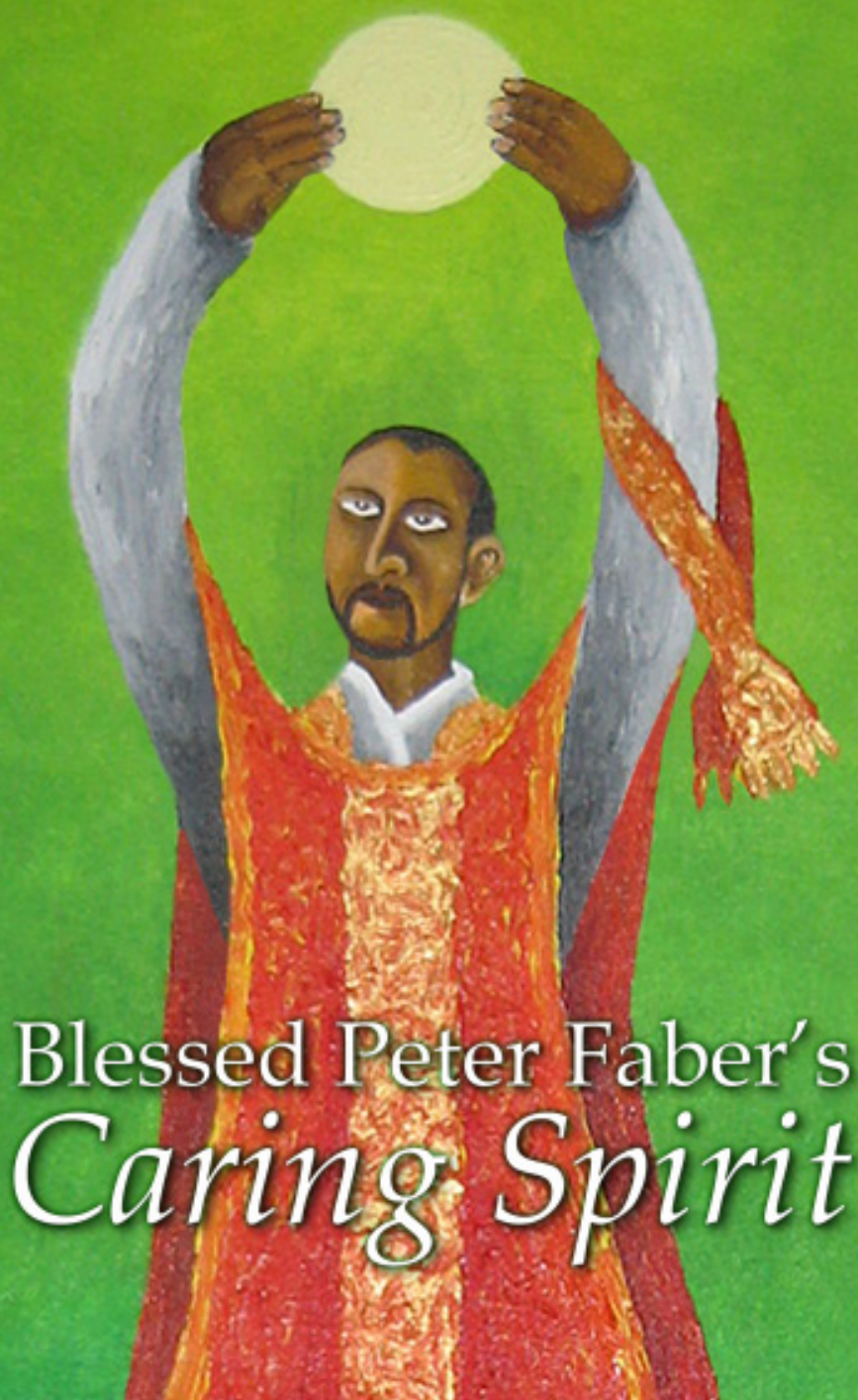


The  
**WINDHOVER**  
The Philippine Jesuit Magazine

THIRD  
QUARTER  
2006



Blessed Peter Faber's  
*Caring Spirit*

# THE ORDINARY MAN'S

**I**n this issue of WINDHOVER, we continue our special series on the First Companions of the Society of Jesus, focusing this time on Blessed Peter Faber. Compared to Ignatius and Francis Xavier, Peter Faber may not be as well known, his accomplishments not as breathtaking. Ignatius, of course, is the founding father of the Society of Jesus, while Xavier is the Church's patron saint of mission. For the longest time, Faber was only known as the Spiritual Director or Retreat Master par excellence, with Ignatius himself admitting that Faber was a genius in giving the *Spiritual Exercises* (SpEx). But, there is much more to this "quiet companion," as writers would call Faber.



**Faber lived in a time when the Church was smarting from internal corruption and abuse, which eventually led to the Protestant Reformation. Faber believed that renewal must first happen to priests and the Church will follow; to individuals first and then society will follow.**

In the first place, his work as a spiritual director and retreat master was remarkable, to say the least. Among those he accompanied for direction or for guidance in the SpEx were bishops, princes, and other well-placed people in society (our modern day VIPs). His "converts" would include the future great men of the Society of Jesus such as Lainez, Alphonsus Rodriguez, and the third Superior General of the Jesuits, Francis Borgia (the latter two becoming saints.) Of his directees, our blessed Faber was happy to brag that as far as he knew, not one of them returned to their former spiritual state of life.

But what is admirable about Faber's passion for this spiritual ministry is the philosophy with which he viewed his work. He lived in a time when the Church was smarting from internal corruption and abuse, which eventually led to the Protestant Reformation. For Faber, as for other Church personalities at that time, the whole controversy was a crisis of faith. And the solution was the renewal and strengthening of the faith of the clergy as well as of the lay. This he painstakingly undertook through the *Spiritual Exercises*. Faber believed that renewal must first happen to priests and the Church will follow, to individuals first and then society will follow.

It is this passion for the renewal of the Church that animated Faber till his untimely death at the young age of forty. It is this concern for the faith of individuals that opened other ministries for Faber. In this WINDHOVER, aside from his work with the *Spiritual Exercises*, we also feature an article on the sacrament of reconciliation for this was one of the not-well-known passions of Faber. He was the favorite confessor of many; they would return

# "SAINT"

to him again and again. We also feature an article on interreligious dialogue. We believe that Faber could have been the forerunner of this important modern day phenomenon, although in his time, Faber interacted more with other Christian sects, praying for Luther and Melancton as often as he did for the Pope. But his attitude as well as approach to those outside the Catholic Church, whether Christians or those of other religions, would have been the same. Rather than engage them in debates, he edified them with his own piety and his sincere compassion for them. In brief, he regaled them with his personal witnessing to the faith.

And yet, what is inspiring about Faber, more than his accomplishments, was his trust and confidence in God. Tomas Cardinal Spidlik, SJ, draws a distinction between Ignatius and Faber. Ignatius, he says, was known to be the "contemplative in action." He suggests, however, that it might be more appropriate to say that Ignatius was a contemplative in view of action. His prayer was always geared for action, for what can be done for the greater glory of God. But the label (contemplative in action), the Cardinal says, applies to Faber, for he was the one who would always find himself in the middle of action, deeply relying on God for guidance.

Known for his obedience, Faber would be sent by Ignatius and the Pope to various missions and the former would readily oblige. He was the Society's trouble shooter as it were. At times and without any grudge, Faber would feel that he was being transferred again to another mission, just when he was warming up in his new assignment. And so, in the middle of the action, Faber learned to trust in God to guide him from one mission to another and to see through the things he had begun. If for the modern day Christian, "divine providence" is an abstract idea, for Faber it was the essence of his life. He let the Spirit guide him. He believed that nothing happened by chance, nothing is wasted in this life, and everything in the end would lead to its fulfillment in Christ.

This perhaps is what makes this "saint" attractive to believers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. How often do we find ourselves in the midst of earthshaking events we have no control over. In a fast-paced world, how often do we find our lives packed with a flurry of activities. The train chugs on and on. And yet, in the midst of our runaway world, can we be contemplatives in action? Can we, like Blessed Peter Faber, trust in the guidance and providence of God? ☪

- 4**     **Blessed Peter Faber:  
Hope in Conversations**  
Frank B. Savadera, SJ
- 7**     **Healing Through the Darkness:  
Faber, Nouwen, and Francis Clark**  
Mark L. Lopez, SJ
- 9**     **In His Company:  
Friendship in Jesuit Life**  
Jordan J. Orbe, SJ
- 10**    **Peter Faber and the  
Christian Life Community**  
Tinnah M. dela Rosa
- 12**    **Companions in the Journey**  
Josephine G. Maribojoc
- 14**    **Jesuit Spirituality Centers:  
CIS, EMMAUS**  
Antonio Roberto G. Sian, SJ
- 16**    **Things You May Have Wanted  
to Know About the SPEX**  
Jordan J. Orbe, SJ
- 18**    **Kumusta Ka Na?**  
Anthony V. Coloma, SJ
- 19**    **Retreat in Daily Life**  
Cristina A. Mossesgeld
- 20**    **Faber Today: The Interreligious  
Dialogue Program of  
Ateneo de Zamboanga**  
Eric S. Santillan, SJ
- 21**    **Book Review**  
Zacarias G. Damo, Jr.
- 22**    **Lessons from the Ministry of  
Accompaniment at the PGH**  
Mark L. Lopez, SJ
- 24**    **Ministry of Confession**  
Eric Marcelo O. Genilo, SJ
- 26**    **Remembering Delaney**  
Catalino G. Arévalo, SJ
- 28**    **Prayer**  
Thomas H. Green, SJ
- 29**    **In Memoriam**
- 32**    **Tongue in Cheek**  
Renato L. Puentevella, SJ

**Cover Painting:**  
Schol. Jason K. Dy, SJ



# Blessed Peter Faber:

## *Hope in Conversations*



**A**s we celebrate the Jubilee year of the first Jesuit companions, we can't help but insist upon inquiring more about the somewhat "unnoticeable" Blessed Peter Faber. Aside from simply being there at the right place and at the right time, co-founding the Society of Jesus, what qualities did this person manifest, we may ask, to merit a place amongst the giants of our Ignatian tradition?

It wouldn't help to know how Faber, in his 40th year succumbed to an untimely death owing to sheer and undramatic exhaustion from work and travels across Europe. It wouldn't help as well to note how since Faber's beatification by Pope Pius IX in 1872,

clamor and interest in his canonization have seemingly cooled down, rendering as perhaps "less preferred" further reflections on his life.

We wouldn't wish to compare Faber with Ignatius of Loyola or Francis Xavier. Our reality, however tells us that during this Jubilee celebration, images of Ignatius offering his sword to the Blessed Virgin at Montserrat and that of Xavier traveling eastward to unknown territories — come almost effortlessly to mind. What then about the Blessed Peter Faber? What imageries can we invoke to automatically remember him by?

## Young Shepherd of Savoy

We contemplate the snow-capped mountain region of Savoy, in a village called Villaret, in Southern France and we find a shepherd boy tending his sheep and occasionally gazing up the towering Alpine landscape that serves to separate the small village from the rest of the world. "What lies behind those natural borders?" the young Faber may have inquired as he pondered the almost eternal silence that pervaded his playground of rolling hills, lush meadows and forests.

The tranquil environs became conducive for Faber's earliest instructions in the faith by Marie Perissin, his mother. Stories of angels, saints and the entire court of heaven singing hymns to the triumphant King of kings may have seemed so real and grandiose, alongside the peasant boy's equally overwhelming encounters with the majestic landscape before him. Faber must have been so awed by such encounters that at seven years of age, he recounts, "I several times felt an especially strong attraction to a devout life, as though God Himself from that time on clearly willed to take possession of my soul as its spouse."

Faber's fellow shepherds, eventually started noticing something distinct about him. He would sit on a huge rock and there, gather children his age, and give them instructions on how to recite the rosary and some prayers. His prolific memory allowed him as well to quote from the catechesis which he picked up from his mother. Even old folks began calling him "*petit docteur*" and would stop by to listen to the kid's passionate tutoring of his fellows. Faber, indeed, began attracting a following because of his charm, wit and gentle character.

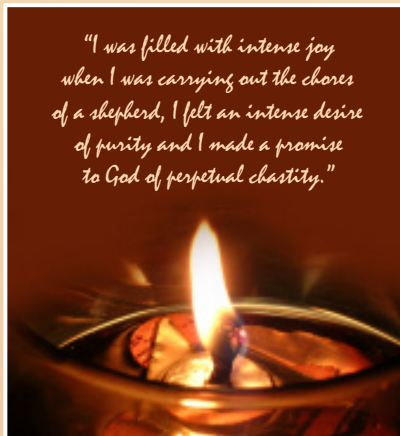
## Virtuous Seeker of Knowledge

From among the first companions, Faber stands out as most excellent in intellectual work. It is widely known that as a student in Paris, he tutored an older companion, Ignatius, in the latter's study of Latin and Aristotle. However, owing to his humble family situation, Faber's parents initially refused to send him to school. As a ten-year old, Faber broke the quiet of his household for days, by crying profusely, begging and praying for his kind parents' change of heart. "I wept so much," Faber recounts, "in my great desire to go to school that my parents felt constrained, contrary to their intentions to send me." His primary education was spent miles away from Villaret, in the towns of Thones and La Roche,

where he was instructed in the rudiments of grammar, composition, literature and a bit of theology. The Swiss priest Peter Veillard exerted a great influence on him especially with regard the complex reflections on the faith and more importantly, the living of a more pious and virtuous life a la Thomas a Kempis. Faber would later on think of Veillard as a true saint.

