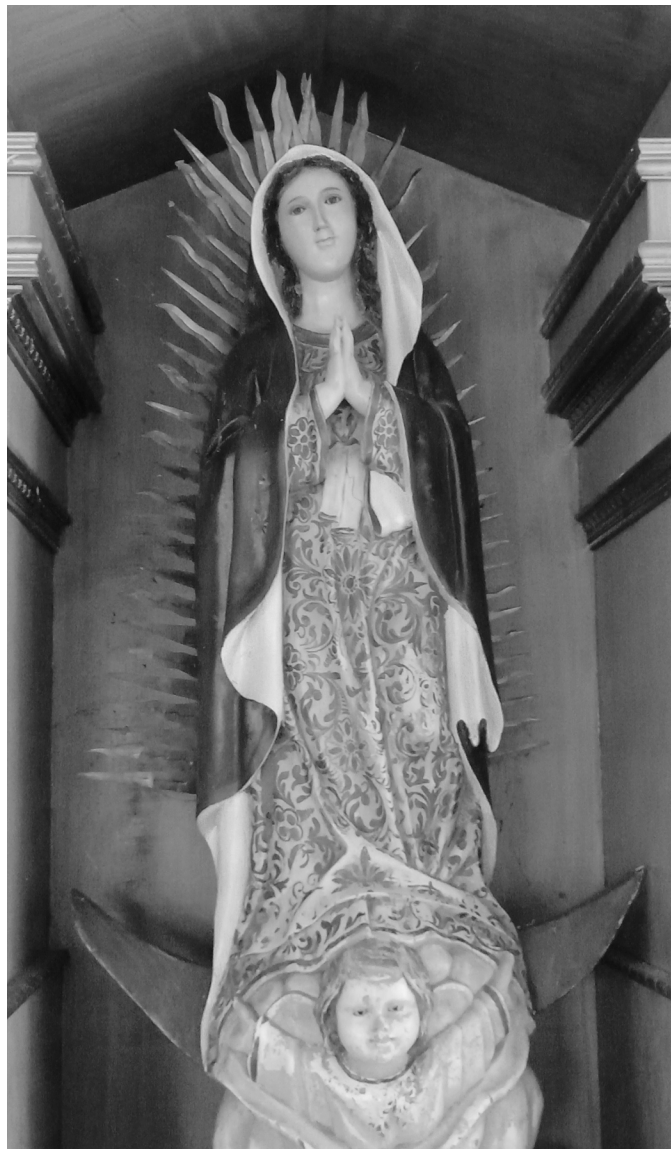
Special gratitude to all our priest-catechists who in one way or another, sent their comments and suggestions, as well as provided a network of key persons who helped in module development. Thank you, Fr. Pablo Tiong, O.P., Fr. Carlo Magno and Fr. Emmanuel Rico Ayo.

The updated module design was a by-product of a series of consultations and assessments. The laborious technical assistance task was provided by Jaycar P. Espinosa whose outputs became the bases for the finalization of modules. At the crucial time of



module synthesis and integration, we were blest by the generosity of talent and spirit provided for by Fr. Richard P. Lagos, OP, of the Diocese of San Jose, Nueva Ecija, and three seminarians from the Diocese of Tarlac - Sem. Anthony Tawataw, Sem. Gerald Cortez, and Sem. Jayson Besa. Other contributors who deserve our utmost gratitude are Dra. Gaines Marie Rosario for her specific input about “the laity”, and Richard G. Pazcoguin, who provided a list of songs related to the module themes.

Despite the pandemic, our *NCS 2021: Research Team* took this RIO activity to heart. We would like to thank everyone for their dedication to the CM production. To Danielle Villena, who designed the initial layout, and Romel Sencio, whose creative talent for design made our CM visually appealing. Our language editor, Pamela Avellanosa also deserves our utmost gratitude, for the patience and eye for technical errors, idea construction and composition, who made our CM clear and readable. And to our team members, Dr. Florence Navidad, Ruth Andaya, Tisha Isabelle de Vergara, Keith Aaron Joven, and Vincent Reuben Valientes, thank you for your untiring dedication to this project.



All the hard work, inspiration, and deep prayers led to the final module version of this project. May these Catechetical Modules be easy-to-understand and be easy-to-use by all those making up all our catechetical ministries across the country and around the world. May this work serve as a seed towards a renewed integral evangelization and renew us all in the Church – bishops, priests, religious, and lay people. May this project encourage us to unceasingly beg the Holy Spirit’s guidance especially for the Filipino-Catholics of today.

As we celebrate our Christian’s faith 5th centenary in 2021, our penultimate gratitude to our Lord Jesus Christ, who guided us in the production of these Catechetical Modules as a moment of His loving embrace and overflowing grace.

CATECHETICAL MODULE TEAM

• Concept & Design

- Fr. Rene De Guzman, SDB, Dr. Caridad Barrameda, Ms. Tessi Ponteras of MOL, Fr. Salvatore Putzu, SDB, Dr. Lysander Rivera of BAMCREF DLSU, Fr. Ernesto B. de Leon, Mr. Eduardo Frando & Ms. Noemi Buena of ICAM, Sis. Rhea Castillo, OP of Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan, Sr. Silvestra Orbigo, FMM, of Lumen Christi and Sr. Ma. Jesusa G. Enginco OP, *members of the Episcopal Commission on Catechesis & Catholic Education (ECCCE) Technical Working Group (TWG) 2017-2018.*
- Dr. Clarence M. Batan & Jaycar P. Espinosa of the *National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project Research Team*

• Writers

- Fr. Richard P. Lagos, OP, *of the Diocese of San Jose, Nueva Ecija, YOUCAT PHILIPPINES National Director*
- Sem. Anthony Tawataw, *Diocese of Tarlac*
- Sem. Gerald Cortez, *Diocese of Tarlac*
- Sem. Jayson Besa, *Diocese of Tarlac*
- Dr. Clarence M. Batan, *Principal Investigator, NCS 2021: PARI Project*
- Dra. Gaines Marie Rosario, *Head, Lay Formation Center, Archdiocese of Manila*
- Fr. Emmanuel Rico Ayo, *Dean, San Carlos Seminary, Makati City*
- Ms. Jane Roble, *Executive Secretary, EC-ECUM Affairs*
- Fr. Sebastiano d'Ambra, PIME, *Executive Secretary, ECIRD*
- Mr. Antonio Abuso, *Executive Secretary, ECIP*
- Br. Anthony San Pedro Dameg, *PMS, ECM*
- Assoc. Prof. Richard G. Pazcoguin, *Director, UST Campus Ministry*
- Br. Simon Peter Ramos, OP
- Br. Joenner Paulo Enriquez, OP
- Br. Marc Adrian de la Pena, OP
- **Contributors from the following centers:**
 - Archdiocese of Caceres
 - Archdiocese of Cebu
 - Archdiocese of Manila
 - Diocese of Cubao
 - Diocese of Novaliches
 - Diocese of Parañaque
 - Diocese of Pasig

■ Language & Content Editor

- Pamela Guenevere Avellanosa, *Adamson University*

■ Reviewers

- Dr. Joan Christi Trocio-Bagaipo, *University of Santo Tomas*
- Dr. Florence Navidad, *University of Santo Tomas*

- Ma. Cecilia Balajadia, *University of Santo Tomas*
- Pamela Avellanosa, *Adamson University*
- Mc Kenneth M. Baluyot, *Department of Education*
- Fr. Christian Buenafe, *Order of the Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel*
- Fr. Conegundo Garganta, *Executive Secretary, ECY*
- Fr. Antonio Zamora, *Catechetical Director, Archdiocese of Cebu*
- Fr. Eliseo Mercado, *Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate*

■ Consultants

- Bishop Roberto C. Mallari, DD, *Chair, CBCP - ECCCE*
- Fr. Ernesto B. de Leon, *Executive Secretary, CBCP-ECCCE*
- Sr. Ma. Jesusa Enginco, O.P., *Assistant Executive Secretary, CBCP – ECCCE*

■ Layout & Design

- Danielle Villena, *Multimedia Officer, NCS 2021: PARI Project*
- Romel Sencio, *Multimedia Graphic Artist, NCS 2021: PARI Project*

■ Technical Support

- *The National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project Research Team: Jaycar P. Espinosa, Ruth Andaya, Tisha de Vergara, Keith Aaron Joven, & Vincent Valientes*



FOREWORD

Most Rev. Roberto C. Mallari, D.D.

Bishop, Diocese of San Jose de Nueva Ecija

Chairperson, Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)



My Dear People of God! Grace and peace!

We continue our nine-year journey that began in 2012 which brings us to the 500th year commemoration of Christianity's advent in our country in 2021.

To make this truly a celebration of gratitude for the gift of faith, the *Episcopal Commission for Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)* came up with catechetical lessons for our people for the next three years as our immediate preparation. The general theme sums up that of our 2021 Jubilee Celebration: Gifted to Give – *Kaloob, Isinasaloob, Ipinagkakaloob*.

It is with hope that this humble contribution will help our faithful understand more what this gift of Christian faith (kaloob) requires from us – that by understanding with the heart (isinasaloob), they will all the more believe and can pray more through it; manifest it in their daily lives; and thus share their faith with others (ipinagkakaloob). We go back to teaching the truth of *lex credendi, lex orandi, lex vivendi* (how we worship reflects what we believe and determines how we will live) to our people.

As our country celebrates its 5th Centenary of Christianity, we are likewise commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Opening of the Second Vatican Council when the now St. John XXIII widely opened the Church's doors and windows to facilitate the Holy Spirit's access in renewing the Church. It was an experience of a New Pentecost indeed. The 30th year Anniversary of our own Second Plenary Council of the Philippines will also coincide this year. PCP II ushered so many promises of renewal, of another Pentecost for the Church in our country. It Envisioned the Filipino Church to be a Community of Disciples; a Church of the Poor, embarking on a Renewed Integral Evangelization, and witnessing to Jesus Christ's Gospel of salvation and liberation through words, deeds and lives. "Behold, I make all things new", was the clear message then of the *National Pastoral Consultation on Church Renewal (NPCCR)*.

May these simple, easy-to-understand and easy-to-use catechetical lessons help us all in the work of renewed integral evangelization and help us pin our hopes on the Holy Spirit to renew us all in the Church-- bishops, priests, religious and lay people. Strengthened by prayers, may we share our faith by living it in the midst of all in this vale of tears. May we be encouraged to unceasingly beg for the Holy Spirit's guidance especially for the Filipino Catholics of today so that our celebration of our Christian faith's fifth centenary, becomes a moment of God's grace even now. To inspire us more, let me share one of the touching fb posts which reads: **'IF WE DON'T TEACH OUR CHILDREN TO FOLLOW CHRIST, THE WORLD WILL TEACH THEM NOT TO'!**

We fix our eyes on Jesus Christ, our Redeemer as we make our collective journey with the guidance of His Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Star of Evangelization.

All in JESUS' NAME,



INTRODUCTION

Rev. Fr. Ernesto B. De Leon

Executive Secretary

Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education (ECCCE)

Our nine-year journey, nine-year novena preparation for the 5th Centenary of Christianity in the Philippines began in 2012, which we dubbed as the Year of Faith. A new era indeed for New Evangelization. Reflecting on the essential components of the subsequent years, perhaps we can take cue from Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI who asked us “to consider the content of faith that is **professed, celebrated, lived** and **prayed**” and to “**reflect** on the act of Faith” as a whole (PF 9). These indispensable elements of Faith give us a glimpse as to the identity that we have as a Church from the moment we have literally received the faith 500 years ago. Not only has the gift of faith prepared the way for us, but even much more, the MANNER in which we give witness to the received faith is ushered to us by Christ, Himself through the intermediary of Spanish Missionaries.



The faith we PROFESS, CELEBRATE, LIVE, and PRAY, summons each of us to authentically recast, recalibrate and revisit whether we have lived the faith sincerely and wholeheartedly [via the sacraments as our focus] or we have simply just accepted it but not evangelized - or have been transformed by it. If ever that we have failed to truly live the core-values of our faith, it should not discourage or even frustrate us, even if we have not achieved our goals as planned. Instead, it should incite us to confront and accept, to exert and be efficient, to magnify for ourselves our multifarious shortcomings, human limitation-related realities that have hindered us to really be God’s instruments in proclaiming the Gospel to all nations (cf. Mk.16:15) and made it fulfilled in our hearing (cf. Lk.4:21).

This only shows us that we still lack that profound ability to REFLECT (PF 9) (PF 9) in order to understand comprehensively the Church’s missionary tasks. However, our human-related efforts from this vantage point are not futile. Why? Because, lest we forget, the Church is vivified by God’s Spirit and that is what makes her dynamic. And so we are called likewise, to be dynamic, to be discernibly creative and realistic enough with our approaches.

The *National Catechetical Study of 2016-2018* not only gave us profiles of our catechetical ministers. It revealed as well the often-insufficient tools, materials and even formation of our important laborers in God’s vineyard. One significant research insight it gave was the necessity for alternative and appropriate catechetical modules. *NCS 2021* came at the right time when the bishop-members of the Executive Committee for the Centenary Celebration tasked ECCCE to provide such modules using the previous years’ theme (Laity, Poor, Eucharist and the Family, Parishes as Communion of Communities, Clergy and Religious, Youth, Ecumenism, Inter-religious Dialogue and Indigenous People)



culminating in *Missio Ad Gentes*, the goal of which is to drum-beat awareness and appreciation apropos the 500th Year of Catholic Christianity through intense catechesis, helping and challenging Filipino Catholics to truly PROFESS, CELEBRATE, LIVE and PRAY the faith.

