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Christian Koinonia and Some Philippine Cultural Forces*

VITALIANO GOROSPE, S.J.

THE CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES

IN keeping with the theme chosen by the Philippine Theological Society for its 1969 Annual Meeting, namely, "Christian Theology and Philippine Culture," I take it that our main concern and joint responsibility today is to make Christian theology relevant to changing Philippine society, to make the Church incarnate "within" a developing Philippine culture. We are aware of the impact of modernization on traditional Filipino society and of secularization on the traditional structures of the Church. The task of the Church in the modern world has been outlined by the Second Vatican Council as that of justice and development. The task of the Church in the Philippines is to respond to the challenge of the process of "rationalization" which faces Philippine society as a whole; in short, the formation of the Philippine "community".¹

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¹ As a sociological term, "rationalization" means the transition from a society ruled by tradition to one ruled by experimental reason and consciously directed to goals chosen by man. Today the commonly accepted theological term for "rationalization" or "modernization" is "secularization", i.e. the historical process whereby man's

The purpose of this paper is to study some of the cultural forces which should be considered in the task of building up the Christian community in the Philippines. A study of the value-orientations and forces indigenous to the culture should help us discover the concrete, historical, and cultural expression of the Christian faith and capture the evolutionary manifestation of the Church in the Philippines. Thus we may revitalize and foster the growth of the Christian community of love in this part of Asia in accord with the spirit of *aggiornamento* initiated by Vatican II. The problem at hand can be put in the form of a question: What Filipino values and cultural forces can help or hinder the development of the Church in the Philippines? The religious meaning of the development of Christian *koinonia* is the task both of the theologian and the social scientist. Accordingly, the first part of this paper will consider the theological meaning of the New Testament ideal of the Christian "community" or "fellowship" in Christ. The second part of this paper will discuss some of the more salient Philippine cultural forces revealed in the studies of social scientists, and their significance for the Filipino ecclesial community.

CHRISTIAN KOINONIA

It is clear from the New Testament that there are three elements or functions in the Church. These are traditionally

thought and action are freed from primitive, blind, superstitious, or mythical control; it is the attempt to bring nature, the world, human society under man's rational control, to turn away from worlds beyond to concentrate on this world. Thomas B. Clarke, S.J., "Christian Secularity", *The Sacred and the Secular* ed. by Michael J. Taylor, S.J. (N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968), 6-13, points out that Christian secularity excludes the instrumentalization and sacralization of the world without denying God's transcendence and relevance to this secular world and secular life. Karl Rahner, S.J., "Theological Reflections on the Problem of Secularization," *Theology of Renewal*, Vol. I (N.Y.: Herder & Herder, 1968), 167-192, says that "the secular world is exactly the world which the Christian expects, makes, and suffers from in his properly Christian understanding, as a result of which he does not ideologically, as integrist, alienate his world, but sees it, as it is". (p.192).

known as *Kerygma* (preaching or proclamation), *Diakonia* (ministry or service), and *Koinonia* (community or fellowship).² In a fresh interpretation of the Church as God's avante-garde, Harvey Cox describes the Church's *kerygmatic* function as the broadcasting of the seizure of power, her *diaconic* function as the healing of urban fractures, and her *koinoniac* function as building the City of Man.³ Applied to the Philippines, I would venture to say that the Church's *kerygmatic* function will consist in a strong prophetic protest against injustice and in the reform of Philippine *institutions* so that they will serve the Filipino community; her *diaconic* function, in healing the splits of a fragmented Philippine society; and her *koinoniac* function, in building up the Philippine "community". Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church presents a new image of the Church which has the total task of *Martyrion* (witness), *Diakonia* (ministry), and *Koinonia* (fellowship).⁴

Hans Küng in his book on *The Church*, points out that one may know what the Church should be now and in the future, only if one knows what the Church was originally in the New Testament. This means knowing the Church in the light of the Gospel as well as, in terms of development, in the light of the modern world. We know that the Church is headed

² For New Testament texts, cf. Index of *The Jerusalem Bible* (N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966) under Preaching, Ministry, and Community. Gerhard Ebeling defines the true marks of the Church by suggesting that the "true Church" is present where the threefold function of *kerygma*, *diakonia*, and *koinonia* occurs. See Ebeling's *Nature of Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963) and his *Word and Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963).

³ Harvey Cox, *The Secular City*, rev. ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1966), Ch. VI, 108-129.