An uncle Dom Mamert Faber, the Carthusian prior of the monastery Chartreuse of Reposoir seemed to have likewise

taken great interest in the academic and spiritual formation of the younger Faber. The charism of the monks expectedly may have rubbed off on Faber as he continued conferring with Dom Mamert's successor, Dom Claude Perissin—another relative, an older cousin. In his spiritual journal, the *Memoriale*, Faber remembers vacation time in Villaret when a growing desire for holiness took a firm hold on him. Faber reports: "I was filled with intense joy ... when I was carrying out the chores of a shepherd, I felt an intense desire of purity and I made a promise to God of perpetual chastity." In his later travels, Faber will visit more Carthusian monasteries across



Europe, perhaps to rejuvenate his earlier promise of piety and simplicity as the monks may have so inspired him.

Faber also saw in his studies a means to turn his attention away from his experienced sinful preoccupations. "Many more sins would I have committed," he says, "were it not that the Divine Majesty permitted to grow up in my soul a certain selfish desire of knowledge and study."

By the time he reached his 19th year, Faber readied himself for the greater adventure that awaited him in Paris and eventually, the bigger world into which he would introduce the gentle spirit of Villaret, the piety of his monk-relatives and the quiet engagement with others for purposes of passionately tutoring about God.

## Perplexed Discerner

Beneath Faber's calm and somewhat unruffled external disposition, however, lay a constantly perplexed interior self. Such a temperament perhaps mirrors the natural serenity yet constantly troubled history of his hometown. Savoy, initially ruled by independent counts and dukes used to identify itself with Geneva, its eastern neighbor, until it was linked to the northwestern Italian kingdom of Sardinia before finally being absorbed into France.



Faber's most troubled self became even more apparent during his university days in the Portuguese and Spanish dominated College of Sainte-Barbe in Paris. Unlike his roommate Xavier, Faber had always been ambivalent about his plans for the future. He suffered from constant mood swings. For a while, he thought of marriage, then the study of medicine or of law. He also wanted to be a teacher, a theologian, a monk, etc. He found his heart divided amongst the many preoccupations of the world.

Further, he was tormented by his own sinfulness. "*Procul recedant somnia*" or "keep wicked dreams far from us," he would constantly pray. Faber's frequent doubts, scruples and even frustrations of having made unsatisfactory confessions always get ahead of his many achievements in school. "I was so tormented by these scruples," Faber wrote, "that I would have willingly retired into a desert and there lived the rest of my days on naught but herbs and roots just to find peace."

Things turn for the better beginning in 1529 when Faber and Xavier are joined in their room at Saint-Barbe by the 36-year-old Ignatius. Almost immediately did Ignatius befriend his Greek and Latin tutor. Ignatius set to show Faber the light by putting order to the latter's confused circumstance. Through the path of greater self-knowledge, Faber eventually learned to focus on his more positive virtues and consequently, the deepening of his prayer. Once, he wrote: "I can say with truth that I never had any difficulty, scruple, anxiety, doubt, fear—in fact, any feeling that is of the Spirit of Evil—for which I did not immediately or within a few days discover the remedy in Our Lord. All the while the Lord was giving me the grace of insistent prayer."

Eventually, Faber noted his companionship with Ignatius as "*contente cordiale*." "We became one in will and desire," he said. With the guidance of Ignatius, Faber soon decided to become a priest after going through the Spiritual Exercises. He was indeed the only priest who in 1534, during the feast of Our Lady of Assumption, raised the Host before friends vowing perpetual commitment to a movement that will gather more men for the greater service of the Lord.

## A Companion in Dialogue

Almost immediately after offering their services to the Pope, the first companions received their separate commissions. For seven years thereafter, Faber saw himself tasked by superiors to move from one city to another either on foot or muleback. A perpetual traveler until his death in 1546, Faber received his appointments from superiors with obedience and much indifference. He must have traveled a total of 7,000 miles, people calculate. Did he ever grumble or complain? Five months before his death, Faber even wrote: "For my part, I should be glad never to be settled in a place but would rather set forth on a lifelong pilgrimage through one or other parts of the world." His spirit was indeed tireless and perennially inspired by the dictum: "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours."

Faced with the serious challenges posed by the Protestant movement, Faber likewise evolved an apostolate of friendship that leads to conversation. Once a witness to the flogging of a heretic, Faber set out to convince the greater Church of the futility of violence and wild debates. Instead, he advocated conciliation and gentle persuasion, believing that what is required is spiritual help and counsel through a friendly, compassionate and loving approach. "People will forget what you said or did but they will never forget how you made them feel," he declared.

From his encounters with heretics, Faber developed his formula of conversation. "We need to win their goodwill so that they will love us and accord us a good place in their hearts," he said. This can be done, Faber adds, "by speaking familiarly with them about matters we both share in common and avoiding any debate in which one side tries to put down the other." Winning back the old members of the Church, our companion advocated interior reform and effective witnessing among the faithful. He believed that Catholics should be guided to live more fervent lives. Incessant prayer, he said, must be encouraged for everyone without exception.

Consequently, just like our image of the young shepherd sitting on a rock, we again see how Faber's irresistible charm continued to draw people close to him. Reportedly, they thronged to his confessional, asked his valuable counsel and in the case of the community at Parma, Italy, rallied zealously that he not be transferred away from them. A fellow Jesuit, Simon Rodrigues in 1579 affirmed the people's sentiments about Faber by saying: "In his dealings with others, he revealed such a rare and delightful sweetness and charm as I have never to this day, I must admit, found in anyone else. In some way or other, he used to make friends with people, and by the kindness of his manner and speech so won his way into all hearts that he set them on fire with the love of God."

True to how he lived his life, Blessed Peter Faber, for us remains a gentle figure. But just as he drew people close to him during his time, he silently still makes his presence known through the spirit of virtue and simplicity, the desire for knowledge and enlightenment, the spiritual conversations and companionships that we can opt to make more apparent in the life of our communities today. We therefore celebrate the Jubilee year fully graced with the hope that we have a sincere friend and companion in Blessed Peter Faber who quietly and continuously dialogues with us. ☞

---

### References:

- *The Spiritual Writings of Pierre Faber.*
- The Institute of Jesuit Sources, St. Louis, MO 1996.
- William Bangert, SJ. *To the Other Towns.* Maryland: The Newman Press, 1959.

**Frank B. Savadera, SJ** entered the Society of Jesus in May 1998. He is the director of the Arvisu Prenovitiate House.

# Healing through the darkness: Faber, Nouwen, and Clark

It is said that as vainglory and ambition were to Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier, deep self-doubt and depression were to Peter Faber. Such was his woundedness. In spite of this, Faber has become the one among the first companions to bear the distinction of having a deeply caring spirit, an exceptionally gentle, compassionate and affirming personality, and a true bearer of the Risen Christ's consolations.

Ignatius himself was to name Faber as the most gifted in sharing the Exercises; while Rodriguez wrote of Faber's ability to nurture deep friendships that drew others to the love of God as unparalleled by any other. He who knew what it was to be lost—loneliness, self alienation, and deep anxieties—became a good shepherd to countless others. He who knew deep darkness, knew best how to bear light.

My thoughts cannot help but wander ... to the likes of Henri Nouwen ... or to other priests I have come to know, who share this familiarity with profound and lingering desolation, but like Faber, are gifted with a special kind of light that they are able to bear for others.

Nouwen, a Dutch Catholic priest, professor and writer, was known to have struggled with bouts of clinical depression many times in his life. Yet, his work has inspired millions the



world over, and has earned him the respect of a countless following who consider him as one of the greatest spiritual writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

During what he named to be the deepest and darkest phase of his life, Nouwen kept a journal. There, every day, he wrote what he later termed to be "spiritual imperatives." These were words of advice, gentle admonition, and affirmation, written by a seeming "other" who was able to momentarily step back and away from the darkness to address his desolate self. Never did he think any of these brief entries to be worth publishing at the time of writing. It was therefore with much reluctance when he agreed, years later, to have the journal published upon its discovery by an editor friend. "Why don't you share what might help many others?" he was told. Unsurprisingly, that journal-turned-book (entitled *Inner Voice of Love*) is among the most popular of his published

works. Later on, one of the many other books he was to write, he entitled *Wounded Healer*.

Closer to home, I have found that some of the kindest, wisest, most consoling and most caring priests I have ever met, are those who at one point or another in their lives, have wrestled long and hard with depression. One such Jesuit was Fr. Francis Clark.

I was a regular at his college masses in the Ateneo from 2001-2002, and had gone to him for confession a couple of times. I knew very little of him then (not even that he was the first Provincial of the Province and that he suffered from a major breakdown some years after that) for that was long before I entered the Society. But always, I marveled at the holiness the man bore. In his most endearing homilies (always infused with his favorite *kundimans* and his slang but grammatically perfect Tagalog), in the kindest way that he spoke to people, and in the *cura* with which he addressed each and every person, I felt God.

Unfortunately, (or fortunately) I cannot name the other Jesuits that come to mind, for they are still among the living. (Thank Goodness!) I can only hope you will know or recognize them among your friends. In most cases, however, like in that of Fr. Clark, I would hear of their condition or history of depression, long after I had already marveled at the consolation their persons had afforded me. Thus would I be moved into even greater awe at the mystery of each one's giftedness and woundedness, so closely intertwined.

They who themselves walked through deep sadness and loneliness, seem to know it well and its difficulties to live, work and care for people in a way that keeps others from falling or losing themselves in it. In a word, they who have experienced the resurrection, are more effectively able to bring its consolations to the world.

Time and again, such stories make us see the hand of a God who works marvels with human weaknesses, turning these into strength, wisdom, consolation and hope. And this, perhaps, is how we find our wounds healed, our broken selves made whole again. Our lives become renewed when we come to realize that in God's plan, there can be meaning in our suffering: that God trusts us enough to share in his redeeming work, and that we are held, so closely, in God's loving hands when we allow ourselves to be instruments.

In his book *Out of Solitude*, Nouwen writes:

*When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives mean the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares.*

I suspect that all the men I have written of thus far—foremost Peter Faber—must have found the same answers to these questions. In their own hours of darkness, they found the true value of such friends, of what it can mean to be a companion to others. They then chose to be that kind of friend and companion to all God's people. And that is why today, we call those like Peter Faber blessed. ☩

---

**Mark L. Lopez, SJ** pronounced his vows in the Society of Jesus in May 2006. He is now following courses in communication at the Loyola House of Studies.

---

What's with these Jesuits? You've probably heard that one about the person who said he liked attending Jesuit funerals, because it was the only time they spoke nice words about fellow Jesuits. Or perhaps you've read about what one philosopher is supposed to have said of Jesuits: "They meet without affection and they part without regret."<sup>1</sup> You may even have had first-hand experience seeing how Jesuit X and Jesuit Y seem to hate each others' guts, and how the people around them are all walking on eggshells, careful not to cause an escalation of hostilities. These may be sad, even harsh, caricatures but hearing them do make Jesuits either grin in amusement, grimace in recognition, or even wince in guilt—proof of the grain of truth that they contain. Is friendship among Jesuits really an anomaly? If so, then that would be ironic because this year the Society of Jesus around the world is celebrating the Jubilee of the First Companions.

*They preserved themselves in a most sweet peace, concord and love, in communication of all their affairs and of their inmost thoughts ... although they were of so many different nationalities, ended up by being one heart and will.*<sup>2</sup>

These are accounts of how Ignatius and the first companions (Xavier and Faber) spent their time together in the early days. They did not live in one house but they made it a point to gather, speak of spiritual matters, and discuss their problems. These frequent visits and conversations "inflamed their hearts with ardor." These men clearly enjoyed each others' company. Considering how they came from different places, spoke different languages, and certainly had different temperaments, it's a wonder they got together at all! This jubilee year not only honors the individual gifts of Ignatius, Xavier and Faber; it also celebrates the fundamental element of friendship, of companionship that is at the heart of Jesuit spirituality, the very element that has been there since the Society's inception.

In one issue of the journal *Studies in Jesuit Spirituality*<sup>3</sup>, Fr. Charles Shelton wrote about the joys, struggles and possibilities of friendship in Jesuit life. He noted that a detailed study of such a significant topic in Jesuit history has not been done. For a long time friendship, especially "particular friendship" was frowned upon in religious life. He writes: "Unfortunately, the assumption was that we somehow violated our common way of living if we wrote about or focused on specific



relationships to the exclusion of the wider brotherhood.” Despite declarations of being “friends in the Lord,” friendship was often reduced to neutral, affect-less regard. However, it is not only in Jesuit life that male friendship is a problematic subject.