Such efforts to go back to the sources, foundations (ressourcement) of our faith, will make our witness even more meaningful and relevant. This is because we tirelessly work hand in hand to critically exhaust all possible means to improve our approaches in coming up with new and fresh methods of not only catechizing our faithful but also helping them out to mature in the practice of faith. This return to the source is a mature move for us to allow our faithful [including pastors (i.e., religious and diocesan), catechists, and lay leaders] to be immersed in the language of transformation and conversion, that is, to be piecemeal evangelized!

This humble attempt of Catechetical Directors and ministers from various Catechetical Centers through ECCCE is a vivid proof of our desire as a local Church incessantly working towards *aggiornamento*. Such an aim only validates that we, the Catholic Church in the Philippines, after embracing the Catholic Faith with the Christian spirit, is open to having a profound love for the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Eventually with gratitude, the present form became one of the interventions of the *NCS 2021 Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project* implemented by the *Research Center for Social Sciences and Education of the Pontifical University of Santo Tomas*.

Let therefore, our confidence in love grow and our hopes be evident as we walk through the challenges of the times with profound faith as we prove ourselves equal to the encouragement of contextualizing and translating these Catechetical Lessons to our local dialects and to pursue the promptings of the Spirit. For our nation to have a complete adherence and be enculturated to the Gospel message of the One Great Teacher, Jesus Christ (CT 20) so that we all may be one in this catechetical endeavor, not only for 2021 but even beyond.



Photo from Diocese of Kabankalan



Photo from Diocese of Maasin

CATECHETICAL MODULE GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to clarify the outline of catechetical lessons that will serve as the catechists' convenient resource in teaching catechesis for all ages. Also, it will help them achieve the goals of teaching catechesis and will introduce them to new strategies in effectively facilitating a catechetical class. The creation of catechetical lessons is a vital fragment of the *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)*'s response to their commitment to lead Catholic Filipinos to *Live Christ and Share Christ*, which has been their mission since the commencement of the nine-year era of New Evangelization in 2012.

As stated by Pope John Paul II (1979) in his apostolic exhortation *Catechesi Trandendae* or *CT*, the universal catechetical goals are: (1) to strengthen the solidity of the faith and of Christian living; (2) to give fresh vigor to the initiatives on hand; (3) to stimulate creativity with required vigilance; and (4) to help spread in communities the joy of bringing the mystery of Christ to the world. In the same Church document, he also remarked that in terms of its relation to evangelization (or the proclamation of the Good News to the whole humanity), the specific goal of catechesis is to develop initial faith and to advance in fullness and to nourish the daily Christian life of those who received them (CT 20).

Evangelization in Vatican II

The Church reached a turning point to the modern world with the Second Vatican Council. The Council embraced the optimistic vision of John XXIII of a renewed Church seeking greater unity with all men. This renewal resulted in a self-examination and a radical transformation of the Church in many aspects in her life and doctrine (Bokenkotter, 2005). What the Church has today, that is, the presence of faith in every corner of the world, with various traditions and practices is due to the evangelical work of the Apostles, their successors, and the various religious men and women missionaries.

The command of Jesus to His Apostles to proclaim the Gospel to the whole world has been handed down to the Church and to Her members. The Second Vatican Council was right in saying that "the Church has received this solemn mandate of Christ to proclaim the saving truth from the Apostles and must carry it out to the very ends of the earth" (Lumen Gentium 17). Today, the proclamation could be more difficult and challenging but the task remains, just as the enthusiasm and courage that moved the Apostles and the first disciples to proclaim did not change.

The spirit of Vatican II may be described by some key words such as renewal, reform, *aggiornamento* (updating), openness, dialogue and reading the signs of the times. Truly, in Vatican II, the Church got to dialogue with the world of today. The New Evangelization thrust has its origin in the Second Vatican Council. It had been the Council's desire to respond to a sense of disorientation experienced by Christians facing powerful changes and divisions which the world was experiencing at that time. The Council had appropriately stressed what these

new situations demand from the Church: new zeal, new sensitivity, and new ways of doing its evangelizing mission (Canilang, 2013). Therefore, New Evangelization began with Vatican II and its awareness of the changes going on with the world and its commitment to dialogue with these changes in the hopes of achieving a “new ardor, a new zeal, renewed and re-strengthened commitment to proclaim Jesus Christ and his Gospel of salvation to the world today.”

The New Evangelization

The use of the term “New Evangelization” refers to the unique situation of the Catholic Church in today’s generation. Many Catholics just feel too busy to attend Mass regularly and do not feel particularly connected to the Church. Many have begun to call themselves sacramentalized but not evangelized. These are the new problems in the history of the Church. For many centuries, the Church's evangelical mission sought to preach the Gospel to the nations of non-Christians who did not know Christ. Now, the Church is called to a New Evangelization, or an evangelization within itself, a re-evangelization.

There are many people who immediately assume that the New Evangelization is equivalent to the use of social media. New media such as *blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram etc.* are certainly essential to evangelization today. But John Paul II already called for a New Evangelization over a decade ago before online social networking was even possible.

What John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis now call for is an evangelization of those who have already been baptized. The call for New Evangelization is a call for the baptized members of the Church to deepen their faith and reach out to other Christians in deep need of a new encounter with Christ. The audiences for the New Evangelization are those who have already heard Christ being proclaimed, while not neglecting the evangelization of those who have not yet heard the Gospel of Christ (Evangelii Nuntiandi 52). This New Evangelization had to be directed to all the baptized in order to renew, purify, and strengthen their faith.

Why is there a need for New Evangelization? In the year 2000, Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope-Emeritus Benedict XVI, answered this question saying that to evangelize means “to show this path that will teach the art of living. This is why we need New Evangelization; if the art of living remains unknown, nothing else works. But this art is not the object of science, rather this art can only be communicated by the One, who has life—He who is the Gospel personified” (Pope Benedict XVI Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers).

Thus, in the conference of the Asian Congress on Evangelization, Bishop Teodoro Bacani in his article *The Need for a New Evangelization* stated that a New Evangelization is called for because of change in the situation of the recipients of evangelization, and because of changes in the condition of the Church herself (Bacani, *The Need for a New Evangelization*, 43). Therefore, evangelization must be renewed according to the present circumstances of the world and Church, likewise according to the situation to whom the Word of God must be preached.



The Teachings of the Pope on New Evangelization

This part of the discussion exposes the presentation of the Pontiffs who were responsible for the establishment of the New Evangelization. Here are the Popes for the New Evangelization:

Pope Paul VI

Pope Paul VI ushered in a time of reflection on the evangelizing ministry of the Church. Among his many works, it is his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* that captures the beginning of the New Evangelization. This Apostolic Exhortation was written after the Third General Assembly of the Synod for Evangelization. Therefore, the basis that he used for the Church to move forward is evangelization. Pope Paul VI emphasizes first and foremost that evangelization is central to the Church's identity. It is her essential mission and a task that is made more urgent by the changes in contemporary society (Canilang, 2013). Then, he proposes that the Church's evangelizing activity must constantly seek the proper means and language for presenting, or representing, to them God's revelation and faith in Jesus Christ (Instrumentum Laboris 12). After the death of John XXIII, who called for the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI eagerly continued his works and pursuit for an effective evangelization.



Pope Paul VI has in mind the Christians of the West who have distanced and drifted away from the Church. The existence of many atheists and unbelievers in the 1970s gave bigger problems to the phenomenon of Christians who were sacramentalized but not evangelized--Christians only in name. Thus, in order to re-evangelize these Christians who have fallen away from the Church, we must be witnesses of faith. As he exclaimed: "modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers" (EN 41). The good evangelizer is the one who can translate into his/her own life what he/she preaches to his/her audience. Therefore, we could not expect to transform others unless we have had a personal transformation ourselves (Catan & Giordano SJ, 2007). There must be a continuous personal transformation in order to have an effective transformation in others.

There are three points which are important in this discussion of Paul VI's understanding of New Evangelization. The first point is "evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church. It is Her deepest identity. The Church exists to evangelize and through that evangelization process, She grows ever more faithful,

loving and hopeful in the Lord” (EN 14). The second point is the resistance to faith by many atheists and unbelievers takes the form of a certain refusal and an inability to grasp the new order of things, the new meaning of the world, of life and of history. This creates a big problem in the phenomenon of the Christian way of life (EN 56). The third point is the “Church is an evangelizer, but She begins by being evangelized Herself” (EN 15). In order to re-evangelize these Christians who have fallen away from the Church, one has to be a witness to the faith (EN 21). This means that an evangelizer should be the first to be evangelized. The witnessing must not be focused on the pious actions of the Church, but rather it should be seen in the daily ways of life.

Pope John Paul II

The New Evangelization in Pope John Paul II’s concept is a response to new cultural realities. John Paul II is the one who coined the term “New Evangelization” in public. He addressed this in homilies, seminars, public viewings, etc. Then, it easily scattered around the globe and this term became a sign of the beginning of the era of New Evangelization.

Perhaps, the clearest definition of “New Evangelization” is in his Encyclical, *Redemptoris Missio*. In section 33 of this Encyclical, John Paul II describes three different circumstances in the evangelization of the people.

The first situation that John Paul II described is the so-called *Missio ad Gentes*. This situation is an essential missionary focus of the Church on proclaiming the Gospel of Christ to those who have not heard it (RM 33).



The second situation focuses on those with strong Christian affiliation who were “fervent in their faith and Christian living. These are Christian communities with adequate ecclesial structure in its activity thus, needing pastoral care” (RM 33). Hence, the clergy, especially the parish priests, must support them for their sustainability and pastoral care so that there will be no isolated communities to the Church/parish.

The third situation is the concern of New Evangelization. This is the “ongoing evangelization of those in the intermediate situation who have lost a sense of the faith.” They no longer consider themselves members of the Church. We need to re-evangelize such people who have lived a life far from Christ and His Gospel (RM 33). There are many Catholics who have been baptized in infancy but have fallen away from the faith when they grew up. They do not live a personal commitment to Christ

and do not practice the faith as adolescents or adults. The New Evangelization is directed to these fallen-away baptized Catholics.

It is believed that John Paul II repeatedly called for New Evangelization which began in 1983 during his address to the Catholic Bishops of Latin America. He said to the bishops who are present: “The Commemoration of the half millennium of evangelization will gain its full energy if it is a commitment to re-evangelize or to New Evangelization, new in its ardor, methods, and expressions” (Hann, 2014, pp. 15-16). This was how he described New Evangelization: an evangelization with enthusiasm in evangelizing, new in its ardor, effective methods that the faithful can easily and effectively be captured by it, and creative expressions that the faithful may understand it well.

Pope Benedict XVI

Pope John Paul II’s call for a New Evangelization was taken up and reaffirmed by his successor Pope Benedict XVI. During his pontificate, Pope Benedict XVI addressed the theme: “The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith” in the 13th General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to support and better prepare for the work of the New Evangelization (Hann, 2014, p. 18).



Thus, Pope Benedict XVI pointed out that New Evangelization is an important element of the Church's mission and that the Church exists to evangelize. The fact is, evangelization is what makes the Church a true Church. Hence, if the heart of the Church is to evangelize the Gospel to the whole world, then New Evangelization is one of the vital

processes needed to achieve this goal.

During mass at Saint Peter’s Basilica for the closing of the Synod of Bishops for New Evangelization, Pope Benedict XVI reflected on the three aspects of the New Evangelization: First, the Pope reminds us that our ordinary pastoral ministry must be more animated by the fire of the Spirit. Second, we are called to proclaim the Gospel to those people who do not know Jesus Christ. Finally, the mission of the New Evangelization is to find new ways to help renew the faith and lives of people who have drifted away from the Church so that they may encounter Jesus Christ anew and rediscover the joy of faith and return to the religious practice of the community of the faithful (Wuerl, 2013, p. 13).

New Evangelization focuses on those who are baptized and have lost their sense of faith. But it does not mean that evangelization is only offered to them. In fact, all are subjects of evangelization. In other words, New Evangelization is sharing and living the Gospel of Jesus Christ in today’s changing world.

The New Evangelization for the Life of the Church in the Philippines

Concern with the New Evangelization has been the overall theme of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP-II) in 1991, of the National Mission Congress for New Millennium (NMC) held in Cebu in September/October 2000, and of the National Pastoral Consultation on Church Renewal (NPCCR) which the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) sponsored in Manila in 2001. Especially since PCP-II, a great number of synods and pastoral assemblies have been established and carried to term in various dioceses. These synods and assemblies called for extensive surveys and studies on "Faith and Church situations" in many sectors of the country. They involved much serious discussions among members, ordained and lay, in Catholic communities on different levels. Reports, summaries of the deliberations and conclusions of these assemblies were sent to the Holy See for review. Religious Orders, congregations, and a good number of lay institutes and organizations have also held, on the national level, analogous conferences since PCP-II.

Thus, we in the Church in the Philippines come to this program of the "New Evangelization" already with considerable prior extensive and intensive study, reflection, deliberation and resolution. In truth we have been trying to earnestly pursue "renewed evangelization" especially in the last twenty-five years.