⁴ Cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, and Decree on Ecumenism in *The Documents of Vatican II*, ed. by W. M. Abbott, S.J. and Msgr. J. Gallagher (New York: America Press, 1966). From an ecumenical point of view, it is significant that the three biblical terms—*martyrion*, *diakonia*, *koinonia*—were the main focus of the discussions of the Third General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, meeting at New Delhi in 1961.

in the right direction when, whatever the age in which it lives, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the criterion. Hence, Vatican II in re-defining the Church as it is and in relation to the modern world and to other Christian Churches returned to the norm of the Gospel. In order to realize its original meaning, we must examine the historical concept of Christian *koinonia*.

ST. PAUL'S CONCEPT OF KOINONIA

St. Paul's concept of the early Church which functioned according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ is fundamentally that of a *koinonia* or community united in the fellowship of faith, baptism, and especially of the Lord's Supper.⁵ The Lord's Supper is essentially a fellowship, *koinonia*, *communio*, in a twofold sense. First and foremost, the Lord's Supper is *fellowship in Christ*: Christians are called to fellowship with the Son, the Lord (I Cor. 1:9). This fellowship founded in faith and baptism is realized in a new way as the "participation" in the "body and blood of Christ" (I Cor. 10:16). Those who share in the "table of the Lord" (10:21) become partners of Christ. Secondly, the Lord's Supper is *fellowship with other Christians*⁵; their common union with Christ naturally leads to a union with those who share the Lord's Supper, a *communio* of Christians among themselves because they all partake of the same bread, Christ (10:17). Essentially, therefore, the Church must be a meal-fellowship, a *koinonia* or *communio*, a fellowship with Christ and with other Christians, or else it is not the Church of Christ.

This Christian *koinonia* or meal-sharing is not a single event that takes place once and for all; the Lord's Supper, begun in the past, continues in the present, and endures for the future. Because this meal is a meal of recollection and thanksgiving, a meal of covenant and fellowship, an anticipation of the eschatological meal, the Church is essentially a community which remembers and thanks (past), a community

⁵ Hans Küng, *The Church* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1967), 211-224.

which loves without ceasing (present), and a community which looks with hope to the future.

Paul's understanding of the Eucharist has for its background his idea of community, of the Church as the Body of Christ. When Christians share in one and the same meal, they are made into one body. "Because there is *one* bread, we who are many are *one* body" (I Cor. 10:17). Not that the Church is only the body of Christ when it shares in the Lord's Supper, but the common meal gives concrete expression to the fact that the believers belong together, form a real fellowship and, in Paul's characteristic image, form one Body (Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 7). Both the local community and the whole Church are the Mystical Body of Christ.

In the Philippines it is customary on the occasion of a town fiesta to expect meal-sharing beyond the ordinary family circle to express oneness with the town or barrio community. Sharing meals with others is a common Filipino trait and could be a sign of fellowship. Feelings are easily hurt, if one forgets to invite a friend to a wedding reception, a baptism or birthday party, or if a visitor is made to wait while the family finishes its meal. If so much is made of meal-sharing in Filipino culture, then more emphasis should be placed on the meal-sharing aspect of the Eucharist especially in the liturgy. It is in Holy Communion that the Christian community celebrates in a most significant manner its oneness in Christ and its fellowship with other Christians. This oneness *sa hapag-kainan ng Panginoon* is the celebration of Christian koinonia.

If the Eucharist is the bond that unites all Christians, one might ask whether the eucharistic services of the Church should not be made available to everyone irrespective of religious faith? This is a theologically vexing question and presents a difficult problem of ecumenism. Suffice it to say that the reception of the Eucharist, since it is itself a sign of unity, should be the expression only of the unity of faith and baptism which already obtains, even if it be also the

cry for the ideal unity which both Christians and non-Christians seek.⁶ The Eucharist can be taken either as the actual or ideal bond of Christian unity and it is in the latter sense that the common reception of the Eucharist is said to be the goal of Christian *koinonia*. This is the reason why this article emphasizes the Eucharist as the ideal goal of Christian unity rather than a common faith and baptism in Christ which, from an ecumenical point of view, is the fundamental and indispensable basis of unity.⁷

KOINONIA IN THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH

In the mind of the early Church, *koinonia*, *communio* is the common union of the faithful, of the faithful with the Bishops, and of all with the Head, Christ.⁸ The visible sign and at the same time the cause by which this common unity is constantly renewed is the Eucharist, the Communion. One who is debarred from the Eucharist is debarred from the community of the Church. When a Christian set out on a journey, he obtained from his bishop a letter of recommendation, a sort of passport called "letter of communion" (referred to as a *tessera* or identification card), which not only testified that the traveler belonged to the communion and hence could receive the Eucharist but also that he was entitled to hospitality and lodging *gratis* wherever he came into a Christian community. This institution was a powerful instrument of ecclesial unity.