Psychologists, sociologists and even theologians have pointed out that adult friendship is something rarely experienced by men. Friendship among males tends to revolve around doing something—work, sports, hobbies, etc.—while intimacy and self-disclosure are reserved for “sexual” relationships. In Filipino culture, drinking together becomes the venue for bonding. Men in general are socialized to compete, to achieve and to dominate—qualities that may be incompatible with mature friendships. And *homophobia*, the

irrational and inordinate fear of same-sex attraction, makes closeness among men awkward, even taboo.

These notions are now being challenged. Men writers and thinkers are advocating movements to reclaim masculine spirituality and its integration with male sexuality. They are recognizing that vulnerability, intimacy and self-disclosure are human realities, regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Deep, mature male friendship is seen in a better light. Masculinity is not incongruous with having intimate male friends in whom one can trust and confide. The need for intimacy and the benefits of feeling supported by companions have been confirmed in several empirical investigations on priestly and religious life. Valued relationships among male religious have been linked with life satisfaction. They serve



## In His Company: Friendship in Jesuit Life

as buffers against life stressors and are predictors of well-being especially among celibate men.

Ignatius, the “knower of men,” understood deeply this basic human need for intimacy especially in the hearts of those he gathered. Peter Faber wrote in his memoirs how he, tormented by scruples, opened his conscience to Ignatius who slowly guided him towards peace and commitment. The deep friendship Ignatius formed with his companions is evidenced in Francis Xavier’s tender salutations from his missions. Father Shelton writes: “*We might even speculate whether the early Society would even have been viable if the early companions had not enjoyed such a rich friendship.*”

However, the wonder of this “rich friendship” was that it was rooted, not so much in identical attributes (which they didn’t have), or the deep affection for Ignatius (which they did), but in a deep bond of friendship with Jesus Christ. Their common experience of the Spiritual Exercises served as a way for them to get to know Christ intimately and to follow him.

This relationship with Christ can easily fall into idealized servitude—impersonal and demanding. This is a bond to serve, yes, but also a bond of loyalty, intimacy and even affection. It is a call to friendship. This is what truly nourished the companions' bonds with one another. The first companions did not come together because they liked one another. It is truer to say that they liked one another because they were united in one desire.

The joyful commitment to Christ which enabled them to be of one heart and will, also allowed them to live apart from each other and dedicate their lives to their ministry. When Xavier left Rome for the missions, he never saw Ignatius and his brothers again. Father Shelton considers this one quality of healthy Jesuit friendships: a sense of security in the friendship that naturally leads to focus on mission rather than on worrying about the relationship. The bond that unites two Jesuits in friendship allows for separation, even solitude. As Fathers Barry and Doherty wrote, the Jesuit will always live the tension between the need for companionship and the availability for mission.

Friendship is not only important in Jesuit life. It is what lies at the core. It is what fuels their ministry and radiates to non-Jesuit friends and co-workers. Paradoxically, the friendship that enlivens conversations in the recreation room is the same one that infuses the solemn quiet of shared liturgy; it opens the heart in compassionate listening, and quickens the step during the lone trek in the mountains; it sweetens the moments with a trusted comrade and warms the contact with the daunting crowd.

So what's with these Jesuits? They may live together or be dispersed; like Christ's apostles, they may disagree with one another, criticize and even fight. But at the end of the day, when they turn again to the presence of Him who has called them to His Company, there, in that profound solitude, they truly become companions. ¶

- 
- <sup>1</sup> Barry, W. & Doherty, R. *Contemplatives in Action: The Jesuit Way*. New York: Paulist Press, 2002, 34.
- <sup>2</sup> Osuna, J., Nicholas King (trans). *Friends in the Lord*. London: 1974, The Way Series 3, 61
- <sup>3</sup> Shelton, C. *Friendship in Jesuit Life: The Joys, Struggles and Possibilities*. 1995, Studies in Jesuit Spirituality.

**Jordan J. Orbe, SJ** entered the Society of Jesus in May 1999. He has an AB degree in Broadcast Communications from the University of the Philippines.

# Spiritual Accompaniment:

After experiencing the Spiritual Exercises through the direction of Ignatius of Loyola, Peter Faber's life was never the same. His love for knowledge began to cease being a thirst for its own sake. Instead it became a yearning that was spurred by and directed towards the love of God. The life-altering experience of Peter Faber led him to become a spiritual companion, accompanying people in their experience of God through the Exercises. Faber, spiritual companion par excellence, was also a witness of the faith. He was impressive not so much by what he taught but by his example. Through his words and deeds, he drew many people towards a profound intimacy with God.

The Christian Life Community (CLC) is a public world association that is newly discovering Peter Faber as a model and inspiration for its ministry. As its General Principles point out, CLC traces its roots to the time of Faber, through the Marian Congregations, started by Jean Leunis, S.J., which developed after 1540 in many parts of the world. These groups later came to be known as Sodalities of our Lady and eventually as Christian Life Communities. From the original initiative of Saint Ignatius Loyola and his companions, especially the work of Peter Faber, Jesuit-Lay partnerships have a long-standing and rich history of which the CLC is proud and honored to be a part.

CLC sees Faber as a model and inspiration because his life bears similarities to the values that the CLC tries to live out. The spirituality of the CLC is centered on Christ and on participation in the Paschal Mystery. Within the context of the universal sources of the faith, we hold the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius as the specific source and the characteristic instrument of our spirituality towards discerning God's desire for our lives. Praying in the tradition of the Spiritual Exercises, after all, invariably changes people. Our vocation calls us to live this spirituality, which opens and disposes us to whatever God wishes in each concrete situation of our daily life.

In the CLC we believe in the necessity of discerning God's will in our lives if one truly desires to be attuned to the love of Christ. We accomplish this discernment through an annual retreat using the Spiritual Exercises and by trying to find God in our daily and communal lives. Like countless other CLC members, I encounter God through the Spiritual Exercises during my retreats with the CLC. One of my retreats especially brought God's love to me in a real and present way, and since that experience I have never been the same. When I look back at my life journey, I am awed at how my own life has been altered by my experience of God



# PETER FABER

## and the Christian Life Community

through the Spiritual Exercises, and the centrality of CLC in facilitating my finding God. Through the Exercises and the CLC, I encounter a God who truly loves me completely as I am. Though I recognize myself as limited and sinful, I profoundly experience God's love and I am empowered to respond in love to God's call by overcoming my selfish ways.

In beginning the process of finding God in all things, I have awakened to God's presence in and through people whose constant companionship in the CLC leads me towards Christ and my authentic self. Those of us who are members of the Christian Life Community come together regularly in order to journey with each other through prayer and faith sharing. The content of these sessions is usually drawn from the Spiritual Exercises, and witnesses the Ignatian spiritual charism.

It is through the Spiritual Exercises that the CLC forms others in community meetings and retreats. As CLC members mature in their membership, some recognize and respond to God's call of CLC as their life's vocation. Similar to Faber, those of us who have identified with and are committed to CLC as our vocation guide others in the CLC way of life as Group Guides. Through the spiritual accompaniment and personal care of the Group Guides who shepherd CLC communities, members of the CLC meet the Christ of the Exercises. Through the Group Guides' example, the members of the community also become spiritual co-journeymen with one another.

The CLC also journeys with others via retreat direction. Experienced CLC members who feel especially called to share the Spiritual Exercises with others train to become retreat directors. Here especially we see the link to Faber, who so graciously gave of his person to care for others and their spiritual needs. To achieve this link, the CLC Formation Institute was created because the CLC discerned as its



national apostolate the spiritual formation of our people, especially the marginalized. Thus, we offer retreats, recollections, prayer sessions, and programs as opportunities for people to encounter God.

CLC members are called to be contemplatives in action. We surround our work with prayerfulness as envisioned by St. Ignatius so as to become better witnesses of the faith. The CLC is replete with its own witnesses throughout history—people who have once joined the sodality and are now honored as holy men and women of the Church. Among the many holy examples are St. Thérèse of Lisieux, St. Anthony Mary Claret, St. Francis de Sales, St. Dominic

Savio, and St. John Baptist de La Salle.

The CLC Philippines also has its own share of modern day witnesses. We are surrounded by many of them. These include educators, public servants, non-government organization employees, accountants, homemakers, lawyers, and many, many others who do not have throngs of followers as some saints do, but who quietly live lives that bespeak God's call to love and serve. Following Faber's example of *cura personalis*, these CLC witnesses live authentically day by day their response to the call of Christ, the Eternal King. ❧

To learn more about the Christian Life Community of the Philippines, our ministry and our communities, and the ways in which we strive to find God in all things, please feel free to stop by our office located on the Ground Floor of the CLC Center on the Ateneo de Manila campus, call us at 426-00-74 or 75, or email us at [clcfi@admu.edu.ph](mailto:clcfi@admu.edu.ph).

**Tinnah M. dela Rosa** is the Director of the Formation Institute of the Christian Life Community.



# Jesuit Volunteers Philippines:

## Companions in the Journey

*“Ginoo, salamat sa paghatag ug mga magtutudlo diin nakagiya kanamo ngadto Kanimo.”*

It was a starlit night in Anao-aon, a laid back town in Surigao del Norte. The students had just finished the dress rehearsal for the first-ever cultural night in the San Nicholas High School. After months of practice, it seemed the performers were all of a sudden stricken with amnesia - they forgot their lines, choreography and cues with their excitement over seeing colored stage lights for the first time. And the show was the following day.

My Jesuit Volunteers Philippines (JVP) partner, Sarah, and I slumped in a quiet corner, tired, frustrated and worried. We prayed our usual 9:00 evening prayer synchronized with other JVP volunteers assigned all over the Philippines. A student of ours, Dave, joined us. When it was his turn to say his prayer out loud, he uttered: *“Ginoo, salamat sa paghatag ug mga magtutudlo diin nakagiya kanamo ngadto Kanimo.”* (“Lord, thank you for providing teachers who lead us to You.”)

That was 1993, thirteen years ago, when I was a JVP volunteer. (Thankfully, the students remembered everything on performance day and the show delighted the audience!)

JVP volunteers go out to their respective corners of the country with a mission to bring people closer to God—as teachers, community organizers, youth formators, parish workers, and advocates of social causes. These volunteers spend at least a year of their young lives in Masbate, Bukidnon, Mindoro, Samar or Cotabato, sharing their skills and talents as college graduates and young professionals. Working with the people they serve, they contribute to making life better for our brother and sister Filipinos in need by building schools and education programs, putting up social involvement and campus

ministry offices in universities, and setting up cooperatives and livelihood programs in urban and rural poor communities around the country. They contribute to establishing God’s kingdom on earth by building a better country where justice, goodness and hope prevail. In its 27 years, more than 700 JVP volunteers have contributed to this mission.

With the volunteers’ experience of rendering service and being formed in the five JVP core values of service, social justice, solidarity, simplicity and spirituality during their volunteer year, they come out of their JVP experience “ruined for life,” as they would say. Many of the former JVP volunteers, in true JVP spirit of leadership, have put up other service organizations and founda-

tions to continue what they began as JVP volunteers, like the Cartwheel Foundation promoting education among indigenous children, the Mangyan Heritage Center which endeavors to preserve Mangyan culture, and the Skwelahang Sikolohiya Association, Inc. that facilitates the psychological well-being, growth and preparation for release of maximum security inmates in Muntinlupa.

Former JVP volunteers in various fields and industries

also strive to live out the core values in their respective contexts. Nicky De Lange, a volunteer in 1987, is the owner and president of Designs Ligna, a quality furniture company, with local and international markets. He holds leadership positions in both the domestic and international furniture industry. In his words, his year of service and formation in JVP’s core values remains a “benchmark” for making important decisions as a businessman and leader and in living his life, in general. Designs Ligna employees enjoy the highest benefits in the local furniture industry.



With the noble goals and humble efforts of JVP both in serving communities and forming the volunteers themselves, being at the helm of the JVP Foundation as its Executive Director is a huge responsibility. Although this is a complex vocation, I have espoused quite a simple principle and value in being a leader-companion in JVP: love in the concrete. I remember sending my first e-mail message to the JVP community when I came in as Executive Director in May 2004; it was not Valentine's Day, but I sent a message of love, part of which read:



In the end, and in fact in the beginning and in between, what has often been said of JVP work and life is true: what is important is that one has loved—one's self, neighbor, country and God. God the Son entered the world and loved in the concrete. He healed, taught, and lived and worked among the people in the society of His time. Love always looks after the good of the beloved. And so we are impelled to help ourselves, to improve lives, to form communities, and thus help develop our country. Our nation is in great need and while to some, it is already hopeless, JVP continues to hope and heed the call of love.