Photo from Diocese of Alaminos

The task of New Evangelization calls us to continue earnestly the initiatives and projects which have been ongoing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. *We are called to examine more deeply the pastoral situation that we all face together as Church in the Philippines. We are asked to explore and discover "the new methods and means for transmitting the Good News" more effectively to our people, always under the guidance of the Spirit. Above all, we are challenged anew to foster in the Church in our country a renewed commitment and enthusiasm in living out the Gospel in all diverse areas of our lives, in "real-life practice", challenged anew to become more and more authentic witnesses of our faith, especially to our Asian neighbors!*



CATECHETICAL MODULE STRUCTURE

The framework employed in teaching catechesis adopted the nine Pastoral Priorities of the Church in the Philippines (that also act as the key themes over the nine-year period of New Evangelization) as a response to Pope John Paul II's emphasis on the need for systematic catechesis, which deals with essentials, and is sufficiently complete and open to all other factors of Christian life (CT 21).

Hence, in making this lesson we provide a module based on pastoral priorities of the Philippine Church. Every module has four topics consisting of the four themes of New Evangelization. They are: Encountering Christ, Conversion, Communion (sense of belongingness) and Zeal for Mission. To better comprehend these four themes of New Evangelization, let us reflect on the Holy Father Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* as the basis for this study.

Four Themes of New Evangelization

Encountering Christ

Pope Francis said that the first step of evangelization is having an encounter with the person of Jesus Christ. No one can begin an authentic evangelization without having encountered Christ in their lives. In fact, the opening sentence of his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* states: "The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept His offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness, and loneliness" (EG 1).

The Holy Father moves quickly to say: "I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting Him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day (EG 3)." It is important to go back to the basic premise that all of us are created in the image and likeness of God. Everyone is an image of Christ, capable of serving, loving and doing good.

This is the direct challenge of Pope Francis to all Christians, to open the hearts and lives of the faithful to the person of Jesus Christ. Perhaps one must need to be reminded of the simple doctrine of the Church that Christ dwells within each other. One does not have to search for Him or ask for any incredible revelations to know Him (Gaudete et Exsultate 20). Thus, the faithful must seek Him in every moment, in every day, in prayer, worship, work, relationships and in every act of kindness.

One might ask who is God? God is love. God shares his love to His people, and as one who received the love which restores meaning to lives, how can one fail to share that love with others? Jesus came down to the world to show us the extraordinary way of love through the cross. Hence, encountering Christ leads to joy and the fullest possible experience of life.

Each encounter with Jesus is an invitation to follow Him. For that reason, the Church exists for a mission, and that mission is to proclaim Christ by the witnessing of one's own life and proclaiming Him to the world (EG 20). It is an encounter with a personal God that transforms man to evangelize and impels Him to open the hearts and lives of the faithful to the person of Jesus Christ. At the opening synod for the New Evangelization Benedict XVI points out that: "In every time and place, evangelization has its starting and finishing points, which is Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

Conversion

It is very important to encounter Christ in the daily basis of our life. After encountering Christ, the next step for renewal is conversion. When we have already encountered and recognized Christ as significant in our life, it is the starting point, in which man seeks for conversion. What is conversion? The Greek word for conversion is *metanoia*. It means to rethink. It is a process wherein a person questions one's own and common way of living, allowing God to enter the criteria of one's life and not merely judge according to the current social opinions (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, 2000). This conversion is not a mere change of religion but rather it is a conversion of the heart and mind, which is a radical conversion, "a conversion which restores the joy of faith in their hearts and inspire a commitment to the Gospel" (See EG 14).

Thereby, to convert means not to live the mainstream way of life for its own sake or do things just because others are doing it. It is not feeling justified in doing dubious, ambiguous, or evil actions just because others do the same. Conversion means beginning to see one's life through the eyes of God; thereby looking for the good, even if uncomfortable and aiming not for the judgment of men, but on the justice of God. In other words: to look for a new style of life, a new life (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, 2000).

Hence, to be converted is not only about the change of perspective in life but it also includes the way we live our lives to the fullest; how we act, how we behave and how we give meaning to our lives by doing mission, in accordance to our own purpose and calling in life. For example, if one is already converted to Christ, he/she will not be able to cheat his/her neighbor, but rather think about the goodness he/she can offer to his/her brethren. In this conversion we should not only follow our own desires in life but also become aware of the presence of God in our manner of living. "The important thing in this conversion process is not to walk alone, but to rely on each other as brothers and sisters, especially under the leadership of the Church leaders, in a wise and realistic pastoral discernment" (EG 33).

Communion (Sense of Belongingness to the Church)

In *Caritas in Veritate* no. 53, Benedict XVI explains that the development of the people depends, above all, on recognition that the human race is a single family working together in true communion, not simply a group of subjects who happen to live side by side. When a person sees others as a family member, it becomes a responsibility to give assistance, to offer help, to be there when others are in need.

To evangelize is to make the Kingdom of God present in the world and to proclaim Christ. The Word of God clearly has a social content: at the very heart of the



Gospel is life in community and engagement with others (See EG 177). Therefore, one must connect Himself/herself to others in building the Kingdom of God here on earth. One has a personal calling to respond in proclaiming the Good News. Sooner or later, a person will realize that he/ she needs a community to belong to. It is better to have many workers in the vineyard of Christ so that the Gospel will be easily preached to every individual.

The very mystery of the Trinity reminds us that all have been created in the image of that Divine Communion. The Gospel is not merely about personal relationship with God. It is rather living in intrinsic interdependence with others (EG 178-179). With this statement, the value of communion or sense of belongingness to the Church is highly regarded by every faithful servant of God. To this end, the Holy Triune God is the model of this communion.

Zeal for Mission

When a person has already encountered Christ, converted to Christ and is in communion with the Church as children of God, then it will be the time for Him/ her to do mission in whatever way he/she can to proclaim the Word of God through his/her daily witnessing to the Gospel.

To pray and to work: this must be the attitude of every spirit-filled evangelizers. Sometimes, evangelizers easily get tired to the point that his/her work becomes meaningless to Him/her. Thus, because of weariness and difficulties, the evangelizer's liveliness and fervor dies out. Thereby, it is important to have moments of adoration, prayerful encounter with the Word, and sincere conversation with the Lord through the sacraments (See EG 262).

Every period of history is marked by the presence of human weakness, self-absorption, complacency and selfishness. We must learn from the wisdom of the saints who confronted their own difficulties (See EG 163). It is good to be inspired by early Christians and the many brothers and sisters throughout history who were filled with joy, persistent courage and zeal in proclaiming the Gospel.

Pope Francis proposes four spiritual motivations for mission that can help us imitate the saints who continue to proclaim God's Word, even though they encountered a lot of trouble and difficulties.

A. Personal Encounter with the Saving Love of Jesus

The primary reason for evangelization is the love of Jesus which one has received, the experience of salvation urges ever greater love for Him. The best incentive for sharing the Gospel comes from contemplating it with love and reading it with the heart. Its beauty amazes and constantly excites Him/her (EG 264). This can lead to a missionary enthusiasm in proclaiming Christ to others. This conviction is sustained by constantly renewing the experience of savoring Christ's friendship and His message. A person who is not joyful, enthusiastic, certain and in love will convince nobody (EG 266). Therefore, the admiration and excitement of proclaiming the Kingdom of God should always be accompanied with great enthusiasm. A true evangelizer is the one



who never stops being a disciple of Christ, who always walks with Him, communicates with Christ, and eagerly works with Him.

B. The Spiritual Savour of Being a People

To be an evangelizer of souls, one must develop a spiritual taste for being close to people's lives and discover that this is a source of greater joy. God invites us to acknowledge that we are a people. Jesus Himself is the model of this method of evangelization (EG 268). He opened Himself to others, whatever state of life they may be in. It is interesting to recall the closeness of Jesus to everyone. He is very accessible. He draws near to the blind man and the outcasts (cf. Mk. 10:46-52). He eats and drinks with sinners (cf. Mk. 2:16), without worrying about being thought of as a glutton and a drunkard Himself. He shows compassion by allowing a sinful woman to anoint His feet (cf. Lk. 7:36-50) and healing a man with a withered hand during Sabbath (cf. Mt. 12:9-13).

With His inspiration and moved by His examples of sharing in the lives of all, listening to their concerns, helping them materially and spiritually, everyone is called to be committed in building a new world. But this must not come from a sense of obligation or a burdensome duty. Rather, it should be done because of a personal decision which brings joy and gives meaning to the lives of all the faithful (See EG 269).

C. Sense of Mystery

Some people do not commit themselves to mission because they think that nothing will change and so it is useless to make the effort. Sometimes, one misses to inculcate in his/her mind that in the midst of darkness, something new always springs to life and sooner or later produces fruit; (EG 275) that God is capable of intervening and He does not abandon His people.

This fruitfulness is often invisible, intangible and unquantifiable. One can know quite well that lives will be fruitful, without claiming to know how or where or when. But one thing is for sure, no single act of love for God will be lost, nor any of the acts of sincere concern for others. Moreover, no generous effort is meaningless and no painful endurance is wasted (See EG 279) because God will repay it with the abundant gift of salvation. This conviction is called a sense of mystery, that when one entrusts Himself/herself to God, he/she will bear good fruit.

D. Fervent Prayer

Pope Francis tells everyone the importance of prayer in doing mission in the task of evangelization: "Constant prayer will grant us the guidance for every crisis that one is experiencing in his/her mission" (EG 282). It is very essential to beg God in prayer. One must not abandon prayer even in the midst of doubtful moments. The special weapon that everyone must always use is prayer so that one may never get tired of his/her mission to spread the Good News. In fact, "when evangelizers rise from prayer, their hearts are more open. Freed from self-absorption, they are desirous of doing good and sharing their lives with others." In short, evangelizers must always stand in his/her friendship with God in prayer.



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CATECHETICAL MODULE 1: INTEGRAL FAITH FORMATION

Overview

The Meaning and Necessity of Faith

What is faith? Faith is first of all a personal adherence of man to God. At the same time, and inseparably, it is a free assent to the whole truth that God has revealed (CCC 150). In faith, one must surrender one's whole being to God in His love and wisdom. By faith, one freely commits oneself entirely to God (DV 5). This is what it really means when the faithful utters, "I believe in God." Faith is the virtue of saying "yes" to the truth taught in the Sacred Scriptures and in the living Tradition of the Church (See Pastoral Letter on the Year of Faith). Faith, then, involves the total person, his heart and mind. It "touches every part of Him/her--his/her mind (believing), his/her will (doing), and his/her hearts (trusting) (CFC 128).

The Impact of Secularism on Filipino Faith

In truth, the Filipino faith is deep and simple. Filipino Catholics are not embarrassed to perform religious rites, like making the Sign of the Cross in any public places, or to display religious images or articles in vehicles. Many even dare to follow religious practices in places where the faith is banned.

But there is also a danger of a faith that is not well-transmitted to the individuals. The faith now is largely uninformed, prone to ritualism and pietism, tending towards the externals of prayer and sacraments without understanding their meaning (See Pastoral Letter on the Year of Faith). Faith that is practiced only externally is hypocrisy and can make people feel alienated. This can lead to secularism which separates the practice of faith from public life. Thus, little knowledge is dangerous, that is why there must be a careful way of practicing such piety in liturgical activities. Likewise, there should be a proper transmission of faith by the competent authority of the Church or a well-informed catechist (See CCC 2472). Hence, materialism and secularism are worrisome issues that contradict a life of faith towards conversion of heart and mind to Christ. If the faith is well-informed and the center of it is Christ, it would be easier to defeat all these challenges that hinder the call to a renewed integral evangelization.

Knowledge and Deepening of Faith

Sacred Scriptures and Tradition, Vatican II Documents, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* supplemented by the Catholic Social Doctrine of the Church are the fundamental references of knowing and deepening the faith (See Pastoral Letter on the Year of Faith). In reality, not all Filipino Catholics are able or can be expected to read these books and understand them. There should be guidance from pastors, consecrated persons, catechists, and religion teachers. However, knowledge of faith is not enough. There



should also be a personal encounter with Christ, an eagerness to know Jesus and see how Christ works in the lives of the people. In reading the Catechism for Filipino Catholics it must be noted that what is presented in that book is not theory but an encounter with a Divine Person who lives within the Church (PF 11). God is not a mere concept, thus, an encounter with Him should not only stay in the mind. Rather, God must be experienced in our daily endeavors.

Hence, faith is principally celebrated through the liturgy. It is also a good opportunity to strengthen our faith through the liturgy, especially in the Eucharist, which is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed to and the source from which all Her power flows (Sacrosanctum Concilium 10). In the Eucharist, we also rediscover the content of faith that is professed, celebrated, lived, and prayed (Fidei Depositum 116). As the Church celebrates the liturgy in accordance with their true profession of faith and correct interpretation, they remember the memorial of the Paschal Mystery of Christ.

