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## Word, Memory, Witness

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hardware while the poor get poorer — these and many other of the moral concerns of the contemporary citizen would seem to deserve more emphasis.

The reader has to search carefully to find evidence that the author has been living and teaching in the Third World for many years. In fairness to the author he may have felt that his manual provides the basics, the skeleton to be fleshed out by the professor. Fair enough. But by itself the text seems to stand aloof from the fray. The modern student, obsessed with instant relevance, may not appreciate the wealth of knowledge the author has placed at his disposal.

For example, the pages which the author devoted to usury give no clue to the magnitude of the problem locally. The few words on faith healers do not even hint that the author is teaching in a country which draws the sick and afflicted from all over the world to its faith healers. The element of coercion in a government family planning program is not mentioned even though it played no small part in the rejection of the government in India and is latent in the local practice of assigning quotas to government doctors in the program.

The pages spent on the problem of lying with explanations of the subtleties of false speech and mental reservation seem, today, a luxury the modern manual cannot afford. A few sentences with reference to traditional sources would seem to suffice. The same could be said for the treatment of Sunday rest and prohibited works which might appear meaningless to the vast majority of the poor of the Third World.

But the author has provided the readable two-volume modern manual that he ambitioned as “a book of reference . . . a textbook to which the student can be referred . . . in addition to their (professors’) own notes and outlines of moral theology.”

The many apt excerpts from the documents of Vatican II enrich the manual while its detailed index adds to its usefulness.

*G. W. Healy, S.J.*

**WORD, MEMORY, WITNESS: THE 1977 BISHOP'S SYNOD ON CATECHESIS.** Edited by Pedro S. de Achutegui and Joseph L. Roche. Loyola Papers 11. Manila: Loyola Papers Board of Editors, 1978. 177 pages.

More or less a year has passed since the Bishops' Synod on “Catechesis in Our Time” was held in Rome. Much has been written in appreciation and evaluation of the Synod, especially in periodicals. In the book to be reviewed here, valuable material on the Synod is made available. The volume can serve as a source book for the researcher, but above all as a practical guide for those responsible for catechesis.

The editors have grouped the contents of the volume in four parts: The Synod and its messages; addresses of Pope Paul VI; Philippine contributions; and supplementary texts. Three appendices conclude the book. Topically, the contents come under the following headings: The "Message to the People of God," published by the Synod itself; two major commentaries on the Synod and the "Message" by the editors; materials prepared prior to the Synod or presented during the Synod; finally some other items, among them a selected bibliography.

The "Message" is the major product of the Synod (The "34 Propositions" submitted to the Pope were not made public). The "Message" is given in an improved and smooth translation. For those not yet familiar with it the contents may be briefly indicated here. After the introduction, a first part gives a brief analysis of the contemporary situation focussed on the world, the young, and the state of catechesis. Part Two, the most important part, is entitled "Catechesis: Manifestation of Salvation in Christ". This part shows the nature and structure of catechesis; it distinguishes three aspects, namely word, memory, witness. These three terms are used as the title of the present book. The last and third part deals with the agents and the settings of catechesis. The "Message" ends with a pledge of the bishops to give catechesis first priority in pastoral work.

This is not the place to comment on the Synod itself but rather to inform the reader of the points highlighted by the two commentators. Father Achutegui begins with a description of the history and procedure of the Synod. He then deals with the "Theological Orientations" of the Synod, i.e., the theological principles that were prominent at the Synod. The more properly catechetical options approved by the Synod are discussed by Father Roche.

Father Achutegui considers the following as the major themes. The Synod strongly underlines the Christocentrism of catechesis. Achutegui feels that the local Church, understood as diocese, is given sufficient emphasis, but that the basic Christian community, though mentioned in no. 13 of the "Message," is not presented with the clarity desired. The idea of inculturation (the terms contextualization and incarnation are also used) was endorsed by the Synod. Achutegui feels that popular piety, one of its aspects, was not given due emphasis in the "Message." Spirituality is another major theme; it covers the emphasis on religious experience, prayer, liturgy. Under the heading of orthodoxy and orthopraxis Achutegui points to the strong emphasis on Christian moral life, including social morality. A last major point for Achutegui is the distinction between catechesis and theology.

Father Roche's commentary, entitled "What is Catechesis?" is a very clear and helpful piece. In a major section he clarifies the relation between catechesis on the one hand and evangelization, religious instruction, faith, theology on the other hand. He elaborates the structural description of

catechesis as word, memory and witness. In discussing catechesis as word, he has some very illuminating lines on catechesis in schools which ought to be read by all administrators of Catholic schools and religion coordinators. When dealing with catechesis as memory (which means that prayer and liturgy are parts of catechesis) he gives a balanced view of the catechetical potentiality of the liturgy. Catechesis as witness refers to the living of the faith, to a Christian style of life. Roche underlines the Synod's insistence on the need for moral norms and rules as the expression of the Christian commitment.

The book is valuable, first, because it makes available once more the text of the "Message". It is a sad fact that all too often important developments do not reach the grass roots level because the texts are not known. Secondly, the commentaries help to unlock the riches of the heavy and compact synodal text. The pre-Synod documents (Position Paper of the Philippine Hierarchy and Statement of the FABC East Asian Regional Meeting) and the interventions (three from Philippine bishops and two from Jesuit Superior General Father Arrupe) included in the volume give one some idea of how the final "Message" came about. The inclusion of Father Arrupe's intervention on "Catechesis and Marxism" is a very happy choice and very helpful in the Philippine context. Likewise, the annotated, selected bibliography by Father Roche, though short, should prove valuable to the practitioner.

Perhaps the "Motu proprio" of 1965, establishing the Synod of Bishops, could have been omitted. There are only few printing mistakes, the most striking on p. 70 where one should read John 17:3 instead of Jn. 7:3.

In his closing address to the Synod (included in the book, p. 97) Paul VI spoke of "successive concentric waves" by which the impulse of the Synod would be communicated to the whole Catholic world. This book is one of the means to pass on the impulse. May it make waves in the Philippine catechetical sea!

*Herbert Scholz, S.V.D.*

THE IGLESIA NI KRISTO: ITS CHRISTOLOGY AND ECCLESIOLOGY. By Fernando G. Elesterio. Cardinal Bea Studies V. Quezon City: Cardinal Bea Institute, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, 1977. ii, 217 pages.

*The Iglesia ni Kristo* is the first comprehensive doctrinal study of the christology and ecclesiology of this dynamic, disciplined, and fast-growing religious group. The book's intent is non-polemical. Written in the spirit of ecumenical theology, it seeks to promote a virtually non-existent dialogue with the *Iglesia*. The areas of christology and ecclesiology are chosen for two