And we, in JVP, try to love in the concrete in the spirit of *magis*—excellent love. As a leader of JVP, this means for me steering the organization to ensure that things run smoothly while at the same time exploring uncharted seas to grow in our mission and more effectively address the needs of an ailing Philippine society. In the concrete, this means building the organization's capacity; running and developing its programs, structures, systems, processes, procedures; taking care of people and forming institutional and human relationships; all in a manner that would best help JVP fulfill its mission of rendering faith-driven volunteer service for nation-building. Underpinning all these works is a sincere effort to lead by example in living out the core values of JVP.

Seeing the volunteer as a person in a remote mission area in Mindanao, I ask: what are his needs to contribute effectively to the mission of JVP and to ensure his growth and general well-being as a person? If he needs to communicate and coordinate with us on the home front in the National Office in Ateneo de Manila to request for educational materials not available in his area or to seek professional advice or to share his feelings of homesickness, how can we facilitate this? With JVP supporting its programs through fund-raising, perhaps we can address his needs by engaging a telecommunications sponsor to cut costs. In the concrete, this means conceptualizing a proposal, seeking out the right people, persisting in following up and negotiating to seal a deal to bridge the distance between Mindanao and Quezon City and make us in the National Office accessible companions to our

volunteer. And so now, JVP has an official telecommunications provider under the banner, "Bridging the distance to help build a nation."

As a companion and co-pilgrim of JVP volunteers in their journey, I remember giving the moon as my *pabaon* (a thing given to a person about to embark on a journey) in our *huling habilin* (last words) session in the Orientation Seminar before the volunteers were sent off to their mission areas. I told our volunteers that no matter how far we are from each other, we stay connected under the same moon. This moon is without a light of its own, but merely reflects the light of the sun. Each one of us is also a moon reflecting the light and excellent love of God in our life of service. That evening, while on the boat to her mission area with other JVP volunteers, one of our volunteers sent me an SMS at 2:00 a.m. saying, *Nandito kami sa barko.... At sabay-sabay kaming nakatingin sa buwan. Kaunti na lang, makakarating na kami. Salamat, Ate Jo.*

The life of a JVP volunteer is not easy, being sent to a place where you do not know the people, the culture, language, and sometimes even the food. Indeed, it is a saving grace to have a companion in the mission, whether a JVP partner in the area or a co-pilgrim who might be physically distant from you but whose presence and support you feel and who communicates with you from time to time. Perhaps that was why Christ sent his disciples in twos to go on their missions. As a companion of the volunteers, you share their triumph in seeing their adult student finally learn how to read and their heartache in having put so much effort into



organizing a livelihood seminar where the attendance turned out to be low. As a companion, you share the joy of a volunteer who has learned to love the Mangyans and the pain of a volunteer who feels she cannot enter the world of a hardened youth who has been sexually abused by her father. As a companion, you pray with the volunteers in offering hopes, dreams, triumphs, frustrations, failures, and heartaches, theirs and yours. While it is important to impart

to a volunteer what you know to help ease a pain or multiply triumphs, being present with and believing in him gives him courage and strength to continue his journey as a JVP volunteer.

In one of the thank-you letters given to me by the volunteers at the end of their volunteer year, I understood what it meant to be a companion. Ginger wrote, "*Salamat sa pagiging inspirasyon sa akin - inspirasyon sa pagbibigay, pagdarasal, pagmamahal. Thank you for being someone I can look up to but at the same time being someone I could walk with as a friend.... I love you.*"

We are all on a journey. It is a journey that ends where we began, a journey where we help each other walk closer back to God. It is a joy to have companions on this journey. ❀

---

**Attorney Josephine G. Maribojoc** is the Executive Director of the Jesuit Volunteers of the Philippines, Inc.

# Continuing Faber's Legacy:

Driven by his great faith and love for God, his desire to be placed in the service of God's Son, and the gift of his God-given talents and genius, St. Ignatius of Loyola developed a spirituality founded on the Spiritual Exercises which not merely deepened his love for God but also translated this love into action for the service of souls for God's kingdom. Five hundred years after, not only have the number of souls to be served multiplied many times over but also have the complicity and challenges of the world to which present souls have been exposed. If Father Ignatius were alive today, he would readily be proud of the faithfulness and innovations carried out by the Philippine Province's collaborations with its lay counterparts in order to promote his spirituality for the good of the Church.

Both the Emmaus Center for Psycho-Spiritual Formation and the Center for Ignatian Spirituality (CIS) were established to meet such spiritual hunger and needs. Emmaus was established in 1981 to address the formation needs of various religious congregations, seminarians, lay organizations and clergy in the Philippines. The Center for Ignatian Spirituality Philippines, on the other hand, begun in 1991, saw as its mission the formation and training of ministers and agents of Ignatian Spirituality.

While Emmaus Center continues to strive to be the resource center for psycho-spiritual formation necessary for religious, clergy and lay people's effective life-giving service in their respective apostolates and ministries, CIS aims to be a resource training, network and renewal center for those religious, clergy and lay people who aspire to deepen their faith life in the light of Ignatian Spirituality or who sense a call to accompany others in their spiritual journey.



Values being upheld by Emmaus are the following: integral psycho-spiritual formation and reverent companioning [of the person], professionalism [of Center personnel]: competence and integrity, deep respect for the diverse gifts and charism in the Church, and sensitivity and responsiveness to God's presence and promptings.

Among the basic Emmaus programs and modules offered are: psycho-spiritual integration workshops; sexuality seminars; self-awareness techniques (Journal Writing, Enneagram, MBTI, etc.); modules on building self-esteem; "Growth in the Spiritual Life" workshops; seminars on developmental/life transition issues; seminars on contemporary issues in the Church (sexual abuse, power, etc.); seminars on understanding formands' context (globalization, Gen-X, Y, Z, etc.); training in companioning skills for formators (processing, spiritual direction); workshops on developing formation programs; coaching and supervision for formators; group spiritual direction for formators; modules on "Spirituality in the Workplace."



# Jesuit Spirituality Centers



CIS, on the other hand, shares the gifts of the Spiritual Exercises and Ignatian Spirituality through spiritual direction, retreats (group and individually guided), workshops, conferences, supervised retreat-giving experiences, and courses for retreat-givers and spiritual directors in partnership with Loyola School of Theology. It has a “Spiritual Direction Course” project in partnership with the East Asian Pastoral Institute, which serves the local Churches of Asia and the Pacific. Credits for its “Degree Course in Spirituality and Retreat Directing” are recognized by the Loyola School of Theology. CIS also has a ministry for the poor, forming lay spiritual guides and giving retreats or spiritual direction to individuals with limited financial means and parish-based and/or marginalized communities. In relation to this same ministry, in celebration of the Jubilee Year of the First Companions, CIS has established both the Blessed Peter Faber and the St. Ignatius of Loyola Endowment Funds. Lastly, CIS has its own magazine, *Antig*, which has a dual purpose of giving its updates as well as providing a venue for reflection on matters pertinent to Ignatian Spirituality.

One of the new programs of Emmaus is the “Intensive Training in Processing Skills.” The program trains formators

how to “process,” teaching and refining their skills such as physical attending, active listening, accurate empathy, non-intrusive probing and confronting with care. These allow the formator to help the person clarify whatever concerns or issues he or she is grappling with until a kind of insight into the dynamics of that concern is reached. This is done to help the person determine which appropriate courses of action to consider.

CIS, aside from its new work regarding the renewal of the clergy, through giving directed retreats to diocesan priests, is now also into developing programs for *Retreat in Daily Life* graduates especially in the corporate world. It aims to find a more sustained spiritual nourishment specific to the workplace of the latter.

Emmaus and CIS serve the religious and clergy as well as the lay subscribers. Spiritual directors, from the young to the middle-aged, train at CIS come from all walks of life. Directees come from the young up to people in their old age. For Emmaus, however, although this center is open to lay people who are into the spiritual formation of lay people, it continues to be more associated with the religious and clergy. This is particularly through its psycho-spiritual integration programs and sexuality seminars, which help the religious or clergy in formal formation look at themselves and assess their capacity for living out a religious vocation.

By promoting and deepening the Ignatian Spirituality with their clientele who pray and live out this spirituality not only by themselves but also share this with others, both Emmaus and CIS play an important role in addressing the spiritual hunger and need of the people in this part of the world. It is inspiring and admirable to see how they have zealously and creatively continued to use and innovate Ignatian Spirituality for people who strive to find God and be faithful to him in this ever-changing and challenging world. ☪

---

**Antonio Roberto Sian, SJ**, a medical doctor by training, is the Assistant Director of the Arvisu Prenovitiato House in Manila.

# Things you may have wanted to know about the

One day, you may come across the words *Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius* (others abbreviate it as SpEx) and begin to wonder whether you can use this mysterious, Zen-sounding, new workout to tone your upper body. In other words, you're lost. The following FAQs may help put you in the loop.

## 1. Why is it called *Spiritual EXERCISES*?

We may understand *exercises* to simply mean *activities, methods or ways*. They are *spiritual* because these are activities or actions we can do to make "contact with God." Examples of these are ways of praying such as meditation, contemplation, vocal prayer, devotions, examination of conscience, etc. We may also understand *exercise* in the sense of being a *work-out or training to keep fit*. Just like physical exercises which are good for tuning up muscles, improving circulation and flexibility, spiritual exercises are good for strengthening "spiritual muscles," increasing one's openness to the Holy Spirit, becoming more aware of God's presence, and growing more familiar with God's ways. What's important to remember is that these spiritual exercises are meant to be *done*, not just to be read or thought about.

## 2. Is the *Spiritual Exercises* a retreat?

Nowadays, *retreat* has become a common word. We even hear of corporations who bring their employees to a posh resort for a company *retreat* (as a time to rest, recreate and even to party!). In the spiritual sense, we understand *retreat* as a time to withdraw from one's normal activities and devote one's self to prayer and solitude. It is also a time to rest, but to do so in God's presence. It may also be a time to reflect on one's life, on one's relationship with God and on the meaning of one's significant experiences. It may be structured, meaning there is a definite set of prayer and spiritual activities within the time of retreat. Or it may simply be silence and reflection. The *Spiritual Exercises* is more specifically a program for a retreat. It is made up of prayer activities and methods with a particular structure and flow. The sequence of prayer activities has a purpose, which is to bring a person into contact with God. It is not the only type of spiritual retreat. There are also other forms aside from the *Spiritual Exercises* (also known as the Ignatian retreat), with different formats and goals.

## 3. Did Saint Ignatius write the *Spiritual Exercises*?

After Ignatius experienced his spiritual conversion, he began to help others who were struggling with their faith. His main resources were his own religious experiences and the ways by

Just like physical exercises which are good for tuning up muscles, improving circulation and flexibility, spiritual exercises are good for strengthening "spiritual muscles," increasing one's openness to the Holy Spirit, becoming more aware of God's presence, and growing more familiar with God's ways.





# SPEX (but were afraid to ask)

which God was “instructing” him. The Spiritual Exercises began as a set of brief notes which Ignatius kept to remember methods and reflections that he found helpful in guiding others. Ignatius also supplemented these with ideas from books he read during his convalescence at Loyola and his pilgrimages to Montserrat and Manresa (such as *Vita Jesu Christi*, *Flos Sanctorum* on the lives of the saints, and the *Imitation of Christ*). The basic structure of the Exercises is said to have been formed already when Ignatius spent time in Manresa (1523). Later, he agreed to write down the Exercises in full in order for others to use it to guide people in prayer. The Spiritual Exercises were officially approved by Pope Paul III in 1548.

#### 4. Can I do the Spiritual Exercises on my own or do I have to go to a Jesuit?

Most definitely, you cannot just grab a copy of the *Spiritual Exercises* and read it from cover to cover. You won't be able to make heads or tails of it! It is meant to be a manual or a guide for one who is *giving* or *guiding* someone else who is doing the retreat. Without a doubt, Ignatius meant it to be a guide for an *individually directed* retreat, with a person seeing a retreat giver who guides him/her through the Exercises. However, there was a time when Jesuits started to give Ignatian retreats to large groups, usually called “preached” retreats. Nowadays, the practice of doing the retreat individually is becoming more common. In principle, all Jesuits are capable of guiding someone through the Spiritual Exercises. There are also many other priests, nuns and lay people who are in the ministry of giving the Exercises. Institutions such as the Center for Ignatian Spirituality have programs for people who are interested in experiencing the Spiritual Exercises.

#### 5. Why would a person want to go through the Spiritual Exercises? Are there any prerequisites?

The main purpose of the *Spiritual Exercises* is two-fold: “to dispose the soul to remove all disordered tendencies, and to seek and find the Divine Will regarding the management of one's life and the salvation of one's soul.” Pretty intense, right? This is why even Saint Ignatius carefully chose the persons whom he allowed to do the full

Exercises (which means thirty days of silence and prayer). Nowadays, adaptations of the SpEx are possible, and one can go through certain parts of it with a retreat guide. One can even do the Spiritual Exercises in daily life, and not have to go to a retreat house. The important thing is that you have these basic qualities:

- a) a genuine desire to seek and encounter God; b) a certain level of generosity of heart and a willingness to be led by the Spirit; c) a capacity to stay in silence; d) some ability to pray and to articulate what happens in prayer, and e) a good degree of self-awareness and openness. Two common reasons to do the Exercises are to discern or confirm one's vocation and to get to know God in a more intimate way.