Living the Faith

How will the Catholic faithful live out their faith? To live in a truly moral life, a life in fidelity to God's command. The Ten Commandments of the Lord are summarized into two: love of God and love of neighbor. Therefore, faith demands a genuine love. Thus, charity is summed up as faith in action. To strive to live a truly moral life is to journey on the way of discipleship, of being united in mind and heart with Jesus (Final Statement of 4th Federation of Asia Bishops' Conference Plenary, 4-8). Faith is a gift to be proclaimed, communicated, and shared. That is why the final mandate of the Lord to His Apostles is to go and make disciples of all nation, and to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Mt. 28:19-20). It is also the same mandate to all the people of God to become witnesses of a good Christian life and share the same faith to others. The Catholic faithful can live their authentic faith and shared it to others "by living witness of poverty and detachment, freedom in the face of the powers of this world and fidelity to the Lord Jesus" (*Instrumentum Laboris* 158). In short, it entails that depth of witnessing. When one is truthfully penetrated by the Word of God into his/her mind and heart, he/she is moved to be more concerned, sympathetic and affectionate to the needs of his/her brethren who is an image of God. In result, he/she will never fail to proclaim the Good News to others.



Photo from Archdiocese of Capi

Catechetical Intended Learning Outcomes

- a. Faith is at the heart of pastoral renewal. Thus, may the faithful see that faith must be authentically formed and renewed based on reading the signs of the times without abandoning the rich tradition of our faith (Contents of God's self-revelation, which is found in Sacred Scriptures, Sacred Tradition, and the meaning of the Creed).
- b. The faithful must realize that the center of our faith is Christ which can be found in the Church, in the classroom, at home, in society/community, in cultures, in politics and even in one's private life.

- c. The faithful must realize that they need a community to belong to because true faith in the Incarnate Son of God is inseparable from self-giving and from membership in the community of the Church.
- d. To translate into action our faith in the Lord, a continuous service to God and others are necessary. As well as, worshiping God, having a love for prayer, practicing the sacraments, reconciling with others and living an authentic Christian life.

Etymology

Faith generally corresponds to the **Greek** noun πίστις (pistis) or to the **Greek** verb πιστεύω (pisteuo), meaning "to trust, to have confidence, to be reliable, or to assure". Faith in Latin word is *fides* and may refer to: Faith, trust, loyalty, or fidelity, or a religious belief.

Faith means belief, firm persuasion, assurance, firm conviction, faithfulness. Faith is confidence in what we hope for and the assurance that the Lord is working, even though we cannot see it. Faith knows that no matter what the situation—in our lives or someone else's—that the Lord is working in it.

Catechetical Context

CBCP Pastoral Exhortation on the Era of New Evangelization

We look forward with gratitude and joy to March 16, 2021, the fifth centenary of the coming of Christianity to our beloved land. We remember with thanksgiving the first Mass celebrated on Limasawa Island on Easter Sunday March 31 that same blessed

year. We remember the baptism of Rajah Humabon who was given his Christian name Carlos and his wife Harah Amihan who was baptized Juana in 1521. Our eyes gaze on the Santo Niño de Cebu, the oldest religious icon in the Philippines, gift of Ferdinand Magellan to the first Filipino Catholics that same year. Indeed 2021 will be a year of great jubilee for the Church in the Philippines.

We shall, therefore, embark on a nine-year spiritual journey that will culminate with the great jubilee of 2021. It is a grace-filled event of blessings for the Church starting October 21, 2012 until March 16, 2021.

How providential indeed that on October 21 this year, the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI will add another Filipino to the canon of Saints of the Church, our very own Visayan proto-martyr Pedro Calungsod, who gave his life for the faith on the morning of April 2, 1672 in Guam.

The canonization of Pedro Calungsod will take place under the brilliant light of the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council on October 11. This same day also marks the twentieth anniversary of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the

**Looking Forward to
Our Five Hundredth
Go and make
disciples...
(Mt. 28:19)**



commencement of the Year of Faith that will end on November 24, 2013. These events will take place during the celebration of the XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops that will be held in Rome from October 7 to 28, 2012 on the theme, “The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith.”

FAITH AND EVANGELIZATION

All these events are bound together by the themes of “faith” and “evangelization”. Evangelization is the proclamation, witness and transmission of the Gospel given to humanity by our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the opening up of people’s lives, society, culture and history to the Person of Jesus Christ and to His living community, the Church.

The mission of all of us who are called to take part in the “New Evangelization” is the Church’s own essential mission, as it was the mission of Jesus Himself also. Of this basic truth Pope Benedict XVI reminded us, in his first announcement of the Year of Faith:

“The new evangelizers are called to walk first on this Way that is Christ, to make others know the beauty of the Gospel that gives life. And on this Way, one never walks alone but always in company, an experience of communion and brotherhood that is offered to all those we meet, to share with them our experience of Christ and of his Church. Thus testimony combined with proclamation can open the hearts of those who are seeking the truth so that they are able to arrive at the meaning of their own life.”

Hence, the Pope said that the Year of Faith will be a “moment of grace and commitment for an ever fuller conversion to God, to strengthen our faith in Him, and to proclaim Him with joy to the people of our time” (Benedict XVI, Homily at the Mass for the New Evangelization, October 16, 2011).

THREE FACES OF EVANGELIZATION

To better understand the New Evangelization, let us first place it within the comprehensive context of the Church’s mission of Evangelization. “In its precise sense, Evangelization is the *missio ad gentes* directed to those who do not know Christ. In a wider sense, it is used to describe ordinary pastoral work, while the phrase ‘New Evangelization’ designates pastoral outreach to those who no longer practice the Christian faith” (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization, December 3, 2007, 12).

The New Evangelization, therefore, is primarily addressed to the baptized in the Christian West “who are experiencing a new existential and cultural situation, which, in fact, has imperiled their faith and their witness.” This is a situation which Pope Benedict XVI has described as an ‘interior desert’ which “has virtually eliminated any question of God” (XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, Instrumentum Laboris, 86).

It is a crisis “bearing in itself traces of the exclusion of God from people’s lives, or a generalized indifference toward the Christian faith itself, to the point of attempting to marginalize it from public life” (Benedict XVI, Address to the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, May 30, 2011).



But in fact the cultural situation so described applies as well to certain parts of Africa, Asia-Oceania, and South America. Referring to Africa, Pope Benedict XVI observed that the situation in the continent call Christians “to reawaken their enthusiasm for being members of the Church...to live the Good News as individuals, in their families and in society and to proclaim it with fresh zeal to persons near and far” (Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Africae Munus* 160, 2011).

While the Christian West must deal with the challenge of secularism, materialism, and relativism leading to the abandonment of faith, the same problem to a lesser degree is posed to the “younger Churches,” especially those sectors that are highly influenced by great social and cultural changes. These, too, are “fertile ground for the New Evangelization” (*Instrumentum Laboris* 89).

More specifically, following the lead of Blessed Pope John Paul II (*Redemptoris Missio*, 37-38) the New Evangelization has to be directed to the cultural, social, political, economic civic, scientific and technological, communications and religious dimensions of life. All these have been deeply influenced by the globalizing secularist and materialist culture.

The pastoral situation calls on the whole Church, the faithful, to participate in “overcoming the separation of the Gospel from life and reconstructing, in the everyday activities of the home, work and society, the unity of life which finds its inspiration in the Gospel and, in the same Gospel, the strength to realize it fully” (cf. John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* 30, 1988).

THE NEW EVANGELIZATION FOR THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES

Concern with the New Evangelization has been the overall theme of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP-II) in 1991, of the National Mission Congress for the New Millennium (NMC) held in Cebu in September/October 2000, and of the National Pastoral Consultation on Church Renewal (NPCCR) which the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) sponsored in Manila in 2001. Especially since PCP-II a great number of synods and pastoral assemblies have been established and carried to term in various dioceses. These synods and assemblies called for extensive surveys and studies on “Faith and Church situations” in many sectors of the country. They involved much serious discussions among members, ordained and lay, in Catholic communities on different levels. Reports, summaries of the deliberations and conclusions of these assemblies were sent to the Holy See for review. Religious orders and congregations, and a good number of lay institutes and organizations have also held, on the national level, analogous conferences since PCP-II.

Thus we in the Church in the Philippines come to this program of the “New Evangelization” already with considerable prior extensive and intensive study, reflection, deliberation and resolution. In truth we have been trying to earnestly pursue “renewed evangelization” especially in the last twenty-five years.

This task of New Evangelization calls us to continue more earnestly the initiatives and projects which have been ongoing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We are called to examine more deeply the pastoral situation that we all face together as Church in the Philippines. We are asked to explore and discover “the new methods and means for



transmitting the Good News” more effectively to our people, always under the guidance of the Spirit. Above all, we are challenged anew to foster in the Church in our country a renewed commitment and enthusiasm in living out the Gospel in all the diverse areas of our lives, in “real-life practice”, challenged anew to become more and more authentic witnesses of our faith, especially to our Asian neighbors!

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ROOTS

We need here only to hear again the great commandment for mission, the mission mandate of Christ Jesus Himself, “As the Father has sent me, even so I send you” (John 20:21) and “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you and lo, I am with you always, until the end of time” (Mt 28: 19-20). Indeed the letter to Timothy tells us that “God desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (I Tim 2:4). And Paul says that “everyone who invokes the name of the Lord will be saved” (Rom 10:13). But he goes on to point out that no one can come to believe in Jesus Christ if he has not heard the Word of God. But then the message that awakens faith has to be proclaimed by messengers sent out for the task. “So then, faith comes from hearing the message and the message comes through preaching Christ” (Rom 10:17)

Vatican II taught us that “The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature” (LG 2). The Church exists out of her faith in Jesus the Word incarnate sent by the Father, a faith generated by the Holy Spirit. And the Church exists in order to bring the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ to all people under the guidance of the same Spirit. The missionary mandate of the Church, however has assumed new forms and methods in the history of the Church, depending on situations and historical moments.

After the 1974 Synod of Bishops that was devoted to Evangelization in the Modern World, we heard from Pope Paul VI in his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* issued in 1975 the immortal words, “For the Church evangelizing means bringing the Good News into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new” (EN 18). So the Church’s evangelizing mission, as always but more so in our contemporary time, should not only cover wider geographic areas but also people’s criteria for judgment, values, points of interest, mindsets, and lifestyles (EN 19). In other words, evangelization must affect and transform the newly emerging cultures.

At that time Paul VI was already aware that “the split between the Gospel and culture is without a doubt the drama of our time, just as it was of other times” (EN 20). PCP II called it the dichotomy between faith and ordinary life. Blessed Pope John Paul II has constantly repeated this basic insight in his call for a New Evangelization. The Church, in complete fidelity to the Gospel and Tradition, cannot “simply appeal to its former Christian heritage” but must discover how to conform herself “with the person and message of Jesus” in changing cultures (John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Europa* 2, 2003).

He invites us to a New Evangelization: “new in its ardor, methods and expressions” (John Paul II, Discourse to XIX Assembly of CELAM, Port au Prince, 1983). The New Evangelization was in fact the common theme of the continental Synods that helped



prepare the Church for the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 (see John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Asia* 29). For his part Pope Benedict XVI humbly admits that faith can no longer be taken as “a self-evident presupposition for life in society” in our changed and changing cultures (Benedict XVI, *Porta fidei* 2, 2011). So by calling for a Year of Faith he invites the Church to profess, celebrate and transmit her faith in cultural contexts that have become indifferent or even hostile to the faith.

The New Evangelization, therefore, appeals to the Church to muster her spiritual energy received from the Word and the Spirit in order to discover in diverse cultural settings the signs of hope and action of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, the Church must be cognizant of the new cultural situations that call on her “to look at the way she lives and transmits the faith” (*Instrumentum Laboris* 49).

The Church in the Philippines will heed the call.



Photo from Archdiocese of Palo



Photo from Diocese of San Jose, Nueva Ecija

WHAT WILL THIS ERA OF NEW EVANGELIZATION FOR THE PHILIPPINES CONSIST OF?

As we initiate concrete activities in pursuit of the New Evangelization at this time, four ‘areas’ or ‘dimensions’ of concern are opened up for us:

First, the intensification of promoting *missio ad gentes* in all our communities, among our lay people, our priests and seminarians, and men and women in consecrated life. Post-World War II Roman Pontiffs have insisted that the Church in the Philippines has a clear “missionary vocation” given by divine providence by reasons of history, of geographical location, of the presence of Filipino Christians in so many ‘non-evangelized’ regions of the world. In all of human history it is today that the number of those who have never met Jesus Christ or heard His Gospel is perhaps at its highest level. How imperative and how urgent it is then that Jesus and His Gospel be made known, and His truth and way of life be witnessed to by us to whom 500 years ago the Christian Faith was given as gift!

Secondly, in our part of the world all evangelization must keep in mind the imperative of “bringing Good News to the poor” (*pauperes evangelizantur*). This holds true of all evangelization, but it has a special relevance and urgency for us and our Filipino “missionary vocation”. We are still a long way from the vision to becoming in truth a “church of the poor”—committed to struggle to bring down poverty among our people, committed to striving to do all we can to help bring about “a civilization of justice and love”.



Thirdly, we must reach out to the many Catholics whose faith-knowledge and faith-practice have been largely eroded and even lost. We have to reach out to former Catholics who have drifted from the Church due to scandals, hurts, unresolved confusions and doubts as well as to Catholics who have in fact turned to other religions and religious traditions. We must counteract the creeping effects of glorified moral relativism and secularism now eating up our people. We must protect the youth from the attraction of individualistic sects that ignore all communitarian norms.