The so-called new "concelebrated masses" of today recall the original meaning of the early concelebrations which is the

⁶ Pedro S. de Achutegui, S.J., *24 Questions on Ecumenism* (Quezon City: East Asian Pastoral Institute, 1966), 53-54.

⁷ "All who have been justified by faith in baptism are incorporated into Christ; they, therefore, have a right to be called Christians, and with good reason are accepted as brothers by the children of the Catholic Church" (Vatican II's *Decree on Ecumenism*, 3).

⁸ The "peace and communion" form of address in every Papal Encyclical today is reminiscent of the unity of the Primitive Church. For a brief historical treatment of *koinonia* in the early Church, see Ludwig Hertling, *A History of the Catholic Church* (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1957), 35-43.

common union of Bishops and priests. In Rome at least on Sundays, where the individual priests did not celebrate together with the Bishop, it was customary for the Bishop who offered mass first to have acolytes carry to the titular churches consecrated particles which the priests then placed in their respective churches. This practice signified that the priests were not separated from communion with the Bishop. In order to prove membership in the Church, one usually argued that he belonged to the Church which was in communion with almost all Bishops or even with a single one who certainly possessed the communion with the rest. But a definitive criterion by which one could recognize membership in the true Church was communion with the Roman Church. It must be noted that this view is no longer held in Vatican II's *Decree on Ecumenism*.

The historical analysis of "peace and communion" shows clearly that from the beginning the Church was a *koinonia*, a community, not a mere spiritual content, not a crowd of likeminded persons, not a mere league of friendship and love. Among the faithful and the Bishops, who for the most part did not know one another personally and only too frequently were quarreling among themselves, consciousness of unity depended on the conviction of a real bond, which they did not themselves create, but which existed independently of them. The real bond, which they expressed by "peace and communion", included a social structure or institution as well as a sacramental element. The two were inseparable. The communion is a real society, but by virtue of the sacramental element it differs from every other society found among men. In antiquity, the early Christians were united into a community by the Eucharist; it was the bond of love which constituted the first Christian *koinonia*. We find this view of "peace and communion" or "fellowship" already present from the very beginning as when St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "Because God by calling you has joined you to his Son, Jesus Christ; and God is faithful" (I Cor. 1:9). The *Pax* which the first Christians carved on countless tombstones means "peace and communion", the communion of the saints, the

community of love which is the Church. "He died in peace" nowadays means: He died in the fellowship of Christ and of the Church and hence belongs now to the Church Triumphant.

PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF KOINONIA

A philosophical analysis of the human community will help us to understand the theological meaning and ideal of Christian *koinonia*. Human existence as a "co-existence", i.e. the openness of the human person towards another person and ultimately to a Personal Absolute, is the philosophical basis of the human community whose goal is universal interpersonal fellowship or "community". Modern man is still in search of a comprehensive human ideal which will enrich the quality of human life. This ideal is the communion of persons in knowledge and love, where everyone is related to the other not in terms of function but precisely in terms of his reality as a unique person. Now this ideal of universal fellowship may not be realized without God as the source and goal of unity. The growing unity of mankind is not an accomplished fact but a task to be achieved progressively on the part of all men.

Today the crisis between the person and the community makes us more conscious of the profound reality that "man is a community of persons in relation".⁹ Man cannot develop fully as a human person outside the context of personal communion. We need one another in order to become our real selves. "I" simply cannot be without the presence of "You", without the ideal "We" of the community. Community is a shared process of living, not a question of *having* more but *being* more; not a matter of personal affluence, but a matter of personal involvement with one another. The basic human vocation is to become fully human and to be fully human, whether one knows it or not, is to be a Christian. Hence the

⁹ The phrase "man is a community of persons in relation" is from John MacMurray's *Persons in Relation* (London: Faber & Faber, 1961) and the idea is developed briefly by Robert O. Johann, S.J. in "Person and Community," and "God and Community," *Building the Human* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1968), 82-84; 92-95.

universal fellowship of all men finds its completion and perfection in Christian *koinonia* whose source and goal of unity is Christ. This is what Teilhard de Chardin means when he says that the whole universe and mankind is evolving towards Christ, the Omega Point. This Christian community is the Church; this is salvation; this is the Eucharist and Paschal Mystery. The Christian religion is nothing but the celebration of our human togetherness in Christ and with one another as a fact and a task.