#### 6. If I do the Spiritual Exercises, will I become a better person?

Becoming a better person after doing the Exercises is not guaranteed. However, if you do the Exercises well, which means that you are generous with your time and attention to God, you are open to your retreat guide, and if you give yourself fully in prayer, there's a big chance that you will encounter a man called Jesus Christ. And this encounter will change you—you will find yourself

growing more attracted to this man, to his ways, to his dreams, and to his mission in the world. And if you allow him more and more space in your life, you will never be the same again.

These are just some quick points about the Spiritual Exercises. If you want to learn more, you may read *A Way to the Desert* by Father Ramon L. Bautista SJ.<sup>1</sup> Or you may approach a Jesuit and ask him yourself. Who knows? He may even agree to guide you through the *Spiritual Exercises*. ☪

<sup>1</sup> Bautista, Ramon Ma. L. *A Way to the Desert: 101 Questions and Answers on Retreat, Prayer and Discernment the Ignatian Way*. Makati: Saint Paul, 2001.

**Jordan J. Orbe, SJ** entered the Society of Jesus in May 1999. He has an AB degree in Broadcast Communications from the University of the Philippines.



# Kumusta Ka Na?

**K**umusta ka na?" (How are you?) This is the question I ask to start the prayer sessions I give at the Manuel V. Pangilinan Center in the Ateneo Campus. I have been facilitating prayer sessions and retreats-in-daily life for the past three years. I always ask that same question at the beginning of every prayer session. I am always amazed by the myriad of responses the question elicits.

"Bro, *pagud na pagod na po ako!*" (I'm so tired, brother) cried one college student and added, "I have a test tomorrow in Accounting and a paper due this afternoon. I am really, terribly tired of all these things." Another student intimated, "I am currently unattached. Help me find someone *naman* Bro." A senior shared that "academics and organizational work are a bit overwhelming. But I am more concerned about what will happen to me after graduation. I do not know what to do. Actually, I am scared at the thought of what life will be for me after school."

Their concerns may not be matters of great consequence, but they do reveal a certain hunger in a student's life: the need to be listened to and to feel cared for. Monique, a member of Ateneo Student Catholic Action (ATSCA), commented that "I have been having Individual Consultations with Jesuit scholastics. They have always been there during times when I need someone to talk to regarding family matters, the organization, friends, love, career."

Kris of the Ateneo Catechetical Instruction League (ACIL) stated that "I just need someone to talk to." Monique added, "many times in the past, I would always go to Bro. JJ whenever I had problems, especially during times of burn out and hurt caused by other people. His being there, simply listening gave me a chance to pour out everything I had to say. He helped me understand and see things clearly."

Angela of the Ateneo Christian Life Community (ACLC) shared, "I was guided by a Jesuit during my five-day retreat and in the retreat-in-daily life program of the Campus Ministry Office. They were very helpful. They were not scolding me for my shortcomings. Because of their care and warmth, I was at ease opening up and sharing my real feelings."

Another member from ATSCA, Caloy, shared that "there was a time when our Jesuit moderator wrote me a letter. It was during a retreat. It was also a time when I really felt exhausted because of the academic and organizational work. We weren't that close but I really felt that he cared a lot."

But beneath the need for care and warmth is a certain need to make sense of the things that overwhelm and confuse them. Wenona, from ACIL, said that the Jesuit Scholastic who guided her "helped me realize a lot of things especially during the times when I felt confused."

Vit, from ACLC, shared that "there was a time when I really felt like such a failure that I couldn't do anything right in my life. I felt down and unhappy. And when our Jesuit brother told us that he too experiences this kind of feelings of failure, I felt comforted after hearing this and I felt inspired to also be like him: strong, despite moments of failure and sadness."

As one progresses in this companionship, one comes to a distinct and clear realization of an insatiable hunger—not only for love and understanding for the self—but a hunger for God. Angela, from ACLC, shared that "he made me see God in my everyday experiences."

Diana of ACLC expressed that the Jesuit brother who accompanied her "was helpful for the deepening of my relationship with my God. He helped to constantly reflect and see how God is present in my life."

Angela added that "Every moment I was conscious of God's presence in my life, and I grew strong enough to take the initiative in doing and being more. My retreat director, a Jesuit scholastic, guided me so well, especially during my first year that until now the graces are still very present and alive in me. That first year which I experienced with him was just the start. But it was a great start that I know will keep me coming back to God for the rest of my life."

Francis, an ATSCAn, shared that "the Jesuits I know, more than being my personal counselor, are my friends. Their ways serve as an inspiration for me to do more for God and for other people. I can see *magis* in them. I can see God working in them."

The desire to embody the spirit of *cura personalis* continues to enliven a good number of young Jesuits today—devoting their time and energy to provide companionship for young people who are searching for God. Actively yet quietly pursuing to reflect the consoling ministry of the Risen Christ, may we continue to accompany people in a personal way—with charity and kindness, as friends are accustomed to console friends. ☪

**Anthony V. Coloma, SJ** is finishing his AB Philosophy at the Ateneo de Manila University.

# Retreat in Daily Life

## Bringing St. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises into the mainstream

**T**he 2006 Retreat in Daily Life at the Center for Ignatian Spirituality Philippines (CIS Phil) is about to start. 85 applicants beat the deadline of August 1, while 15 more applied within the week and were placed on the waitlist. The applicants are all lay, except for three religious, and come from different sectors of society—leaders and members of charismatic renewal or Ignatian-inspired communities, middle level managers and top executives from the corporate world and media, yuppies, professionals, housewives, lay missionaries, and retirees. Their ages range from the early twenties to the seventies.

The Retreat in Daily Life (RDL) is an individually directed retreat for persons who cannot take the time off to do the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius in a retreat house. The retreatants do not leave their homes and places of work but commit to a daily prayer period and regular meeting with their retreat guide.

CIS Phils. is one of the many Ignatian spirituality centers worldwide that has mainstreamed the Spiritual Exercises through the daily life format. The RDL was a further development of the revival of the individually directed retreat led by Loyola House in Guelph, Canada in the 1970's. The RDL was reintroduced in the 1990's worldwide, more than 400 years after it was begun by St. Ignatius of Loyola, to respond to the spiritual needs of a growing number of active lay people.

In the Philippines, CIS Phil. has offered the Retreat in Daily Life yearly since 1998 and people continue to come in increasing numbers. What do they have in common? Why do they want to take the retreat in daily life? What is very evident in the interviews that we conduct to assess the disposition of the applicants is that there is a deep longing to deepen their spiritual life and to find a deeper meaning. They have heard about the RDL from friends who have taken the retreat and were inspired by the sharing of the retreat experience and by the transformation and the fruits that they have observed in their friends.

The Retreat in Daily Life is challenging, even for those with a regular prayer life. There are initial struggles of being distracted with concerns at home and at work, or maintaining focus and perseverance in prayer. But once these obstacles are hurdled, the graces are abundant. There is a sense of growing intimacy with the Lord, more self-awareness, enlightenment and sense of freedom. There is a call to be more loving and to serve others as well as the grace to respond to this call.

CIS Phil also makes the RDL available to marginalized or parish-based communities by subsidizing the cost of the program. (An endowment fund was started last year to support CIS Phil's retreats for the poor as well as provide scholarships to lay persons who have the disposition to be retreat guides). Whether the retreatants are college scholars from Montalban, or parish youth leaders from San Jose Manggagawa Parish in Marikina, or community leaders from Camarin, or prayer leaders from Navotas, the RDL does not fail to touch them, to help them experience a loving, merciful God, and evoke a greater desire to help their communities.

The CIS Phil's well-trained pool of retreat guides have varied backgrounds as well—priests, scholastics, other religious and lay persons, single or married, who are immersed in the corporate world, or running their own businesses. Their desire to be retreat givers flows from their own experience of the Spiritual Exercises in either the closed retreat format or the retreat in daily life.



Being an RDL guide requires commitment as well. As RDL guides, we journey with the retreatants over many months, make ourselves available for the weekly meetings and tend to our own spiritual nourishment and personal development, coming for supervision, studying the Bible,

theology and spirituality. And yet, it is always a privilege for us to witness our Lord himself acting in the lives of the retreatants, continuously molding them. We in turn are showered with generous blessings. We experience growth in our relationship with God and develop a deeper awareness of our own giftedness and vulnerabilities. As we listen and journey with the retreatants, we cannot help but pray for them and bring to prayer our own experience of accompaniment. In the end we are humbled to realize that after all we are instruments trusted by God to help bring about his Kingdom.

The caring spirit of Blessed Peter Faber, whom Ignatius considered to be the best giver of the exercises, lives on in the hearts of every retreat giver, who patiently and unconditionally accompanies the retreatant and encounters God in the journey. ❧

**Cristina A. Mossesgeld** is a Project Officer at the Center for Ignatian Spirituality, located on the campus of the Ateneo de Manila University.



# FABER TODAY

## The Interreligious Dialogue Program of Ateneo de Zamboanga

Father James Fredericks SJ, professor of theology at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, once said that people often talk of interreligious dialogue as being based on big spiritual mysteries, “like the Holy Spirit or some transcendent reality; but no, the foundations of interreligious dialogue in Los Angeles are cheese enchiladas.” He explains that most interreligious discussions with his Buddhist friends happen in the context of a meal.

The Ateneo de Zamboanga University Campus Ministry (CM) office has their own version of that when they break the fast (*Id Al Fitr*) with their Muslim students at the end of the Muslim celebration of Ramadan and in Christian fiestas and celebrations. Why not have a dialogue of life over hot *pandesal*, *puto*, *suman* and coffee?

This is just one of the many entrypoints that the ADZU Campus Ministry utilizes in dialogue with its Muslim students. The University also hosts the Federation of Muslim Students Association (FMSA) Sportsfest. The Ateneo de Zamboanga University is one of the first in the Philippines to have a Muslim Coordinator/Imam (leader) for its Muslim students.

While the main clientele of the CM is the Christian community on campus, it acknowledges the presence of a small Muslim Community of about 700 of its 3500 students. So, in the School Year 2004-2005, a Muslim Coordinator was assigned in the Campus Ministry Office. His main job was to coordinate the Muslim Recollections and Retreat Program. By sustaining this program and by having a Muslim Coordinator, the Muslim students have been given greater care and the programs for them are further

developed to suit their spiritual needs. In the last school year (2005-2006), the Campus Ministry appointed a full-time Coordinator for Interreligious Dialogue.

Admittedly still in its infancy stage, the program includes separate Recollections for the Muslim students (during their second and third year) and Retreat (during their senior year), as well as a Religious Studies Course. The CM also supports the Muslim Students Association (MSA), which is under the ARO (Alliance of Religious Organization) of the CM. The job of Campus Ministry then is to accompany the Muslim students in their formation through deepening of their own faith experience. Ignatian spirituality is also introduced by emphasizing its universality.

Ghazzali “Ghaz” Taupan, the Muslim Coordinator and Coordinator for Interreligious Dialogue for the University, explains that the work for interreligious dialogue is really a work for peace. He points out that the great thinkers of Islam see dialogue as a must, and in accordance with the Holy Qur’an. “Do not argue with those who were given the book save in the best way possible, unless it be those of them who are given to wrongdoing and therefore not accessible to friendly argument.” Say to them: “We believe in what has been sent down to us and what was sent down to you, and your God and our God are one and the same. We are Muslims wholly submitted to him. (*Ankabut* 29:46) He is in constant communication with the *Silsilah Dialogue Movement* which has earned its reputation in the Philippines and in other countries as a movement passionately dedicated to Muslim-Christian Dialogue.



Recently, Muslim students expressed their needs to extend their prayer room. It has become smaller because so many are praying there now. This is a good “problem” to have since this means that many of the students are praying and trying to live out their faith. Basic to dialogue is a deeper understanding of one’s faith and many of the Muslim students in ADZU have expressed this need to deepen their own faith to prepare themselves to enter in dialogue with their Christian friends.



Joy Tarroza, who has been with the Campus Ministry for six years, shares that being with Muslim students—sharing food, companionship, and faith experiences with them—is really an experience of greater deepening of her own faith as well. She realizes that “the Muslim students I work with are people like me who seek to find God in all things and who want to discover His will for them.” She further realizes that the spirituality they share is really very similar even if they have different terms for it. The experience has made her see that when you build good relationships with each other and promote an atmosphere of respect, you no longer see what is different as a point of difficulty but as a point of possible convergence instead.

Indeed, being a work of peace, interreligious dialogue needs to be nourished by friendship and even playful activity without any hidden agenda. Interreligious dialogue is an adventure of ideas without winners and losers. In fact, real dialogue does not result in conversion in the traditional understanding, but respect.