Lastly, we must renew our attention and zeal toward the reawakening, fuller formation and animation of young people and youth groups, in both urban and rural settings. The Philippines is a country of the Young. We cannot insist enough how important and significant, how urgent and crucial the evangelization of our youth is. This, indeed, is priority pastoral task.

A NINE-YEAR ERA OF NEW EVANGELIZATION

As we initiate concrete activities of the New Evangelization, we need to emphasize the absolute necessity of three overriding faith imperatives for evangelizing efforts to be fruitful.

First, the centrality of the Eucharist. For if “the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed” and “is also the fount from which all power flows,” it is “especially from the Eucharist” that “grace is poured forth upon us as from a fountain” (Sacrosanctum Concilium, no. 10). The grace that radiates from the Eucharist has to accompany all our evangelizing efforts.

Second, the necessity of Prayer. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the main agent of evangelization. Every evangelizer, therefore, has to be led and driven by the Spirit, even as Jesus was in His proclaiming of the Kingdom of God (see Lk. 3:22; 4:1,14). And it is through prayer that we are able to listen to the Holy Spirit and do his bidding. It is by the Holy Spirit that we are able to call on God, Abba. It is by the Holy Spirit that we are able to follow in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus and tell His story to others. In our context, our people’s fidelity to prayer through religious devotions and practices – through their popular religiosity and piety – is an enduring witness to their acceptance of the Good News of Jesus. Hence, the New Evangelization has to be accompanied by prayer and contemplation. We are called to rekindle the spirit and practice of prayer among us and foster a renewal of popular religiosity and piety in its different forms and practices.

Third, the necessity of Conversion. The journey to discipleship in Christ begins with conversion, a deep metanoia, a change of mind and heart. Conversion into discipleship leads to telling the story of Jesus as one has seen Him, heard Him, and touched Him in the core of one’s heart. Jesus our Lord of Divine Mercy is a testimony that no evangelization can be fruitful without conversion. “Repent and believe in the Gospel” were the first words of Jesus in his public ministry as recorded by Mark. As Church, all the faithful, and especially we as Pastors, should recognize and confess our own “*mea culpas*,” and our failures to evangelize credibly and effectively.

With these postulates of the New Evangelization, we respond to the call of the Spirit for a New Evangelization by focusing on the Nine Pastoral Priorities of the Church in the Philippines as the key themes over a nine-year period.



Year 2013: Integral Faith Formation. What a blessing it is that this first pastoral priority coincides with this Year of Faith as declared by the Holy Father! Our pastoral concern goes out to the great many whose faith hardly plays a significant role in daily private and public life. We reach out during this year to those who have drifted away from the Christian faith. We note with sadness the erosion of the faith and our need for true conversion. The Sacred Scriptures and Tradition, Vatican II and the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Catechism for Filipino Catholics will be fundamental references of the New Evangelization. This is the year of San Pedro Calungsod, who with San Lorenzo Ruiz, provides an exemplary model for the mission of the Church in the Philippines. Integral Faith Formation will focus on the “12 articles of Faith” found in the Apostles Creed. Faith Formation has one objective: a more intimate relationship between Jesus and his followers. Blessed John Paul uses the three phrases: evangelization with “new methods, new expressions, and new fervor.” In the end, the Church follows the way of holiness through conversion and discipleship.

Year 2014: Laity. This year especially celebrates both the sacrament of Baptism by which all the faithful become God’s sons and daughters and the sacrament of Confirmation by which they become witnesses of Christ to others. Yet the gifts of the Holy Spirit through these sacraments often remain dormant. This year is to be devoted to the renewal of the laity, to their “empowerment” or more accurately to activating their charisms from the Spirit, so that they may indeed take up their role as co-responsible agents of evangelization and lead in the task of social transformation. In this regard, of paramount global importance is the ecological challenge of climate change.

Year 2015: The Poor. This year is dedicated to committing ourselves more firmly to our vision of becoming truly a Church of the Poor. The new evangelization is also a powerful call from the Lord to follow in His footsteps to be evangelically poor. How far have we journeyed to our vision of Church? How shall we assist the materially poor to face the challenges of hunger and poverty, of globalization and climate change? And together with them eradicate the evil of corruption and the economic and political imbalances of our society? At the same time we realize that the materially poor in our midst have the God-given power to tell the story of the poor Christ who by His poverty liberates and enriches us. The whole Church, rich and poor, powerful and powerless, have to be in solidarity in the work of restoring integrity and truth, justice and peace – love – in our benighted land.



Photo from Archdiocese of Tandag



Photo from Diocese of Urdaneta



Year 2016: The Eucharist and of the Family. This is a year of great blessing for us. The Holy Father has chosen Cebu as the host of the Fifty-first International Eucharistic Congress. We will focus our pastoral action on making the Eucharist better appreciated and its missionary implication better lived by the Catholic faithful. We shall especially emphasize on forming the Filipino Family as a Eucharistic community of parents and children, true to its name as a domestic church, rooted in the Eucharist. An evangelized family is an evangelizing family. Even as it is increasingly besieged by secularist values, the Family, as PCP-II has said, is “the focal point of evangelization.” We shall intensify our efforts to strengthen marriage and the family and to protect them from ideas and values that destroy them.

Year 2017: The Parish as a Communion of Communities. This is a year when we more deeply discern not only the structures of governance of our dioceses and parishes but also of the quality of faith life in the parish, the fellowship, belongingness, and participation experienced by its members. In a special way we shall probe into our efforts of making the parish a communion of communities, a communion of Basic Ecclesial Communities and of covenanted faith-communities and ecclesial movements. We shall discern and implement measures on how communities of consecrated life may be more integrated into the life and mission of the parish. In brief, our focus will be the building of a parish that is truly a faith community immersed in the lives of its people.

Year 2018: Clergy and Religious. In our culture, clergy and religious are the key to the New Evangelization. Yet they are not immune to the twin errors of a dichotomy of faith and inadequate discipleship of Christ. This is a year dedicated to the integral renewal of the values, mind-sets, behavior, and life-styles of the clergy and religious. The aim is to become servant-leaders in the manner of the Good Shepherd, live the spirit of the evangelical counsels and be authentic prophets of the Good News of Jesus and of the Kingdom. It will be a year, too, of revisiting ways of seminary and religious formation, of on-going formation, and of the collaboration of the laity in these crucial approaches to integral growth and development in view of mission and ministry.

Year 2019: Youth. It is often said that the youth are the future of the Church. The youth are in fact the present of the Church. They are its most numerous members. They inspire us by their active participation in society and in the Church. The involvement of hundreds of thousands of young people in the various activities of evangelization and social transformation is a call to greater participation in the Church. “New methods, new expressions and new fervor” of evangelization are imperative. We shall invite the youth to discern deeply their vocation in the world and in the Church, especially the Lord’s invitation to them to the priestly and religious life. How we, as Church, respond to the aspirations of the youth will shape the third millennium.

Year 2020: Ecumenism and Inter-Religious Dialogue. Different faiths and religions are a formidable challenge to a nation that strives to be a community, a human family, a unity in diversity. This year will be devoted to exploring new ways of being community through ecumenical and inter-religious relationships and action. Caritas in veritate, open, honest, respectful – loving – dialogue of life, prayer and action is the only way towards community. At stake are the great values of peace and harmony, particularly in areas of armed conflict, solidarity in the struggle for social change, unity in healing social ills, integrity and social justice in our land.



Year 2021: *Missio ad gentes*. We are indeed proud that so many of the Filipino faithful (laity, priests, and religious) are missionaries in all the continents of the world. It is the duty of faith in Christ to tell his story to others, especially to those who have not sufficiently heard of Him. Even as we are deeply inspired by the stories of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) witnessing to their faith in “ad gentes” regions as well as in highly secularized countries, we need to explore new ways of assisting them as evangelizers. We have been challenged by Blessed John Paul to become the “foremost missionaries” in Asia. This year will be devoted to how we are fulfilling that vocation, how a mission-consciousness in all the faithful can be formed, how each one can be animated into becoming a missionary even at home, and more concretely how parishes and dioceses are supporting our own Philippine-Mission Society.

CALL TO EVANGELIZE

As we launch this nine-year period of New Evangelization for the Church in the Philippines, let us listen to the words of Pope Benedict XVI:

Today the world needs people who proclaim and testify that it is Christ Jesus who teaches the art of living, the way of true happiness, because he Himself is the path of life; people who first of all keep their own gaze fixed on Jesus, the Son of God: the word of proclamation must always be immersed in an intense relationship with Him, in the intense life of prayer. Today’s world needs people who speak to God, so as to be able to speak of God. And we must always remember that Jesus did not redeem the world with beautiful words or ostentatious means but with His suffering and His death.

The law of the grain of wheat that dies in the ground also applies today; we cannot give life to others without giving our own life: “Whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it,” the Lord tells us (Mark 8:35) It is only through men and women molded in God’s presence that the word of God will continue its journey in the world, bearing its fruit.

Dear friends, being evangelizers is not a privilege but a commitment that comes from faith Thus I ask you to let yourselves be formed by God’s grace and to respond in docility to the action of the Spirit of the Risen One. Be signs of hope.... Communicate the joy of faith to all with the enthusiasm that comes from being driven by the Holy Spirit, because he makes all things new. (Rev 21:5), trusting in the promise that Jesus made to the Church: “And lo, I am with you always, to the ending of time!” (Mt. 28:20) [Pope Benedict XVI Address on the New Evangelization, Rome 15 October 2011].

Beloved People of God, we invite you to pray and reflect on what the New Evangelization asks of all of us, from each of us. The Lord of History, without any merits of our own, first gave the priceless gift of the Christian faith to our people and our land, – nearly 500 years ago. Each year, in our own “uniquely Filipino” novena before Christmas Day, our ‘Misa de Gallo’ novena, we thank God’s goodness for this gift of faith, and beg for grace that our people may persevere in it.

In the face of pervasive secularism and materialism, in the midst of billions who have not truly encountered Jesus Christ nor heard of His Gospel, how challenged we must be to embark on the New Evangelization! How can we not want to share Jesus the Way, the Truth



and the Life with those who are yet to know and love Him who is the answer to the restlessness of every human heart?

In this Year of Faith and throughout the nine-year period of special New Evangelization – and beyond – let us celebrate our faith. Live Christ, Share Christ!

May our Lady, Mary Mother of Our Lord and the Star of Evangelization intercede for us and guide us in sharing Christ, our Emmanuel, God-with-us now and forever.

Maranatha, AMEN.

For the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines,

(SGD) † JOSE S. PALMA. D.D.

Archbishop of Cebu

President, CBCP

July 23, 2012

Song for Reflection

“Help my unbelief” (Mark 9:24). This was the petition uttered to Jesus by a father, in tears, begging for a healing miracle for his child. Pope Benedict XVI said that the crisis of the Church today is a crisis of unbelief – when many who used to be committed Catholics leave the Church, not so much because they no longer believe the doctrines of the Church, but because they become emotionally insecure, not knowing how their being Catholic can respond to their daily struggles. Even in our Filipino culture, a person stays with a group so long as “*feel ko*”, and leaves when “*hindi ko na feel*.”

Listen to/Sing this song about faith written by Fr. Manoling Francisco, SJ and discover how faith is as much an act of the heart as it is an act of the mind.

PANANALIG

Silvino Borres Jr, S.J.

Manoling Francisco, SJ

Sa puso kong umiibig, walang nananaig,
kundi yaong pananalig sa Sintang iniibig.

KORO:

Hindi Ka man masilayan,
at init Mo'y maglaho nang tuluyan,
pag-ibig ko sa 'Yo at katapan,
mananatili kailan pa man.

Bawat tao'y nalulumbay at di mapalagay,
hangga't hindi nahiHimlay sa puso Mong dalisay.
(Koro)



PA NANA LIG

Titik : Silvino Borres, nSJ
Manuel Francisco, SJ
Musika: Manuel Francisco, SJ



lan pa man.

Ba - wat ta - o'y na - lu - lum - bay

at di ma - pa - la - gay

hang - ga't hin - di na - hi - him - lay

sa pu - so Mong da - li - say.

Reflection Questions:

1. Why is a sense of “emotional security” important in keeping Catholics in the Church?
2. How can you grow in this emotional aspect of the faith so as to firm up your membership in the Church?

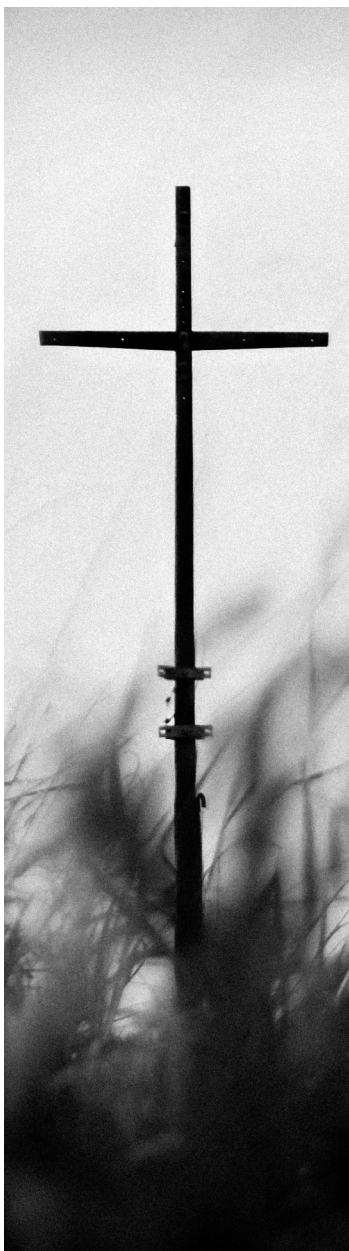
**“Early in the morning the chief priests met hurriedly with the elders, the teachers of the Law, and the whole Council, and made their plans. They put Jesus in chains, led Him away, and handed Him over to Pilate.”
(Mark 15:1)**

Catechist's Corner

Becoming and being a catechist is an active process of partaking in the educative mission of understanding, learning, and living our Catholic faith. This part of the module offers a glimpse to the empirical narratives of the lives of the catechists, creatively captured in a methodological approach called, “research poems”.