CHRISTIAN MORALITY AS A COMMUNITY MORALITY

Both the philosophical and theological concept of *koinonia* throws new light on the contemporary understanding of Christian morality as a community morality. That man is a community being should nowhere be more real and manifest than in the Christian community. The distinctive Christian way of life stems from the central reality of the God-man relationship revealed in Jesus Christ. God gave Himself to man in Christ and this gift in turn demands a response from man. The Christian ethic is a community ethic for three reasons. First, the Christian ethic is given to man in community. God spoke to man, not merely as an individual, but as a member of the community of God's people. Secondly, the Christian ethic is understood in community. God's revelation can be understood only by man through the common understanding of the ecclesial community of which he is a member. Thirdly, the Christian ethic is for the building of the community. God's self-giving to mankind forms mankind into a community. But community is at once a gift and a task which is yet to be achieved. The true response of man to God's gift is the promotion of the community of mankind, the development of mankind as the people of God.

In short, the call of all men is to the building of the human community. Christian morality is community building activity. Christian *koinonia* is nothing but the fulfillment of the human community. God's self-giving to man in Christ was given to man in community, is understood only by man in community, and is directed towards the building of the true

human community founded on man's sonship of the Father and man's brotherhood with his fellow man, both of which derive from and are manifest in Jesus Christ.¹⁰ In the Philippines today there is great need to stress the social aspect of morality; Christian morality is not a purely private affair but something communal.

SOME PHILIPPINE CULTURAL FORCES

Now we must examine some of the Philippine cultural forces which have the potential for becoming the indigenous expression of the Christian faith and which should be captured in order to build up the Christian community in the Philippines. We shall briefly discuss the *koinoniac* implications of the empirical findings of the behavioral sciences, first, on Philippine interpersonal behaviour patterns; secondly, on the anatomy of Filipino clannishness; thirdly, on a recent survey of the Church in the Philippines; and finally, on the group dynamics behind three religious or quasi-religious movements both within and outside the Catholic Church.

Philippine Interpersonal Behaviour Patterns

The bilateral family kinship system of Philippine social structure is the most important element in the development of the Filipino personality and of the Philippine community. The Filipino family and Filipino familial loyalties have been blamed for the lack of interest in the common good. Some people seem to hope that a breakdown in family solidarity may bring about the needed sense of national responsibility. What we must blame for many of our national ills is wrong family upbringing. The solution to our national problems does not lie in the erosion of family ties but in a return to the true Christian concept of the family where the young are taught a sense of national responsibility and a strong social consciousness. After all the family should be the first Christian *koinonia* in miniature. At present the Filipino family is undergoing

¹⁰ Enda McDonagh, "The Christian Ethic: A Community Ethic," *Theology of Renewal*, Vol. II (New York: Herder & Herder, 1968), 307-327.

evolutionary changes under the impact of modernization and this fact raises a variety of problems and questions. What will be the future structure of the Christian community in the Philippines? Shall it be based on the psycho-social model of the Filipino family or on that of the modern business corporation? Will strong family loyalties on the one hand, or family disintegration and demoralization on the other, impede the development of Christian *koinonia*? The Christian Family Movement represents the main effort of the Catholic Church to answer some of these family problems but the C.F.M. must be extended to the masses.

In a society like the Philippines where certain spheres are dominated by the female rather than the male, the position occupied by the Filipina accounts not only for the fact that women are more religious than men, but may well augur the future role of women in the Philippine Church.¹¹ The most effective link between a Filipino and his God will be a good Filipina. As a matter of fact the Philippine Catholic Bishops have already approved women as lectors or extraordinary ministers of some liturgical functions in cases of necessity.