This echoes what Peter Faber once said (talking about Protestants and people of other faiths): “It is necessary to win them over so that they will love and esteem us in their hearts. This can be done by speaking familiarly with them on subjects we have in common and by avoiding debates in which one side wins out over the other; for we should talk about things which unite us before taking up things which give rise to differences of opinion.”

The ADZU Campus Ministry is living that out today. ❧

---

**Eric S. Santillan, SJ** entered the Society of Jesus on May 1999. He has a degree in AB Political Science from the Ateneo de Manila University.

---

# A Third Look at Jesus

and the Backpack of a Jesus-Seeker Series

**A** *Third Look at Jesus* and the *Backpack of a Jesus-Seeker* series authored by Carlos H. Abesamis, SJ, are simple, easy-to-understand and lay-friendly expressions of the original or Biblical Jesus’ life and mission. Since they convey a life-story—with flesh and blood realities pulsating in every scribbled insight—the books go beyond theological, philosophical and any other form of abstract, speculative or technical language and system. Hence, they are not meant as treatises which only experts can feast upon. They are rather signposts that inspire and guide Jesus-seekers who are committed to follow in the footsteps of the original Jesus.

The title of the main book, *A Third Look at Jesus*, at first glance may create an impression that it is about a sort of perspective or viewpoint on Jesus and his mission. This is true, but again the *Third Look* goes beyond mere perspectives or viewpoints because it is a way of life or spirituality which is patterned after that of the original Jesus.

*Third Look* spirituality necessitates a perspective, shaped and sharpened by a significant contact or immersion with the poor. Through immersion, the Jesus-Seeker can wear the “eyeglasses” of the awakened poor who struggle to work for the transformation of humanity and the rest of creation in the course of history. These “eyeglasses” moreover are the *Third Look*’s main tool for biblical interpretation. One reason for this is the fact that the perspective of the awakened and struggling poor is none other than Jesus’ perspective of himself and his mission. Of course, other scholarly instruments such as the historical, linguistic, literary, structural and sociological tools are also used, when called for. This means that anybody, say, even the poor and uneducated, may significantly understand Jesus and his mission for total salvation by simply looking through the eyes of the awakened poor.

Total salvation in *Third Look* spirituality is the synonym of the Kingdom of God which constitutes the core of Jesus’ mission. Also, Jesus is not the Kingdom of God. The proclaimer is not the proclaimed, so to speak. Neither is the Kingdom of God equated with heaven, just as heaven is not humanity’s final destiny. It is rather The Kingdom of God which is about a new world and a new history of life and life-blessings such as health for the sick, good news of liberation to the poor, release to captives, liberty to the oppressed, jubilee year, justice to the nations (Lk 4:16-21, 6:20-21, 7:18-23; Mk 1:14-15; Mt.11:2-6, 12:18-25), divine filiation (Mt. 5:9), vision of God (Mt. 5:8), compassion (Mt.5:7), inheriting the earth (Mt. 5:5), laughter and joy for the sorrowing poor (Lk 6:27b), food for the hungry poor (Lk 6:21a), destruction of satanic powers (Mt.

12:28), resurrection from death (Lk 20:34-36) and unity of all things in Christ (Eph.1:9-10) where "God is all in all" (1Cor 15:28). Accordingly, *Third Look* spirituality considers the ministry/practice of Jesus, on the one hand, and the "second coming" at the end of time, on the other, as important Christ-events in addition to Jesus' death and resurrection. In the ministry of Jesus, the Kingdom of God was first proclaimed and inaugurated Mk 1:14-15), and the "second coming" is the time when the Kingdom of God will have come to its fullness (Lk21:25-28).

It must be noted, however, that Third Look spirituality views Christ's death not only as the occasion when forgiveness of sin was poured on humanity; it was also a result of his provocative proclamation of the Kingdom of God. Jesus, therefore, did not just die. He was killed because of his Kingdom practice. Regarding Jesus' resurrection, one significant Third Look discovery is the fact that Jesus is the Cosmic Christ that binds all things together (Eph 1:9-10); and regarding the "second coming," what Third Look spirituality expects is not so much a fearsome scenario of judgment or doomsday but a much awaited moment of great rejoicing.

Noteworthy to emphasize, too, is that Jesus' ministry/practice has a life of its own and is not a mere prelude to his death. Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God during his ministry already belongs to the core of the Jesus-story.

The Kingdom of God, moreover, is not for souls but for flesh and blood persons, the natural world and the whole universe (Rom 8:19-23). It encompasses every boon or blessing that promotes life, including, but not limited to, divine life, sanctifying grace or beatific vision. Neither is it confined only to the individual's private sphere. It also involves the social, political, economic and other aspects of life. The Christ-events therefore are not limited to Jesus' paschal mystery (death and resurrection) but includes his whole life-story beginning with his ministry and climaxing in his coming again in glory. The infancy as well as the baptism and temptation narratives serve as introduction.

The *Backpack of a Jesus-Seeker* series—with some additions and elaborations on the topics of meditation and Mary as well as the author's and other Jesus-Seekers' stories—are actually more simplified versions and more appealing presentations (in dialogue form coupled with cute cartoons) of the themes expounded in *A Third look at Jesus*. Remarkable in the series are the two essentials of Jesus: (1) Jesus' connectivity to his "Abba" in prayer, most likely, through silent meditation and (2) Jesus' being poured out in mission for total salvation. Jesus did wonders not because of his divinity but due to his connectivity. In this context, Jesus is appropriately described as a Spirit-filled, Spirit-led contemplative-activist. This kind of spirituality, indeed, is what Mary lived, and what every Jesus-Seeker ought to live, too.

Like the Biblical Jesus, Third Look spirituality sees conversion as the most basic moral quality of a Jesus-follower. But in contrast to traditional morality, Third Look conversion does not delve much on a rubber-band spirituality of painstaking struggles wherein the believer's strong will is of utmost importance. Rather, conversion in Third Look spirituality smoothly and naturally happens when the Jesus-Seeker, who practices silent meditation, allows the Spirit to dissolve his/her ego or dark side which is manifested in hatred, jealousy, anger, greed, sexual sins, idolatry and the like (cf. Gal 5:19-21). Conversion then is a passage from darkness to light through silent meditation which is more profound though it is a kind of knowing beyond knowing, or knowing beyond the mind. Indeed, through silence or sighs too deep for words (cf. Rom.8:26), and in their core which is the natural habitat of the Spirit (cf. Gal.4:6), Jesus-Seekers can be directly in touch with the Source—the wellspring of fresh water and stupendous divine energy—who is no other else than God himself. In this sense, Third Look spirituality is not something that Jesus-Seekers cause to happen, but rather something which naturally, freely and spontaneously happens to them. When this takes place, Jesus-Seekers become suffused with the Spirit who drives them to continue Jesus' mission as they live a life of contemplation-activism until the full realization of the Kingdom of God. ☩

---

**Zacarias G. Damo, Jr.** collaborates with Fr. Carlos Abesamis, SJ in the retreats and seminars Fr. Abesamis gives on the *Third Look at Jesus*.

---

**A**fter my month-long exposure as a pastoral care volunteer in Philippine General Hospital (PGH), I understand now what we mean when we say that **life is sacred**.

In the pediatrics ward, there was a boy named Justin. He was already two months old, but his cries were barely audible and were more like little grunts and whimpers. Justin was born blind, deaf, with an enlarged head, deformed arms and legs and without an anus.

"What hope did this child have?" I often secretly asked myself, while cursing, in whispers, at what evil narcotic taken during pregnancy may have caused this abomination. But before I could keep from spiraling into the kind of questioning and blame that is sometimes called desolation, what struck me in my encounters with Justin was the care afforded this child, by the nurses and doctors of the ward. It was no less, if not more than the care given to less special babies. When his parents would have to leave him for hours unattended, relatives of other patients in the same ward would take turns to watch over Justin. Despite the uncertainty of what the future held for him, Justin was loved.

In the playroom of the same ward, I made friends with a *barkada* of five: Mark who had Down's Syndrome; Raymond with plastic anemia (giving him bloodshot eyes, scars, scabs and bruises all over his face and body); JR who had hemophilia (leaving him barely skin and bones); Jomark who had an enlarged cheek and lips; and John who could only speak in quack-like sounds while breathing through a hole in his throat.

It felt good to be with them, not because I was the most good looking person in the room (for once), but because never in my whole stay there did I see or hear any of them make fun or laugh at each others' defects. There was even care in the way they treated each other—Raymond humoring Mark on days when he seemed sad, Jomark carefully helping John remove teddy bear fibers that got caught in the hole in his throat through which he breathed. This kind of caring and gentleness was, for me, unusual for a group of boys aged 7-12. There was a palpable sense of respect for each other, despite how funny looking we all were.

On the other side of the PGH compound, some distance from the Pedia Ward, is the Cancer Institute. Patients free from infections are given their chemo or cobalt therapy at the institute, and on the second floor of that building is a special place called Hospice Care. In my first few days there, I met Julie, 28 years old, battling breast cancer that had spread to many parts of her body.



# LESSONS

from the Ministry  
of Accompaniment  
at the PGH



One day she asked me *"Brother, ano ba ang ibig sabihin ng 'hospice care'?"* (Brother, what does hospice care mean?) By God's grace I did not know what it meant then, and could only say *"Di ko rin alam, pero sige, itatanong ko."* (I don't know, but I will ask.) When I returned the following day, Julie had passed away. And it was then that the nurse explained to me that hospice care was for those whom all curative medical treatment had been given, but to no avail. The concern in that area was therefore to make their final moments as comfortable and peaceful as possible.

Julie asked me some other questions I could not answer for her, in the few days that were allowed to me to sit beside her and pray with her. *"Kaya ko pa ba ito, Brother? Parang hindi na"* (I doubt if I can still do this, brother) she kept saying when the water in her lungs started to drown her, keeping her from being able to lie down and rest. For days she went on like this, with great difficulty breathing, restless because she had to sit up, awake through the days and nights. Once, she said *"Bakit kaya ito nangyayari sa akin, brother? Bakit kaya ito pinapayagan ng Diyos?"* (Why is this happening to me, brother? Why is God letting this happen?) At that moment, to have spiritualized and spoken of a God who allows us to be tested, felt too much like a lie. So I could only say, in all honesty tempered with compassion, *"Hindi ko rin alam, Julie. Hindi ko rin alam."* (I don't know, Julie. I don't know.) And then I just took her hand and held it.

Looking back, I understand now that my desire not to patronize or preach to a dying person, was born out of that same respect and reverence for life which I now write about. It was a sanctity that called for empathy, not false consolation.

After a month in PGH, I understand now that it is the sanctity of life that calls us to care for the least among us, to hold on and fight for life as much as we can. It is why babies who seem not to have any hope, must be cared for; why we accompany and give the best to the dying until their very last breath, and honor them long after. The value of each human being—no matter how deformed, "abnormal," exhausted or disabled—is never diminished. This sacredness is more easily felt than understood. But it is nonetheless something we can protect, honor and reverence, despite the difficulty and mystery in its naming.

I end simply by asking the reader to say a prayer for all those I have here written about. Julie, Justin, Mark, John, Jomark, JR, and Raymond, and the hundreds like them in PGH and in hospitals across the country. For even when we pray for people, what we affirm is that they are sacred – that they are gifts. They are blessings we must cherish, whose intentions are holy and worth asking and offering to God. ☩



# Ministry of Confession

I developed a personal attraction to the ministry of hearing confessions during my fourth year of theology while preparing for my confession examinations. During my review classes, I learned that the sacrament was not a revolving-door ministry where penitents are absolved and dismissed as fast as possible. Neither was it a washing machine ministry where people simply go to be cleansed of sins without any consideration about how the sins got there in the first place. I learned that it was properly a ministry of healing, reconciliation, and formation of conscience.

When I was ordained I was more apprehensive about my first confession than my first mass. With my first mass, I knew somebody would help me if I made a mistake. With my first confession, and every confession thereafter, I knew I had no one to help me. If I failed to properly advise the penitent or if I failed to address a serious sin or a pattern of sinfulness, I would not be able to correct my mistake. I would not be able to meet that penitent again or if we should meet again, the seal of confession would prevent me from bringing up matter from a previous confession. I had to be careful to get every confession right each time.

Hearing confessions is a ministry that teaches me to practice indifference in my ministry. After confession I do not expect to be remembered or even thanked. I don't even expect a stipend. I cannot boast about who have come to me for confession in the same way one can boast about having married or baptized some famous person. The simplicity of the rite of confession allows it to be freed from the materialistic trappings that sometimes creep into the celebration of other sacraments. The sacrament of reconciliation fosters a certain purity of intention in ministry that influences the way I celebrate the other sacraments.



Inspired by the example of the late Fr. Gerry Healy, who spent hours in the confessional at Sta. Cruz Church, I volunteered to hear confessions weekly at an urban parish. It is an apostolate I looked forward to every week. There have been moments when I have been stunned to silence by some of the sins confessed. There have also been moments of unexpected humor when a penitent realizes how silly his rationalizations have become. I had initially preferred a confessional where I can be face-to-face with the penitent until I realized that more penitents preferred the anonymity of the old confessional booth. Some penitents can try your patience with their scrupulosity but there are also penitents who can break your heart with the woundedness of their lives. There are some who are profusely thankful after being absolved and there are some who leave even before you finish speaking. I have learned to wait for a major sin to drop in somewhere between the second and third minor sins. I have learned to gently interrupt penitents who start by confessing other people's sins. And I have learned to wait up to the last minute of my shift for that last anguished penitent who waits for the other penitents to leave.