Read, recite, listen, and/or reflect on your life as a “catechist” using the selected research poem below. Discuss your views and insights with fellow catechists using the provided guide question/s in relation to the module theme on *integral faith formation* (*pananampalataya*).





III SANHEDRIN

By Clarence M. Batan¹

Translated to English by Luciana L. Urquiola

When Mother gladly received
Her teaching assignment-
As a new catechist
In a public school,
She prepared for the day
Of her visit to the school
Of her meeting with the principal
To get- the schedule.
Only four time slots to choose from:
Earliest in the morning,
In between breaks,
After lunch,
Or just before dismissal.
Like Jesus
Standing before the Sanhedrin,
She bowed in humble submission
Before the mighty
She held no objection
For her mission to set in motion,
At any given time,
For catechesis to finally begin.
This is the third
Way of the Cross
Of a servant-catechist,
For a meaningful servitude.

GUIDE QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

How many times have we persisted to proclaim our faith in front of our people?

¹This research poem is part of the book, *KATEKISTA: Mga Tulang Pananaliksik Hango sa National Catechetical Study 2016-2018*, produced as a Research-based Intervention Outcome (RIO) of the National Catechetical Study (NCS) 2021: Pastoral Action Research and Intervention (PARI) Project. To access this, you can visit this link: <https://www.ncs2021pariproject.com/katekista-mga-tulang-pananaliksik>.

CATECHETICAL LESSON 1:

ENCOUNTERING CHRIST: WORD MADE FLESH

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of an only Son, coming from the Father, filled with enduring love. (Jn 1:14)



Introduction

It is by the infinite goodness and wisdom of God that pleased Him to reveal Himself and to make known the mystery of His will. His will was that people should have access to the Father, through Christ, the Word made flesh, in the Holy Spirit and thus become sharers in His Divine Nature (CCC 51; DV 2).

The Divine Revelation of God is realized simultaneously "by deeds and words which are intrinsically bound up with each other" (DV 2) and shed light mutually for man to be capable of responding to His revelation by knowing Him, loving Him, and adoring Him as his Creator. God reveals Himself to man gradually. He prepares Him by stages culminating in the person and mission of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, (CCC 53) the Son of God made man, the perfect and unsurpassable Word.

God has allowed, through His loving spouse, the Holy Mother Church, that this revelation and faith to One Triune God, arrive in the Philippines. Thus, Filipinos, by virtue of baptism, become followers of Christ. To trace His footsteps in our times means to utter His Words to others, to love with His love, and to live with His life. To cease following Him is to betray our very identity (PCP II 34). Moreover, this expansion of the revelation is actually an accomplishment of the mission of the Church given by our Lord to his disciples, *"go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"* (Mt 28, 19).



Photo from Diocese of Tandag

Our understanding and love of Jesus Christ have been colored by our personal and national historical experiences of pain and struggle, of victory and celebration. All these experiences have somehow defined and clarified our unique identity as persons, as Christians, as Filipinos, and as a nation (CFC 31). Hence, the Plenary Council of the Philippines was held "to take stock of where we are; to look where we are going; to reanimate our life in Christ; and to unite all things in Him (PCP II 7). Our Catholic Faith, therefore, must be "inculturated" within our specific and unique Filipino character which has in part shaped our faith experiences through the years (CFC 32).





Worship

Gospel of John 1; 1-5,9-14

In the beginning, was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through Him, and without Him, not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in Him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him; yet the world did not know Him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept Him. ¹²But to all who received Him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.



Doctrine

To have a deeper knowledge of God's Revelation

What is "Revelation"?

Revelation is God's personal loving communication to us of who He is and His plan to save us all in His love. It is God's reaching out to us in friendship, so we get to know and love Him (CFC, 101).

How does God reveal Himself?

God reveals Himself in:

- † Creating us and everything we see, hear, and touch __ from the beginning till now [natural signs];
- † His words and deeds in Sacred Scripture's record of salvation history, completed and perfected in His Son-made-man, Jesus Christ [Biblical signs];
- † His continuing presence by the Holy Spirit in His people, the Church; [ecclesial signs];
- † The prayer and sacramental worship, doctrine, and moral service of the Church; [liturgical signs];
- † His interior presence (Grace) in our conscience and in all the events of our daily lives, world events, recognized in the "signs of the times" (CFC 102).

How does Christ reveal God to us today?

Christ reveals God to us primarily through the Church, its Sacred Scripture and living Tradition, through which the Holy Spirit comes to us (DV 10; CCC 97; CFC 105).



To understand the role of Jesus, the Word of God in the plan of God's Revelation

How important is Jesus Christ in God's Revelation?

For Christians, it is Jesus who is:

- † the Revealer of God our Father,
- † Himself, the Image and Word of God; and
- † the Final Goal of God's revelation, our ultimate destiny. (CFC 104)

To see clearly the mission and ministry of the Catholic Church in spreading the Gospel.

- † God "wants all men to be saved and come to know the truth" (1 Tim 2:4), and in ways, both hidden and clear, calls all to Christ, who is the goal, the object, and the agent of God's Self-revelation, and "the real light which enlightens every man" (Jn 1:9).
- † Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Scripture grew from the life, worship, and teaching of the early Church. So the Church is its authentic interpreter, under the active help of the same Holy Spirit (CCC 100; CFC 107).
- † The Church, in her doctrine, life, and worship, perpetuates and transmits to every generation all that she herself is, and all that she believes (DV 8; CCC 98).
- † The mission of Christ and the Holy Spirit is brought to completion in the Church, which is the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit (CCC 737).



Faith Response

- † To have the conviction that God, who is the Supreme Being, by His Love and Mercy revealed Himself to man.
- † To have the conviction that God made known His plan of Salvation through Jesus Christ.
- † To have the conviction that God never ceases to establish His friendship with us.
- † To express the Love received from God by loving Him back and our neighbors.



Human Values

The theological virtues are the foundation of Christian moral activity; they animate it and give it its special character. They inform and give life to all moral virtues. They are infused by God into the souls of the faithful to make them capable of acting as his children and of meriting eternal life (CCC 1813).

- † **Faith-** the free, reasonable, personal committed total response to God or the objective of a revealed truth believed in, through the grace of the Holy Spirit (Jn 20:31; Rom 10:9; Heb 11:1; 2 Cor 3:16-18; Acts 16:14; DV 4-5; YOUCAT 21-22).



- † **Hope**—is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ’s promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1817; YOUCAT 308).
- † **Love** – A theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God (CCC 1822). Charity upholds and purifies our human ability to love, and raises it to the supernatural perfection of divine love (CCC 1827; YOUCAT 309).



Morals

- † Man must live in harmony with God and with others, through his faith in the God of love, he is called to put into practice what he believes. The righteous shall live by faith through this reason, the believer seeks to know and do God’s will (Rom 1: 17; Gal 5:6, CCC 1815).
- † To give service and witness to the faith must be considered necessary for the salvation of souls (CCC 1816).
- † Hope for what is infinite, that is, the glory of heaven promised by God to those who love Him and do his will (cf Mt 7:21; CCC 1821).
- † The believer must imitate the love of Jesus which he, Himself has received. Just as how Saint Paul said, “If I have not charity, I am nothing, I gain nothing” (cf 1 Cor 13: 1-4) Love is itself the fulfillment of all our works.



Simple Activities

Activity: Who helps me to know my Faith

Let the learners get their writing materials and ask them to write all the people whom they think help them to know about God. Let them discuss it one by one and tell the group how that person/s influences their faith.

Song analysis: *Pananalig*

Refer to Module Overview **D. SONG FOR REFLECTION** for the song analysis.

Guide for reflection:

- † How faithful am I with the Lord and with his church?
- † Is my faith based on my feelings or based on the grace of God?
- † What are my actions and words that reflect my faith to God?



Prayer / Worship

My God, I believe in you, I trust in you, I love you above all things, with all my heart and mind and strength. I love you because you are supremely good and worth loving; and because I love you, I am sorry with all my heart for offending you. Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. Amen.



Zeal for Mission

- † **KNOW** the faith by reading the Sacred Scriptures, Catechism of the Catholic Church, Catechism for Filipino Catholics, Social Doctrines, and other documents of the Church
- † **LIVE** the faith by participating in the sacraments especially in the Holy Eucharist
- † **SHARE** the faith through witnessing the Gospel in your daily lives.

CATECHETICAL LESSON 2:

CONVERSION: SINNERS YET CALLED



Introduction

I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance.” (Lc 5:32)

Faith-formation must transmit both the content of Christ's moral teachings as well as their implications to bring personal transformation and conversion to Christian living. The faithful must give witness, both in their private and public lives, to Christ's teaching in everyday life (EG 63). “An authentic faith always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, and to leave this earth somehow better than we found it” (EG 183).

Faith, tied as it is to conversion, is the opposite of idolatry; it breaks away from idols to turn to the living God in a personal encounter. A non-believer may be converted to the faith by rational discourses, or through a heart-felt charity observed from believers, or even through a richly symbolic liturgy faithfully practiced by honorable believers (Lumen Fidei 13). Renewed faith-formation must lead the faithful into a disposition of prayer and reflection. This should be the ordinary environment for all faith formation. This is essential so that the knowledge and practice of the Christian life may be understood and celebrated in its proper context (Pastoral Letter: Year of Faith).

The Gospel reading that is used in this topic came from the account of Luke. It emphasizes that Jesus does not only come to call the righteous people but also the sinners who want to turn away from their sins and repent to God. Hence, repentance is important to *metanoia* or having a change of mind and heart. This should also include virtues that can help us in our conversion, such as: Humility, Acceptance, and Forgiveness. This way, we can continue with our moral life and the zeal of our mission in life as servants of God.



Photos from Diocese of Kalibo





Worship

Gospel of Luke 5:27-32

²⁷ After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth; and he said to Him, "Follow me." ²⁸ And he got up, left everything, and followed Him. ²⁹ Then Levi gave a great banquet for Him in his house; and there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others sitting at the table[a] with them. ³⁰ The Pharisees and their scribes were complaining to his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" ³¹ Jesus answered, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; ³² I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance."



Doctrine

† **SIN** – Sin is more than just an incorrect behavior; it is not just a psychological weakness. In the deepest sense, every rejection or destruction of something good is the rejection of good itself-- the rejection of God. At the core of sin is a rejection of God and the refusal to accept his love. In its most profound and terrible dimension, sin is separation from God. Thus, it is separation from the source of life. That is why death is another consequence of sin. Only through Jesus do we understand the abysmal dimension of sin; Jesus suffered the rejection of God in his own flesh. He took upon Himself the deadly power of sin so that it would not strike us. The term that we use for this is "redemption" (YOUCAT 67).



Photo from Diocese of San Jose (Nueva Ecija)

† **REPENTANCE** – The doctrine of repentance as taught in the Bible is a call for persons to make a radical turn from one way of life to another. The repentance called for throughout the Bible is a summons to a personal, absolute, ultimate, and unconditional surrender to God as Sovereign. The reality of sin is often repressed. Some people even think that guilt feelings should be dealt with merely in a psychological way. But genuine guilt feelings are important. It is like driving an automobile; when the speedometer indicates that the speed limit has been exceeded, the speedometer is not responsible, but the driver is. The closer we come to God, who is all light, the clearer our dark sides come to light as well. Yet, God is not a light that burns but, rather a light that heals. This is why repentance impels us to go into the light wherein we will be completely healed (YOUCAT 229).





Faith Response

We have to admit that all of us have committed mistakes or have done something wrong. We are imperfect human beings. In short, we are all sinners. We need to repent and seek God's forgiveness. God does not qualify. A sin is a sin. Whatever the degree is, it still hurts God. However, as we see in our Gospel reading (Luke 5:32), Christ did not only come for the righteous, but also for sinners who are willing to repent for their sins. As long as He sees us turning away from sins and humbly repenting, He will honor our repentant heart. No matter how grave our sins are, God can and will forgive a truly repentant person. That is how much God loves us.

May we see how sinful we are and how much we hurt God. May we humbly come to Him for forgiveness and may His transforming love penetrate our hearts to heal us from all the hurts and melt away evil in our hearts.