The Filipino tradition of equality within a social class or among one's peer group, the increase of social mobility, and an insistence on the importance of the human person because of his *pagkatao*, his humanity, are factors that favor the freedom and equality of the children of God in the Christian community. The value of the Filipino Christian lies not in the public image others have of him but rather in the image of a son that God has of him. However, the dynamics of

¹¹ For the role of women in Philippine society, see William T. Liu, Arthur J. Rubel, & Elena Yu, "The Urban Family of Cebu: A Profile Analysis," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 31 (May, 1969), 393-402. Among other relevant empirical findings this study concludes that the segregated role relationships within the nuclear unit gave the wife a greater monopoly and autonomy of household decisions and family activities. It is also very pertinent to note that the bilateral system of the Filipino family is more responsive to the body politic (and we may add to the Christian *koinonia*) than the unilateral Chinese kinship system.

power in the Philippine community, where there is a continuing struggle for position in which the rewards go to those who can win the good opinion of others through skill in getting along with them, and through the strategic use of whatever wealth or favors they can command, could be a serious obstacle to Christian fellowship.

Interpersonal expectation in the Philippine community receive a good deal of emphasis. Such Filipino value-orientations as respect, obligation (*utang na loob*), social acceptance through smooth interpersonal relations, *pakikisama*, and the use of euphemism and go-betweens; economic and social striving, gossip (*chismis*) and teasing (*biro*) as a process of social leveling—are ambivalent and can either be negative or positive factors, depending on how they are properly understood, in the development of the Filipino Christian in the Church community.

Finally the Philippine self-system characterized by identity with family, emotional closeness and security in the family, fear of alienation, threat of loss of self-esteem (*hiya*), and personal dignity, are strong cultural forces in the process of humanization and personalization in Philippine society. However, they could also be impediments to the Christian community, if they remain self-enclosed and do not transcend merely personal and family boundaries. Japan is the classic example where family solidarity became the strong base for loyalty to the nation. To the Japanese, the nation is the extension of the fatherland and so the great solidarity in the Japanese family in fact is the base for the tremendous loyalty of the Japanese individual to his country.

The above summary shows the central role of the person-to-person relationship in Philippine society.¹² If Christian *koinonia* is a personal rather than a functional community, then this personalistic trait of our culture should be an asset rather

¹² George M. Guthrie and Fortunata M. Azores, "Philippine Interpersonal Behavior Patterns," IPC Papers No. 6, *Modernization: Its Impact in the Philippines—III* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1968), 7-10.

than a liability in the development of the Philippine "community" whose goal is the human and Christian development of every Filipino. Filipinos value personalism highly and such a value is a good safeguard against the depersonalization of modern society. However, a highly personalized society such as ours is not without its pitfalls and can militate against national goals as a student of our social system observes:

Skill in this domain [person-to-person relationship] is essential while other possible foci, such as material gain, physical prowess, piety, or the fulfillment of rituals, are not as important in the striving of Filipinos. One result is that many aspects of the society are so highly personalized that decisions are influenced more by the people involved than by abstract and general rules which apply to everyone. Another result is that the individual who is able to impress others with his good spirit and interest in them is the individual whom the society honors and trusts.¹³

I have already discussed elsewhere the potential of Filipino values for Christian renewal and Christian values. There is no reason why Filipino values in general such as authoritarianism, personalism, small-group centeredness, and in particular, such as *bahala na*, *utang na loob*, *pakikisama*, and *hiya* cannot be made to work for rather than against Christianity.¹⁴

A recent comparative study between Filipino and Thai interpersonal behaviour patterns concludes that *pakikisama* or skill in human relationship is of paramount importance to Filipinos. Whereas Thais tend to avoid tension in human relationships, Filipinos emphasize *pakikisama* as a positive means of preventing a breakdown in human relationship.¹⁵ It is clear that the Filipino community is person rather than task or organization oriented. "To get along with others" is more valuable than "getting the job done". On the one hand, there is no reason why *pakikisama* in human relationship, if properly understood, cannot be a positive factor

¹³ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁴ Jaime Bulatao and Vitaliano Gorospe, S.J., *Split-Level Christianity & Christian Renewal of Filipino Values* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1967).

¹⁵ Guthrie and Azores, *Ibid.* For a good summary of this empirical study. see p. 60.

in the development of the Christian community; *pakikisama* can be transformed into the Christian ideal of *agape* or common union in love. On the other hand, *pakikisama* as it now exists is not to be equated with the Christian "sense of community" or *koinonia*. We find this Christian "sense of community" in the ancient Filipino *barangay* and even today in the Filipino nuclear family. What is needed is to link the familial sense of community with the national sense of community by means of intermediate groups.