After nine years of priesthood, the sacrament of reconciliation continues to humble and amaze me. I am humbled when persons older and holier than I come to me for confession. I am humbled when penitents talk about their deep pains and sorrows, reminding me about how sheltered I am from many of the tragedies of life. I am humbled when penitents confess sins that I never even bothered to confess. I am humbled by the unconditional trust that penitents have for the office of confessor that they would tell me things that they have not even told their loved ones. At times I am humbled to the point of tears.

But I am also amazed. I am amazed that people who have been so angry and disappointed with God for their broken lives would suddenly come to confess and be reconciled. I am amazed at people who have been hurt by the Church and yet found the grace to forgive and return to the sacraments. I am amazed at the simple, hopeful, and resilient faith of ordinary men and women who keep returning to the sacrament, trusting that God will help them to overcome their stubborn patterns of sinfulness. I am amazed at the transformation that happens in every penitent as they receive God's forgiveness – you can almost feel it, like a change in the air of the confessional, when their sorrow is replaced by a deep sense of relief, joy, and gratitude for God's mercy. No other sacrament can make you experience in a very real way how God's grace can transform a person in an instant. My amazement is also a cause for tears, sometimes.

I am truly thankful for this ministry where I have found so much consolation. Though I could not remember a single whole confession (there seems to be a special kind of divine amnesia granted to confessors) I am sure that, through God's grace, I have made a difference in the lives of some penitents for at least a moment in their journey of faith. And that makes my priesthood all worthwhile. ☪

**Fr. Eric Marcelo O. Genilo, SJ** teaches at the Loyola School of Theology. He is also the Vice-Superior of the Juniors Philosophers Sub-community at the Loyola House of Studies.

## The Prayer of the Prodigal Son

they all thought you were at home  
just waiting.  
but i got your message the other day—  
the one that says you will be here for me—  
and realized you knew where i was  
and what i was doing.

you watched from a distance  
as i wasted my life.  
you gave me time  
and space  
knowing perhaps that i had to be far from you  
to know how precious you really are to me.

(if you had watched more closely  
you would have seen our picture  
at my bedside table.  
i look at it every night...  
and remember.)

please  
wait  
for me.  
and this may take a long time  
but i am here too  
still  
on life's byways and highways  
looking for home  
looking for you  
looking for me.

- eric santillan



# Remembering D

On 20 December 2005, the “community of the U.P. chapel” celebrated the golden anniversary of its blessing in solemn liturgical rites. This chapel of the Holy Sacrifice was the realization of the dream of the Jesuit Fr. John Patrick Delaney and the original Catholic community of the University of the Philippines (UP) after UP moved to its Diliman site in January 1949.

On 20 December 1955 the very first Mass was also offered in the chapel, with Archbishop Rufino Santos as celebrant.

The story of how the chapel was conceived; how four young men who were to become National Artists took part in its design and construction; the really moving and memorable history of the Delaney dream and its step by step fulfillment, of his death less than a month after the chapel's blessing, – all this deserves a book that has not yet been written, but we cannot even touch upon it here.

In an article written by Mrs. Narita M. Gonzalez on this “flying saucer of a church” in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* (11 December 1995), she wrote: ... “... from the high dome ceiling hangs the crucifix of Christ Crucified and Christ Resurrected. ... The placement of the crucifix, up above the plain marble altar standing on the sourcebed of the river of life, is to Father Delaney, the Eucharistic scene in its entirety.”

The UP Chapel was given the name “Chapel of the Holy Sacrifice” of the Mass. For Father Delaney in a true sense “the Mass is, in our lives as Christians, *everything*”. Those of us who heard him speak of the Mass, in almost everything he taught, began to understand that the Mass and what it means is the point of focus for all our Christian living. (Did not Vatican II call the Mass “the source and summit” of our Christian worship and life? The present Holy Father, Pope Benedict XV, teaches pretty much the same thing. Read, for instance, his valuable little book, published not long before his election as Pope, *God is Near*.)

*The two-sided Crucifix at U. P.* Napoleon “Billy” Abueva, now the renowned National Artist (for sculpture) carved the two-sided crucifix “in his Area 17 studio” in 1955. Mr Abueva told me himself that he just followed faithfully Fr Delaney’s instructions. It was the closest he could come to representing the mystery of the Eucharist and sacrifice – the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus “renewed on the altar in the heart of the community.” In one of his *Chapel Chisms* notes Fr Delaney wrote:

*Cross and glory are one only mystery.  
This is what Fr. Delaney taught and tried to  
portray. In and through Christ, dying for us  
has been changed into our own entering  
into the life and glory of the Father.*

The Vision of  
Fr. John Patrick Delaney, SJ:  
The UP Chapel of the Holy Sacrifice



# Delaney

The Mass is predominantly THE ACTION, the renewal of the greatest events of all history, the renewal of the whole life of Christ, especially the Last Supper, Calvary, Resurrection and Ascension. Our ACTION in the Mass – the triple gift: we to God, Christ to God, Christ to us.” (17 July, 1955).

Or, in a variant way: “We to Christ, Christ to God, Christ to us.” We bring all of our lives to Christ. Christ takes up all that we bring to him into his own gift, *especially the Last Supper, his passion, Calvary, his death, his resurrection and ascension.* This his gift is given to his Father, and in turn Christ gives all of himself to us and sends his Spirit into our lives.

Cross and glory are *one only mystery*. This is what Fr Delaney taught and tried to portray with the Abueva crucifix. We would later begin to call these great events, the ‘Christ hour’ – the Paschal Mystery. In the Second Vatican Council and the years following it, we would re-discover the understanding and the language of the Paschal Mystery. Cross and Resurrection inseparably belong together: it is the Resurrection which completes the reality and meaning of the Cross; in Christ’s dying on the Cross which itself is the way to the Resurrection. The Cross “flows into” the glory of the Resurrection; the Resurrection in its turn fills up the innermost reality of the Cross. Jesus’ death was his “total opening of his own human self to the life and oneness with the Father.” The glory given him by the Father in turn fills out the reality of Jesus’ dying with the power of that Resurrection-to-come. In and through Christ, dying for us has been changed into our own entering into the life and glory of the Father. And not just the final “dying” which is the end of our physical life, but all the various ways of “dying” which we encounter throughout our lives. All of them can be filled with “the power of the Resurrection”, if we live them out “in Christ, with Christ, through Christ”.

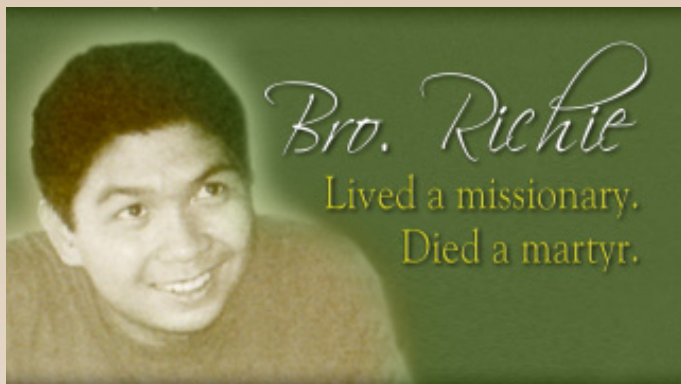
*continued on page 30*

*“I am not in a hurry (for priesthood);  
I think the Lord is in a hurry with me.”*

Ten years ago, a young Jesuit was convinced of his mission of walking the path of Jesus Christ; his wish was for people to remember how he loved and followed Christ. Ten years ago, this Jesuit died in saving lives in Cambodia. Ten years ago, he became a hero, an inspiration to those who know his story, and his wish came true.

Richard Michael Fernando was born on February 27, 1970. He attended elementary school in Dominican School, and he finished his secondary education in Claret School. He graduated with a degree in Developmental Studies from Ateneo de Manila University; then entered the Society of Jesus right after college and took up Philosophical Studies.

In May 1995, he went to Phnom Penh, Cambodia for his Regency. It took him three months to learn and master the Khmer language. He served in the Technical School for the Handicapped run by Jesuits. Here at *Bantay Prieb* or “Center of the Dove” he catered to the material and pastoral needs of his students—mostly, landmine victims. Soon he found himself affected by the lives of the people. He had great love for them and he wanted to help all of them as God would, and offer his life to them to the fullest.



Thus came the day when he was to fulfill his mission. On October 17, 1996, around half-past nine in the morning, Sarom rushed in with a grenade in his hand in the middle of Bro. Richie’s class. Known to the facilitators of the center, Sarom was a troubled student who was habitually involved in a lot of gambling. While everyone else was in panic, trying to get out of the room, Bro. Richie was determined to calm Sarom down. He made his move to embrace the student, and after moments of struggle, the grenade dropped and bounced back at Bro. Richie: he was injured in the head, his upper and lower back, and legs.

His remains were brought back to the Philippines and he was laid to rest at the Sacred Heart Novitiate in Novaliches, Quezon City. The blood from the grenade blast was enshrined on the top of a small mound in a tomb in Cambodia to give him honor.

On the tenth anniversary of his death, the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus honors the memory of Richie by offering him to the Filipino youth as a model of selfless service. ❧

*-Bianca Orenciana*

# IS SPIRITUAL DIRECTION REALLY NECESSARY?

**NOTE:** Our readers have many questions about Ignatian spirituality. In this regular column, Father Thomas H. Green, SJ, gives his answer to the question(s) posed by a friend of Ignatius, whom he has named “Ignacia.” Send questions for future columns to Fr. Tom at **Windhover**.

*Ignacia's question:* This month's questions concern the value and necessity of spiritual direction for growth in the interior life. Ignacia asks: “Do I really need to have a spiritual director? Can I not do it ‘on my own’?”

## Fr. Tom's Reply

Dear Ignacia,

Peace! It is a joy to hear from you again, after many months of silence! Perhaps your question explains why Maybe you felt you should try to do it on your own? If so, I presume your writing to me now suggests that you are not sure it is working!

The good Jesuit answer to any question is to make a distinction. So let me be a good Jesuit! St. Thomas Aquinas tells us, very wisely, that God normally works through natural causes (in this case, a human agent). God, of course, can direct you personally, but the whole principle of sacramentality indicates that he usually chooses to work through weak human instruments like myself. If no human instrument is available, he will, of course, work directly to guide you himself. But if he provides the human instrument, then you have to respect his choice to work in this incarnational way.

Granted this good Jesuit distinction, and assuming it is possible for you to find a director, then the answer to your question is “Yes”. As one of my favorite hymns expresses it, he is the Lord of the dance – not you or I. And he chooses to work through weak human beings (as he told Moses and Jeremiah and Isaiah and Peter, when they protested their unworthiness). We have to respect his choice, if he really is the Lord of the dance.





**Jesus says, “I call you no longer servants but friends.” And he explains, “A servant does not know what his master is thinking, but I have shared with you all that the Father has revealed to me.”**

Why, though, did he choose to work in us in this way? After 50 years in the Philippines and 43 years as a priest, I think I know the answer: The greatest dignity he could bestow on men and women is to ask us to be partners in our own redemption. Like the mother who asks her 5-year old daughter to help her in baking a cake (even though the job will then be much slower and much messier), he knows there is no way he could ennoble us human beings more than by making us his collaborators.

This, I believe, is the real meaning of perhaps my favorite verse in the Last Supper Discourse: John 15.15. Jesus says there, “I call you no longer servants but friends.” And he explains, “A servant does not know what his master is thinking, but I have shared with you all that the Father has revealed to me.” I believe this verse is really contrasting the Old Testament (a covenant with servants) and the New (a partnership of friends).

Granted the above explanation, it might be helpful to note briefly what the role of the spiritual director is. As I said in **The Friend of the Bridegroom** (Chapter 2), the director is not really a director (in the sense of telling me what to do) but a co-discerner, an interpreter of the directee's own experience.

As such, the director has two basic functions: to clarify the directee's own experience by helping her to look at it more objectively, and secondly to be a co-discerner. I say “co” because the primary discerner is the directee herself. A good director, hopefully with more experience in the ways of God, the devil and human nature, can help the directee to interpret the source of the inspirations and feelings in her life of prayer.

If you wish to explore this further, you can read Chapters 1 to 3 of **The Friend of the Bridegroom**, and then you can send your questions to me for future discussion here. Meanwhile, I promise you my prayers, that you can find a good director. And please return the favor by praying for the old man! ☺

- Father Tom

**Fr. Thomas H. Green, SJ** teaches Philosophy at the Ateneo de Manila University and spirituality in the Loyola School of Theology. He is a well-known writer of books on Prayer and Spirituality.