Human Values

- † **HUMILITY** – Humility is the quality of being humble. It means putting the needs of another person before our own. It also means not drawing attention to ourselves and acknowledging that we are not always right. In fact, humility is one of the most powerful and significant attributes of growth because being humble helps build trust and facilitates learning. That is why it is important to have this virtue. As Proverbs 11:12 says “When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble person comes wisdom. God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble (1 Peter 5:5).
- † **FORGIVENESS** – When we hold on to hurt, pain, resentment, and anger, it harms us far more than it harms the offender. Forgiveness frees us to live in the present. Reliving the wrong that was done to us only keeps us living in the past and missing today's beauty. Forgiveness allows us to move on without anger or contempt or seeking revenge. As Jesus commanded: forgive not seven times, but seventy-seven times, which actually means everlasting forgiveness.
- † **ACCEPTANCE** – Acceptance is not something that can be forced. Learning how to accept things always begin with not being able to accept them and yet finding a way to do so. It is also important that we can accept ourselves for who we really are. Otherwise, we will only create problems in our life. Acceptance is the key to convert momentary happiness to enduring happiness. It helps us move from feeling happy to actually being happy. Practicing acceptance especially in acknowledging our own mistakes/sins and learning to turn away from it through regular confession leads to holiness of life.





Morals

It is very important to maintain a good and healthy relationship with God through worshipping in the Holy Eucharist and communicating with Him in daily prayers. Hardness of heart and not following the commandments of God are the main reasons why sometimes we are aloof in our relationship with Christ. We are loaded with sins that is why we think that we are unworthy of His love, but the truth is, His love is everlasting. When we commit sin, we are putting aside God's love for us. Hence, repentance and other virtues mentioned above are important for conversion (Metanoia). They lead us back into a relationship with Him to become His faithful servants.



Photos from Diocese of Kabankalan

What should we do in repentance? Remember: we can lie to other people and we can lie to ourselves, but we cannot lie to God. If we really want to repent, we need to be humble and admit that we do not always do the right thing. When we are humble before God and know in our hearts what is right, we should live by His Word. We have to believe that God can forgive us and help us lead a better life. If we do not, we will quickly lose motivation to correct our mistakes. Changing bad habits and correcting wrong doings are hard but we have to believe that God is there for us and we will not falter.

It is important to think about why what we did was wrong. Blindly following God's Word only shows Him that we do not acknowledge our sinfulness. Careful reflection on our sins allows us to better see why it was wrong and helps us in making amends. Think about the people who may have been hurt by our sins and think about what sin does to our soul. Think about the other bad things that that guilt leads us to do.

Repent for the right reasons. Repent because it is good for the soul and it will make life more enjoyable and productive. Do not repent just because of worldly possessions, acclaim, or any other ulterior motives that we hope to get from it. Repent because our sins have offended God--Him who loves us so much and to whom we should give all our love. When we repent, the main thing to do is to correct our erring behavior. We have to stop committing the sins for which we wish to repent from. This is not easy, but we can do it! It will usually take time and a few mistakes, but if we really mean it and we really wish to repent, we will be able to overcome it and live our life to the fullest.



Simple Activities

Activity: Write a **RESOLUTIONS LIST**

Everyone in the group will write a resolutions list such as: “I will not be lazy,” “I will not utter bad words,” etc. Write as many as you can, even from previous resolutions that you have not done. When all are done writing their resolutions list, the group will form a circle. Members of the group (voluntary) will be encouraged to share their resolutions list with the group. At the center, there is a pot where they will put what they wrote after reading it. After someone has read his/her own resolutions list, the members of the group will affirm the person that even though he/she has committed a mistake, there is still goodness in Him/her. (ex. Adam, I admire your courage for sincerely sharing your resolutions list to us, I want to affirm that even though you made a lot of mistakes in life you are still a lovable person and I believe you can follow through your resolutions). After everyone has shared their resolutions lists, the group must promise to the sacredness of the activity--that they will not tell anybody what they have heard and witnessed, then the facilitator must encourage the group to strive to be true with their resolutions list.

Song Analysis: **Lupa**

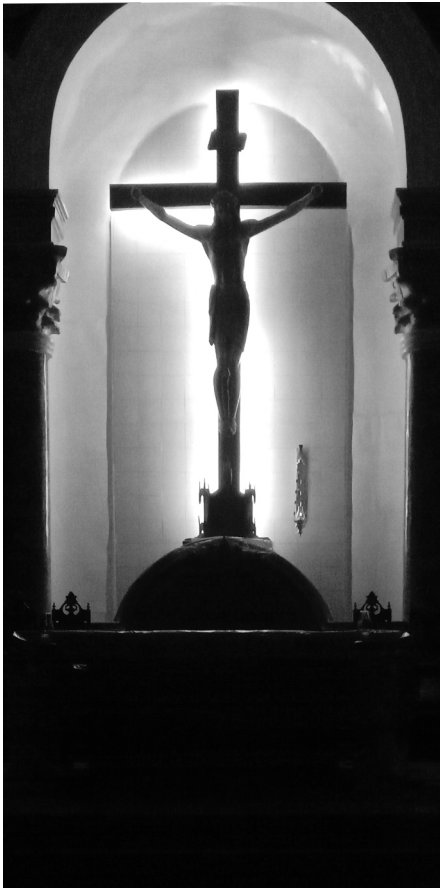


Photo from Diocese of Borongan

LUPA

Rico J. Puno

Nagmula sa lupa
Magbabalik na kusa
Ang buhay mong sa lupa nagmula
Bago mo linisin
Ang dungis ng 'yong kapwa
Hugasan ang 'yong putik sa mukha

Refrain:

Kung ano ang 'di mo gusto
Huwag gawin sa iba
Kung ano ang 'yong inutang
Ay s'ya ring kabayaran

Sa mundong ang buhay
Ay mayroong hangganan
Dahil tayo ay lupa lamang
Kaya't pilitin mong ika'y magbago
Habang may panahon ika'y magbago
Pagmamahal sa kapwa ay isipin mo

Guide for reflection:

- † Am I aware that I need to work on my own conversion?
- † Does my encounter with Christ help me see things that I need to change for the better?
- † Do I consider my humble yet Divine Origin and my Divine destination or calling?
- † Does my conversion also encourage others to make amends for their sins?



Prayer / Worship

Almighty God, Thank you for another day to live. Thank you for another chance to experience Your love. I beg for pardon for all my sins. Sorry for abusing or ignoring Your love. Sorry for hurting You. I humbly come to You with a repentant heart, asking Your forgiveness, and for Your grace to help me live a life pleasing to You. Transform me with Your love and use me to bring Your love to others as well. Heal me and make me whole. AMEN.



Zeal for Mission

- † **KNOW**- To be converted in mind and heart. To follow God's will, it is important to know God's works of salvation or to read inspirational text in sacred scriptures about God's saving love to all humankind.
- † **LIVE** – To live our faith in God, we should always remember that we are weak, and we need God in our lives. Due to our human weaknesses, we commit mistakes. In order to have continuous atonement, we need to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation every time we feel that we are already loaded by our sins.
- † **SHARE** – It is important to have a sense of mission for our brethren. When we encounter our brothers and sisters who are committing sin, we should try to reproach Him/ her and inspire Him/ her to repent. Example: If a person sells a product which is overpriced and is not in good condition, urge Him/ her to repent by pointing out to Him/ her that he/ she is not just fooling his/her clients or customers but also God Himself. As the scripture states: "Everything that you do to the least of your brethren, you do it to me." Likewise, encourage Him/her not to cheat again and to confess his/her sins to a priest.

CATECHETICAL LESSON 3:

COMMUNION: THE POWER OF ONE



Introduction

From the beginning of man's history, man, having been created in the image and likeness of God possesses human dignity. He is not just something, but he is someone. He is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving Himself and entering into a communion with God, with Himself and with others. Mankind is called by grace into a covenant with his Creator, to offer Him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead (CCC 357).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us that catechesis aims to put people in communion with Jesus Christ: only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity (CCC 426).

The concept of communion lies "at the heart of the Church's self-understanding" (Pope John Paul II, 1987). Insofar, as it is the Mystery of the personal union of each human being with the Divine Trinity and with the rest of mankind, initiated with the faith (1 Cor 1:9). Likewise, having begun as a reality in the Church on earth, it is directed towards its eschatological fulfilment in the heavenly Church.

"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (Jn 17: 20-21)



Photo from Diocese of Romblon

If the concept of *communion*, which is not a univocal concept, is to serve as a key to ecclesiology, it has to be understood within the teaching of the Bible and the patristic tradition. *Communion* always involves a double dimension: the *vertical* (communion with God) and the *horizontal* (communion among men). It is essential to the Christian understanding of *communion* that it is recognized, above all, as a gift from God, and as a fruit of God's initiative carried out in the paschal mystery.

The new relationship between man and God, that has been established in Christ and is communicated through the sacraments, also extends to a new relationship among human beings. As a result, the concept of *communion* should be such as to express the sacramental nature of the Church while "*we are away from the Lord*" (Cf. LG 1). It is also this particular unity which makes the faithful into members of one and the same Body, the Mystical Body of Christ (Cf. LG 7), an organically structured community (LG 11), "*a people brought into one by the unity of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*" (LG 4), and endowed with suitable means for its visible and social union (LG 9).

Thus, there should be a desire in the community to live with faith, hope and charity that will enable one to uplift his/her communion to the Divine Absolute, and may increase the sense of belongingness of every member of the Church.



Worship

Gospel of John 17: 14-23

¹⁴ I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁵ I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.²⁰ “I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. ²⁴



Doctrine

Communion of Man with the Divine Persons

- † **CCC 27** - The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to Himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for: The dignity of man rests above all on the fact that he is called to communion with God. This invitation to converse with God is addressed to man as soon as he comes into being. For if man exists it is because God has created Him through love, and through love, He continues to hold Him in existence. He cannot live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and entrusts Himself to his creator.
- † **CCC 45** - Man is made to live in communion with God in whom he finds happiness: When I am completely united to you, there will be no more sorrow or trials; entirely full of you, my life will be complete (St. Augustine, Conf. 10, 28, 39: PL 32, 795).



- † **CCC 54** - He invited them to intimate communion with Himself and clothed them with resplendent grace and justice.
- † **CCC 259** - Being a work at once common and personal, the whole divine economy makes known both what is proper to the divine persons, and their one divine nature. Hence the whole Christian life is a communion with each of the divine persons, without in any way separating them. Everyone who glorifies the Father does so through the Son in the Holy Spirit; everyone who follows Christ does so because the Father draws Him and the Spirit moves Him.
- † **CCC 790** - Believers who respond to God's Word and become members of Christ's Body, become intimately united with Him: "In that body the life of Christ is communicated to those who believe, and who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ in His Passion and glorification."
- † **CCC 850** - The ultimate purpose of mission is none other than to make men share in the communion between the Father and the Son in their Spirit of love.
- † **CCC 795** - Christ and His Church thus together make up the "whole Christ" (Christus totus). the Church is one with Christ.

Communion of the Church and Man (Ecclesial Communion)

- † **LG 4** - The Church has been seen as "a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."
- † **CCC 185** - Communion in faith needs a common language of faith, normative for all and uniting all in the same confession of faith.
- † **LG 27** - The faithful must cling to their bishop, as the Church does to Christ, and Jesus Christ to the Father, so that all may be of one mind through unity
- † **CCC 780** - The Church in this world is the sacrament of salvation, the sign and the instrument of the communion of God and men.
- † **YOUCAT 129** - Just as there is only one Christ, there can be only one Body of Christ, only one Bride of Christ, and therefore only one CHURCH of Jesus Christ. He is the Head, the Church is the Body. Together they form the "whole Christ" (St. Augustine). Just as the body has many members yet is one, so too the one Church consists of and is made up of many particular churches (dioceses). Together they form the whole Christ.

Communion among Men

- † **LG 1** - The Church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race, it desires now to unfold more fully to the faithful of the Church and to the whole world its own inner nature and universal mission (CCC 775).
- † **CCC 1702** - The divine image is present in every man. It shines forth in the communion of persons, in the likeness of the unity of the Divine Persons among themselves.
- † **Eph 4: 4-6** - There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.





Faith Response

- † To have the conviction that the Church is One and founded by Jesus Christ
- † To believe that the Church is the Body of Christ, Jesus is the head and we, the faithful are the members
- † To have the conviction that all men are called in communion with God
- † To have the conviction that we are called to live in harmony with God and with other persons and to help one another be holy



Human Values

- † **Unity of faith-** The supernatural bond that exists among all who adhere to the one Divine Revelation. This bond exists on two levels: the level of being, in that all participants in this unity share the same supernatural virtue of faith freely given them by God; and the level of conviction, in that these participants cling to the same revealed truth. Grounded in the oneness of God and of His plan of salvation, this bond admits varying degrees of realization that culminate in the full-blown unity of faith that exists among the members of the Catholic Church. A unity of faith exists because faith is the response to revelation, and revelation is one. Scripture says that there is one God and one mediator between God and men (1 Tm 2:5), one Divine plan of salvation (Eph 1.3–14), one Church, and one apostolic authority (Mt 16.13–19; 18:18; 28:19–20). The acceptance by men of this One-God-revealed economy of salvation is what is called faith. And the unity resulting from the attachment of men to the One revealed-Divine-Order is the unity of faith (CCC 823-819).
- † **Wisdom-** The first and highest gifts of the Holy Spirit. It makes the soul responsive to God in the contemplation of Divine things. Where faith is a simple knowledge of the articles of Christian belief, wisdom goes on to a certain Divine penetration of the truths themselves. Built into wisdom is the element of love, which inspires contemplative reflection on these Divine mysteries, rejoices dwelling on them, and directs the mind to judge all things according to their principles.
- † **Understanding-** The infused gift of the Holy Spirit is given to the mind for grasping revealed truths easily and profoundly. It differs from faith because it gives insight into the meaning of what a person believes, whereas faith, as such, merely assents to what God has revealed. This gift produces three principal effects in those who possess it. They are enabled to penetrate to the very core of revealed truths, without ever fully understanding their meaning; they are confirmed in their belief by acquiring great certitude in the revealed word of God; and they are brought to the knowledge of a greater number of truths by drawing numerous conclusions from revealed principles.