It is puzzling that the Church in the Philippines should be accused of being highly impersonal in a highly personalized Philippine culture. Could it be that the "institutional" or "bureaucratic" Church is due more to Westernization than to Christianization? One need not be Westernized first before he can become a Christian. Is not "bureaucracy" in the Philippine Church due more to Roman influence than to the native culture? It is the task of the Church to find for the Filipino "spiritual community of believers" a local habitation and a name within our native culture. Philippine culture seems to provide a congenial place for the modern emphasis on the value of the human person and the "I-Thou" personal relationship as well as a fertile ground for the growth of a "community of persons in relation". In short, the importance of interpersonal relationships in the Philippines should help rather than hinder the incarnation of the Christian fellowship of love.

The Anatomy of Filipino Clannishness

It has been shown that Philippine society is characterized by family and small group centeredness, by alliance systems for mutual trust and support, by lack of trust beyond these groups, by reliance on power, by absence of concern for any broader or less personal entities. Yet it has also been suggested that nationalism and a common religious faith could still be constructive forces in expanding loyalties and a sense of responsibility beyond the family and alliance group. In the concrete, the future of Philippine social organization would seem to lie in part with the man who solves the problem

of effective organization at the grass roots level.¹⁶ It would seem that the *koinoniac* function of the Church would likewise occur most effectively at the same level.

Does Filipino clannishness militate against Christian *koinonia*? The family and kinship systems have been blamed for lack of national consciousness and purpose. A limited but recent study would seem to refute the mistaken notion that Filipino clannishness is so built-in that it becomes a stumbling block to national unity.¹⁷ This study suggests that the social-alliance model of social organization, though far from perfect, promises ultimately to make better sense of Philippine social phenomena than do models based exclusively on the family and kinship systems. Filipino clannishness refers to positive, favoring bias towards kinsmen, toward those related by blood, marriage, or shared participation in some ritual like baptism or matrimony. Empirical data show that the core of the social-alliance model of Philippine social organization is the system of social allies recognized as *sadiring tao* in Canaman, Camarines Sur, and as *kaugnay* in Marilao, Bulacan. Contrary to the popular view, relatives play surprisingly a small role in the poblacion, and even in the barrio there is less interaction with relatives as one would expect from their prominence in the list of social allies. The tentative conclusion is that Filipinos are much less clannish than they are made out to be. If the social-alliance model is valid, they have a built-in, ready-made system for choosing their allies with an open mind—a mind open to relatives and non-relatives alike. In other words, the social alliance system, being more responsive to the larger Filipino community, is a stronger base for Christian *koinonia* than the family kinship system.

Furthermore a study of the political structure in the Philippines shows that forces of change in the direction of a

¹⁶ John J. Carroll, S.J., "Philippine Social Organization and National Development," *Philippine Studies*, 14 (October 1966), 575-590.

¹⁷ Frank Lynch, S.J., "The Anatomy of Clannishness," (To be published in IPC Papers, No. 10, Q. C.: Ateneo de Manila Univ. Press, 1969).

broader base for the Filipino community are already in motion. The "patron-client system" can be transcended by "grass roots pressure" from below and intelligent planning from above as well as by the integrating forces of modernization. What all this implies for Christian *koinonia* is significant. Philippine social structure is relatively flexible and open to the ideal of the Christian community described by Paul to the Galatians: "You have all clothed yourselves in Christ, and there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (3:27-28).

*Religion in the Philippines*¹⁸

Although the majority of Filipinos identify themselves as Roman Catholics (83.8% in the 1960 Census), the problem of what it means to be a member of the Roman Catholic Church for the individual remains. There is still evidence of animistic, magical beliefs and practices among certain mountain peoples and certain rural areas. One empirical survey indicates that church attendance is related to higher educational achievement, to mass media exposure, to upper socio-economic status, to having attended a religious high school, to residence in the poblacion rather than in the barrio, and to some degree to being a Protestant or *Iglesia ni Kristo* member rather than a Roman Catholic. The reasons why most people go to Church, whether in the rural areas or in the larger urban centers, could be reduced to three: tradition, personal needs and favors, and God.

One of the strongest influences on religious behaviour in Philippine society is what has been called by social scientists "folk Catholicism".¹⁹ Folk Catholicism implies that the

¹⁸ For this whole section and the following, I am greatly indebted to John J. Carroll, S.J., and others, *The Philippines: The Church in an Unfinished Society* (Manila: Institute of Social Order, 1970). Reprinted from *Pro Mundi Vita*, No. 3.