## *In Memoriam*

### **Jose Blanco, SJ**

**Jose Blanco, SJ** was born on January 27, 1924 in Kalinga, Mt. Province. He graduated valedictorian of his high school class at St. Louis School, Baguio City. On May 30, 1942, he entered the Society of Jesus at La Ignaciana, Sta. Ana, Manila where he also had his first vows the following year.

At the Sacred Heart Novitiate, Novaliches, he pursued a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy, and later on, his Masters' Degree. He taught Latin and English for his regency at the San Jose Seminary, Manila, before he went to New York, USA to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Sacred Theology.

He was ordained at Fordham University, Bronx, New York USA on June 18, 1955, and then had special studies in Sociology in the summer of 1956. He had his tertiary at Our Lady of Martyrs in Auriesville, New York, USA and had his final vows at La Ignaciana Apostolic Center, Manila on February 2, 1978.

Except for a brief stint in Indonesia in the late 1970's, he served mostly at the La Ignaciana Apostolic Center, where he became Superior in 1987. In 1989, he moved to Sacred Heart Novitiate in Novaliches as its Novice Master, and Superior. He then went back to La Ignaciana Apostolic Center to spearhead the Social and Pastoral Ministry, including the Active-NonViolence Movement.

Fr. Jose Blanco, SJ spent the last years of his life at the Xavier House praying for the Church and Society. At the age of 82, he suffered cardio/respiratory failure and was brought to Lourdes Hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival on August 29, 2006.

-Bianca Orenciana

This is the same teaching we find in the biblical redemption teaching of John and Paul. In our lifetime it was the masterwork of the Scriptural theologian, Francis Xavier Durrwell, CSSR, who brought this understanding back into Catholic theology. (We in the Philippines have not quite truly assimilated the theology of the paschal mystery into our spirituality, into our deeper understanding of Holy Week and Easter.)

Father Delaney did not have – much of the theology of his time did not have also – what Vatican II and post-Vatican II theology would articulate. But he had its basic vision implicit already in his teaching on the Mass. In this way too he was ahead of his time.

**The River of Life.** At least once I heard Fr Delaney touch on the theme of the waters of life. In the year of his death (1956), Pope Pius XII would issue his “renewed theology of the Heart of Jesus” in the encyclical *Haurietis Aquas*. “You will draw waters from the founts of salvation”, from the pierced side of Christ. The great biblical image of the Heart of Jesus would be the pierced side on the Cross (John 19, 37). From that broken side would flow blood and water. Blood, symbol of his human life given for us. Water, symbol of the Spirit poured out upon us from Christ crucified – and risen. Water, symbol of life given us by baptism; blood, symbol of human lifeblood – in the life of the Spirit – which Christ shares with us in the Eucharist, to make of us “blood brothers” in his Body, in the Church’s life.

So Father Delaney asked future National Artist Arturo Luz to design the “floor mural” on the marble floor of the sanctuary and the entire chapel surrounding it. The waters of life, in the river of life flowing from the altar. The waters of life bursting forth from the pieced side of Jesus on the Cross, water filled with the life of the Spirit given us by the Risen Lord. From the two-sided crucifix, from the altar, from the sanctuary, – principally through Word and Eucharist – the waters of Christ Jesus’ own life would flow into our lives. Fr Delaney was so insistent, in his teaching on the Mass, that the Mass comes to its fullness in *communion* for us. “The complete Mass should really include communion, where we are fully made one with Christ, where we take the gift of Jesus fully into our hearts and lives.”

We have tried to spell out what Mrs. Narita Gonzalez, who herself heard these things from Fr. Delaney’s unforgettable lectures and sermons on the Mass, wrote, many years later, on the Delaney vision behind the artwork in chapel. “The two-sided crucifix and the marble floor with the river of life design: in these for Fr John Delaney the meaning of the Eucharist was quite complete.” In a way it would take us many years to grasp better what Fr Delaney was himself struggling to understand and express with the concepts and words of his time.

**The Stations of the Cross.** The painter Vicente Manansala, who would later be named National Artist also, executed the priceless murals of the Stations of the Cross which grace the panels (the “walls”) around the circular chapel. They are, as Mrs. Gonzalez says surely, “a national treasure.” They are the 14 traditional stations. The Pope John Paul II scriptural stations were not yet then in use. But the UP set ends nonetheless with the fifteenth station, the Resurrection of Jesus.

Again, the deep understanding that passion and death and the resurrection are theologically wholly inextricably bound together “as one and only mystery – the Paschal Mystery”.

In 1955 many did not understand or appreciate what Fr Delaney was telling us by asking Manansala to add that “final station” – Christ in Easter glory, Christ going to his Father, so that he might pour out his crucified-and-risen life, his paschal glory, into our world and its history, into our lives.

**The new Abueva Crucifix.** Fifty years after he carved the two-sided crucifix in the chapel of the Holy Sacrifice, Mr Abueva completed a new and striking one now on the wall of Our Lady of Pentecost church at Loyola Heights, near the Ateneo University. In this new image, he tries to join the two sides of his earlier crucifix into one. It is the crucified Jesus, with pierced hands, feet and side.

But this crucified Christ is breaking out of the linen bands that wrap him up for his burial. A striking note: the nails are seen as “being lifted”, half pulled out from the wood, as Jesus rises. Perhaps some will be reminded of the briefest possible resurrection scene in Mel Gibson’s movie on *The Passion of the Christ*. Jesus who has died is now breaking forth from death to the new existence and life – the life of the Father, the life of glory which he himself now shares with us in the Spirit.

In a way, this is Mr Abueva’s new rendering of his earlier Delaney UP crucifix, carved fifty years ago. That was a first attempt to tell us of the Paschal Mystery, of the one single and invisible mystery which is the Cross-and-Easter. Now a second version tries again to present us the Paschal Mystery, not by giving us its two sides as two, but trying to reveal to us its integral inner unity.

You who read this are urged to contemplate both Abueva crucifixes, reflect and pray in their presence. Maybe your prayer, with the Holy Spirit teaching you, will bring you to a truer and deeper understanding of the mystery at the center of Christian faith and life – the Paschal Mystery. And then maybe you can bring that understanding more authentically into your life as a Christian in our time. ☩



**Footnote:** The four National Artists (NA) who took part in the design and outfitting of the U. P. Chapel of the Holy Sacrifice were:

1. Architect Leandro "Lindy" Locsin, later NA for architecture, who was the architect for the entire chapel, the first circular church for Christian worship ever built in the Philippines.
2. Visual artist Arturo Luz who designed the "floor mural" for the entire chapel marble floor sacristy and main body of the church.
3. Sculptor Napoleon "Billy" Abueva, who made the crucifix with its two sides, carved in wood, and more recently the design on the marble altar in the sanctuary.
4. Painter and NA Vicente Manansala, who painted the Via Crucis which surrounds the chapel from inside. Some UP community members believe Mr. Ang Kiukok, also later to be named NA, worked with Manansala on the Stations. If this is true, then the work of five future National Artists is enshrined in the Chapel of the Holy Sacrifice.



**Outland**  
COMFORT FOOTWEAR

*Be comfortable with yourself.*

*Precious Lara*  
Precious Lara Quigaman  
Miss International 2005

## The WINDHOVER

The Philippine Jesuit Magazine

Provincial: **Fr. Daniel Patrick L. Huang, SJ**  
Socius & Consultant: **Fr. William M. Abbott, SJ**  
Treasurer: **Fr. Noel D. Vasquez, SJ**  
Consultors: **Fr. Antonio E. Moreno, SJ**  
**Fr. William H. Kreutz, SJ**  
**Fr. Jose Cecilio J. Magadia, SJ**

Editor-in-Chief: **Nono Alfonso, SJ**  
Associate Editor: **Rica Bolipata-Santos**  
Business Manager: **Fr. Aristotle Dy, SJ**  
Circulations Assistant: **Bianca Orenciana**  
Layout Editor: **Lambert Alfonso**  
Acknowledgement: **Susan Canlas**  
**Karel San Juan, SJ**  
**James Kroeger, MM**

"The WINDHOVER" is taken from a poem by the 19th century English poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, SJ. Views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the editors or official Province policies. Requests to reprint articles found in this magazine may be addressed to:

The Editor,  
**THE WINDHOVER**  
Jesuit Communications Foundation  
UP P.O. Box 245, Diliman,  
1144 Quezon City, Philippines



## Help The Windhover

Subscriptions to *The Windhover* account for only one-fourth of the magazine's total annual cost. The balance is shouldered by the Provincial's Office, which also has to provide funds for the formation of young Jesuits and the care of aging Jesuits.

Please help *The Windhover* by subscribing, inviting friends to subscribe, advertising, or making a donation.

Checks can be made out to Jesuit Communications Foundation, Inc. Donations may also be deposited directly to the account of Jesuit Communications, BPI-Katipunan branch, account number 3081-1741-47. The deposit slip should be faxed to (02) 426-5970 for documentation purposes.

For inquiries, please email [jcf@admu.edu.ph](mailto:jcf@admu.edu.ph) or call (02)426-5971.

# FIRST CONFESSION: A STUDY

One of the most fascinating pleasures, most titillating delights, of a priest is to hear the confessions of kids preparing for their First Communion.

I was convalescing in the Jesuit Residence Infirmary of the Ateneo de Manila after my brain clot surgery. Having nothing else to do, and enjoying the sybaritic life of the rich and famous, besides being already hale and hearty, and adequately ambulatory to boot, I volunteered to hear the first confession of the Grade Two boys, together with Fr. Chito Unson, the Chaplain, and Fr. Rudy Fernandez, a Filipino Jesuit who had been working in Japan for a number of years but who is now back with us in the Philippine Province.

We heard the boys' confessions for 3 days, enough time for me to notice the similarities and differences in the confessions of the promdi tots in Davao and those of Manila.

In both cities violence, mayhem, attempted murder are reported.: "I kicked, pushed, hit, struck, boxed, punched my brother and/or sister, classmate, *yaya*." Theft, robbery, plain plunder are disclosed: "I stole from my mother's purse. I took my classmate's pen." Lies, untruth, deception! "I told a lie to my father/mother, aunt, grandma, classmate." Oh! (gasp!) My aching heart! The enormity of these sins bowed me down to the floor, tore at my very vitals, made me sweat and squirm and groan. "Heavens!" I exclaimed, "What fools these mortals be!" No, that's not it. That's Puck in "Midsummer Night's Dream." Well, whatever.

There are some differences in the way the two schools conduct their first confession. For one thing, the second graders in Davao are coed, but Manila's are all boys. Another difference: the Davao boys wear short pants; they don't graduate to trousers until the fourth grade. The Manilans, however, because they are more sophisticated and get exposed to the ways of the world earlier, sport trousers—long, brown, macho trousers!

The confessions of the little ones—some may not be so little—reflect not only their school but also their home background. Three or four times I heard the word "sibling/s" used by the city boys. In my four years in Davao I have not heard that word used in the kids' confessions. I myself first heard it in my mid-twenties when I was already a Jesuit. "I braggad!" a Manila child confessed. Again, in my 46 years as a priest I have never heard that word in confession, not even in Negros where the men are notorious braggers, shameless boasters. (*Sa amon provincia ang cuarta guina pipo, guina pala!*) (In our province money is picked and shoveled.)

In Manila, after the boy has told his sins, the priest tells him, "The Lord loves you and wants to make you free, feel free to add some more sins you can remember...." Well, this is all very well and good, nice and sweet and soothing to the soul. But one time I hit a real bomb-site, a veritable landmine.

Let me explain. Usually, most of the evil-doers in both metropolises come to the tribunal equipped with condemnatory documents—many-folded pieces of paper with their transgressions printed on them. Some of the parchments in both places were crumpled and looked like toilet paper with script so faint only the eyes of the child himself could decipher. A few, I must admit, were so well printed I could hardly believe they were done by an eight-year old.

Five to ten sins are usually listed down. The list of one from the Big City almost floored me. There were 20 sins listed back to back, all numbered—clearly marked, crisply phrased, with no room for doubt as to what they meant. I almost forgot myself in admiration. I congratulated the freshie sinner. "Well done, good and faithful servant...." I was about to say.

I caught hold of myself in time, remembered that I was sitting there in the place of Christ the King, judging the sheep and the goats, and, like it or not, I must pass judgment on the criminal on the dock. "For your penance," I intoned, "say

one Hail Mary."

After the priest has given the penance and the boy has recited the Act of Contrition, the priest places his hand on the boy's head as he gives the shortened absolution, "Because you are sorry for your sins and God loves you very much, and I as a priest take the place of God, I also absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

This makes more sense than our own practice in Davao. The placing of the priest's hand on the boy's head is a natural gesture the boy understands and the priest's parting words of absolution will ease his fears, giving him comfort as he leaves the confessional.

In Manila I almost said to the departing penitent, "See you later, alligator," words of farewell which the children in Davao would have answered with, "In a while, crocodile!"

**Fr. Renato L. Puentevela, SJ** is Chaplain at the Ateneo de Davao Grade School.