- † **Sanctity**- In an absolute sense, the Divinity. The sanctity of God is His total transcendence or total otherness. It is in this sense that the Church prays in the Gloria of the Mass: "You alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High." All other sanctity is by participation, so that a creature has as much sanctity as it shares in the Divinity. Essentially it consists in the possession of sanctifying grace, although the term is usually applied to persons who practice more than ordinary virtue, especially the love of God and their neighbor.
- † **Holiness - LG 40:** Holiness is the fullness of Christian life, the plenitude of charity and of our condition as God's children. It is nothing but the faithful struggle with God's grace to identify ourselves with Our Lord Jesus Christ, living in, with, and for Him. It consists in imitating the virtues He lived and taught during His life on earth, and in living the Beatitudes, that he taught at the Sermon of the Mount. In short, holiness consists in being an *alter Christus, ipse Christus* (other Christ, Christ Himself) as St. Josemaria puts it. To this all Christians are called, whatever state of life they may be in: young, old, single, married, lay persons, clerics and religious (CCC 2012-2016).



Morals

- † As members of the Catholic Church, sharing and enjoying the graces and blessings of her Founder, Jesus Christ, one must live in unity by participating actively and fruitfully in all the activities of the particular Church and in union with the Universal Church.
- † In union with the Church, one must have the knowledge and wisdom of the teachings of the Church so that we can preserve our doctrines and we can share them with truthfulness.
- † Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save us from sins and give us new life in Him, we are destined to be united with God from the beginning of time, and thus, we are all called to be holy as He Himself is Holy. The universal call for Holiness is one of our big responsibilities as members of the Body of Christ.



Photo from Diocese of Davao



Photo from Diocese of Alaminos



Simple Activities

The Web of Connection

Goal: This team building exercise will show that you guys are all connected and have a common goal along with getting to know everybody better.

Materials Needed: Enough space for everybody to sit in a circle; A ball of yarn

Directions:

- † Start with your entire team sitting in a big circle
- † Name an icebreaker question that everybody would feel comfortable answering. (Examples: What is your greatest dream? or What is the best thing about you? The facilitator may also think of a light but fun question that inspires the idea of being connected with each other
- † Have somebody start and answer the question. They then grab onto the yarn and throw the ball for somebody else to answer. (After they answered, they hold on to a piece of the yarn and then throw it at somebody else to answer the icebreaker question and so on).
- † At the end, they should have a web. This shows that while they might not always agree with each other, understand what each other do, or know each other well, they are all connected and share the same goal of helping the mission of the Church succeed.

Song Analysis: That They May All Be One *(See next page)*

Guide for reflection:

- † As member of the Church, am I united with her with whole heart, mind and spirit?
- † Do I reflect the teachings of God about love and unity?
- † Do I really surrender all my life to God, knowing that He is my Lord and my God?



Photos from Diocese of Jaro

That They May All Be One

Chorus:

That they may all be one
That they may all be one
The Lord is praying for his church
That they may all be one

He prayed in the garden for His disciples
He prayed for all the blessings they would receive
Oh Righteous Father, I look toward heaven
I pray for unity for those who believe in Me

We're sharing the story, You have given me glory
That only comes from heaven above want those
You've given me in our presence there to be
Manifested by our love

Repeat Chorus

His prayer continued for those coming after
His prayer of longing for the unity
Then they'd believe us, our God sent Jesus
The Holy Father has loved them that the world might see

The Lord said, "Come to Me all you who are weary and burdened
And I will give you rest
Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble
In heart and you will find rest for your souls"

All those who believe in Me in our presence there to be
Manifested by our love

That they may all be won
That they may all be won
The Lord is praying for the World
That they may all be won

The Lord is praying for His church
That they may all be one



Prayer / Worship

Oh Everlasting and Triune God, I consecrate myself wholly to you today. Let all my days offer you ceaseless praise, my hands move to the rhythm of your impulses, my feet be swift in your service, my voice sing constantly of you, my lips proclaim your message, my eyes perceive you everywhere, and my ears be attuned to your inspirations. May my intellect be filled with your wisdom, my will be moved by your beauty, my heart be enraptured with your love, and my soul be flooded with your grace. Grant that every action of mine be done for your greater glory and the advancement of my salvation. Amen.

Petition prayer:

For every prayer our Response is: Hear our prayer Lord.

- † For an end to the violence perpetrated by the indifference of people. That all may have the grace to see every human being as children of God, regardless of race, language or culture. Let us pray to the Lord.
- † For the wisdom to receive the stories and experiences of those different from ourselves and to respond with respect. Let us pray to the Lord.
- † For our faith community, that we may celebrate and welcome the diverse faces of Christ in our worship, our ministries and that we may respond boldly to the Holy Spirit's call to act together in unity as to act together in unity, as we only have one Father in heaven Father in heaven who created us wonderfully. Let us pray to the Lord.



Zeal for Mission

- † **UNDERSTAND** – to build a rapport or a healthy relationship with each other. Although we are diverse in cultures, languages, characters, and even in faith convictions, we must still aim for unity. How? By understanding our differences that leads us to unite in the love of God. We can indeed learn to be united. Once we acknowledge that each person we meet, despite any outward differences, is of equal worth to God, they will become of equal worth to us as well.
- † **LIVE** – Being good to your neighbor is not something that we should still study for. Rather, it should already be acquired as human beings. However, this should be developed through prayer, devotion to a particular Saint, practicing the beatitudes, and learning to look at the heart, rather than at outward appearances. When we place our faith in God, we realize that He has given us the capacity to love all his children as we love ourselves. We become like the prophets who no longer see people in terms of their differences. Instead, we begin to see them as images of God.
- † **SHARE** – We must become a prophet, a messenger of God whose first advocacy is to bring unity, peace and love of our Lord to all the people of God in the world. In simple ways we can promote unity within our family, among our classmates, our peer groups or friends etc. and be a sign of harmony in the community.



CATECHETICAL LESSON 4:

MISSION: SENT BY THE FATHER



Introduction

At the very moment when by Jesus' death, He conquers death so that raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, He might immediately give the Holy Spirit by breathing on His disciples. From that hour onward, the mission of Christ and the Holy Spirit becomes the mission of the Church (CCC 730).

Christ founded His Church to continue His saving mission on earth. "The Church, endowed with the gifts of her founder, receives the mission to proclaim and to establish among all peoples the Kingdom of Christ and of God" (LG 5). This 'mission' is built into her very nature as originating from the Blessed Trinity. The mission flows from the Church as a "Sacrament of salvation," the sign and instrument for achieving intimate union with God (cf. AG 5; LG 1; CFC 1412). Thus, the Church has a mission mandate (cf. Mt 28:19): whose origin and goal is the Blessed Trinity (cf. AG 2); motivated by God's love (cf. 2 Cor 5:14); and with the Holy Spirit as its Principal Agent (cf CCC 849-56).

The mission of Christ and of the Holy Spirit is brought to completion in the Church, which is the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit. This joint mission brings Christ's faithful to share in His communion with the Father and the Holy Spirit. The Lord's missionary mandate is ultimately grounded in the eternal love of the Most Holy Trinity: "the Church on earth is by her nature missionary since, according to the plan of the Father, she has as her origin the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit" (AG 2).

The ultimate purpose of mission is none other than to make men share in the communion between the Father and the Son in their Spirit of love (CCC 850). It is from God's love that the Church in every age receives both the obligation and the vigor of her missionary dynamism, indeed, God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 2:4). That is, God wills the salvation of everyone through the knowledge of the truth. Thus, salvation is founded on the truth (CCC 851).

**Jesus said to them again,
"Peace be with you. As the
Father has sent me, so I
send you." (Jn 20, 21)**



Photo from Diocese of Kidapawan



This missionary endeavor requires patience. It begins with the proclamation of the Gospel to people 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 also stimulate efforts towards Christian unity that implies a respectful dialogue with those who have not yet accepted the Gospel for the glory of God, which is the confusion of the demon and the happiness of man (AG 9).



Worship

Gospel of John 20:19-23

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."



Doctrine

The Mission of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

- † **Joint Mission of Christ and the Spirit: CCC 1299** - So closely do Christ and the Spirit work together that we can rightfully speak of the "joint mission of the Son and of the Spirit" (cf. CCC 689, 702, 727). When the Father sends His Word, He always sends His Breath: there occurs a joint mission in which the Son and the Holy Spirit are distinct but inseparable. It is Christ who appears as the visible Image of the invisible God, but it is the Holy Spirit who reveals Him. The knowledge of the "mysteries of the Reign of God" of which Christ is the fullness, is "given" (Mt 13:11) in the gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. CCC 729). Christ gives the form and content of salvation, while the Spirit makes present and extends this new life.

The Church in God's plan: Origin and her Mission

- † **Nature of The Church: CFC 1355** - Ekklesia. This "more" of the Church can be shown first of all from its long history. Our Catholic Church traces its origin back to the Old Testament qahal and the New Testament ekklesia (CCC 751f). Both terms mean "the people of God called together," or an "assembly convoked by God." Thus, they stress the action of God in calling the people together. Thus, the Church claims to be a faith-assembly whose root cause is God's free call to all to share His Divine goodness and love in Christ. Therefore, the church is not just a social grouping of people drawn together by cultural values and attitudes. This faith-conviction that God is the ever-present source and ground for the Church is the reason for explaining the Church as "mystery" and "sacrament."



† **CFC 1357** - The Church is related to each Person of the Blessed Trinity.

First, to the eternal Father who “resolved to assemble all those who believe in Christ in the holy Church.” In the Father’s plan, the Church was:

- † prefigured from the beginning of the world;
- † prepared wonderfully in the history of Israel,
- † instituted finally in these last times,
- † manifested in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit,
- † to be brought to completion at the end of time (cf. LG 2; CCC 760-69).

† **CFC 1366** - The Church as mystery is further clarified and developed by the notion of sacrament. “By her relationship with Christ, the Church is both a sacramental sign and an instrument of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind” (GS 42; cf. LG 1). Christ then has made the Church the effective sign and symbol of: 1) our union with God; 2) the unity among men; and 3) of salvation.

† **CFC 1454** - What are the essential characteristics of the Church? Traditionally the Church has been described by four basic characteristics, each of which as both gift and task relates the Church directly to Christ. These characteristics are: **ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC, and APOSTOLIC.**



Faith Response

- † To have the conviction that the Catholic Church is the True Church of Christ
- † To have the conviction that the Church received and has her origin from God, the mission of the Son and of the Spirit.
- † To be loyal to the Doctrine taught by the Church.
- † To work with diligence and patience as member of the Church and as missionary of God.



Photo from Diocese of Capiz



Human Values

- † **Truthfulness** - truth as uprightness in human action and speech (CCC 2468). This virtue consists in showing oneself true in deeds and truthful in words and in guarding against duplicity, dissimulation and hypocrisy (YOUCAT 452-457).
- † **Patience** - the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry or upset.
- † **Loyalty** - giving or showing firm and constant support or allegiance to a person or institution.
- † **Obedience** - it requires all to give due honor to authority and to treat those who are charged to exercise it with respect insofar as it is deserved with gratitude and good will (CCC 1900).



Morals

- † Live in and with the Church, that is in accordance to the moral teachings of the Church and pray for the missions and missionaries
- † Act and be aware of the responsibilities as a member of the Catholic Church
- † Unite oneself to the mission of the Church as an active member, be an apostle of Christ!



Simple Activities

- † If it is possible to watch a film about the life of a saint, especially the patron saints of missionaries, like St. Teresa of the Child Jesus, or St. Francis Xavier

Song Analysis: Here I Am Lord *(See next page)*

Guide for reflection:

- † Am I doing a mission in my own community or parish?
- † Am I open to the possible opportunity to do a mission, as a lay faithful or religious or priest?
- † What is God telling me to do for his Church?



Photo from Diocese of Borongan

Here I Am Lord

by Misc Praise Songs

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin,
My hand will save.
I, who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

[Chorus]
Here I am, Lord.
Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

[Verse 2]
I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them.
they turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my words to them.
Whom shall I send?

[Verse 3]
I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will send the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide,
'Til their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send?



Prayer / Worship

Prayer for the Missions

O God, who would have all Your children be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, send forth, we beseech you, laborers into your harvest and grant them with all confidence to preach the Word; that everywhere your Gospel may be heard and glorified, and that all nations may know You, the One True God, and Him whom you have sent, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

Queen of the Apostles, and all you angels and saints of God, Pray to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the harvest and to spare His people that we may all rejoice with Him and the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.



Zeal for Mission

- † **UNDERSTAND** – To participate on the different activities of the parish or of the community
- † **LIVE** – To pray for the missions of the Church and for the intentions and safety of our missionaries
- † **SHARE** – Be a missionary to your family and friends in doing little things that help them to know, love and praise God

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