¹⁹ John J. Carroll, S.J., *Changing Patterns of Social Structure in the Philippines 1896-1963* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1968). Cf. sections on Religion, 37-44; 141-147. Quotations from pp. 43 & 145.

"concrete religious behaviour (belief, attitudes, practices) of a Catholic is the function not only of official doctrine and practice, universal or particular, but also of the culture in which he was reared, and the community in which he dwells." One general attitude characteristic of folk Catholicism is that "God is seen very clearly as the *Father* who understands our miseries and our weaknesses. His outstanding quality seems to be pity". From a comparative and historical perspective, folk Catholicism has from the beginning up to the present not only permeated the lives principally of people in the lower economic levels but also, insofar as certain non-official practices are tolerated by all, to some degree affected the lives of all especially those in the rural areas. This "folk Catholicism" of the barrio is the kind of Catholicism anti-clerical intellectuals and the better educated Catholics object to or reject. It is quite possible that some of the "folk Catholicism" phenomena could be an authentic cultural expression of a developing Christian faith, a genuine religious experience not subject to empirical observation and analysis. Mention must be made here of the phenomenon of "split-level Christianity" which is not peculiar to the Philippines but is true of religious behaviour anywhere in the world. One bright future of the Philippine Church lies in the new generation of educated and articulate laymen who are dissatisfied with the "folk Catholicism" of the barrio, who dislike an "authoritarian" Church, and who are quite open to Church reform (*ecclesia semper reformanda*) advocated by Vatican II.

What is the role of *other religious groups* in the building of Christian community and ecumenical unity? In terms of growth rate alone, the most vital religious groups in the Philippines are neither the Roman Catholics nor the seven other major denominations which make up the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (N.C.C.P.). Most of the increase in membership came from non-ecumenical and unaffiliated groups, while affiliated groups in general grew less rapidly than the growth of the national population. Many of these rapidly growing religious groups, notably the *Iglesia ni Kristo* about which we will have to say more later, are "sects" as

distinguished from "churches". Among the many reasons for the slow rate of growth of the older and more ecumenical denominations, the one that concerns us is that they have become less capable than the sects of answering to the expressed needs of the Filipino lower class. All of these churches have in recent years manifested an interest in closer ecumenical relations with the Catholic Church. With regard to non-Christian groups, the mountain peoples are steadily being converted to Christianity and at the same time being integrated with the national life, while the Muslims resist both conversion and integration.

At this point one may ask what the influence of religion has been in the integration of Philippine society. In the past the Filipino people have been united by a common religious faith which promoted not only family solidarity but also community oneness.²⁰ To what extent the Catholic faith is still the bond of unity, since the advent of modernization, all other religious groups as well as the forces of nationalism, remains the object of further study. The ecumenical movement towards Christian unity in the Philippines has already made a fresh start but the ultimate goal of Christian unity is still far off. At any rate insofar as Asia is concerned, it is not without significance that the country which stands almost at the geographical center of the Far East, should also be that in which Christianity has taken the deepest root. In God's providence it would seem that the Philippines has been destined to become the vital center in which all Asia may find itself, its own mind and heart, not changed but transformed and made whole in the mind and heart of Christ.²¹

²⁰ Frank Lynch, S.J., "Organized Religion," *Area Handbook on the Philippines*, II, p. 666, made the following early observation: "Since the majority of Filipinos were Catholics, a sense of oneness was promoted by the latent consciousness of sharing this faith with most of one's townmates. . . . [The] social/religious practices during Christmas, Feast of All Souls promoted not only family solidarity but also community oneness." Quoted from J. J. Carroll, S.J., *Ibid.*, p. 43.

²¹ Horacio de la Costa, S.J., "The Eastern Face of Christ," in *Asia and the Philippines* (Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1967), 162-169.

The Filipino people should be the living witness for all Asia of the Eastern face of Christ; the Philippines should be the visible sign today of the one Christian community in Asia.

The growth of the Church is dependent on *personnel*. How does the Philippine Church stand on this count? With regard to the Catholic Church, there has been an increasing personnel shortage, both clerical and religious, particularly in those institutes and works which have been dependent upon foreign religious. With regard to the non-Catholic groups in the Philippines, figures show a high ratio of non-Catholic clergymen to the people they minister to. In the development of the Philippine Church, the recent Filipinization movement is significant, but its success partly depends on the rate of increase of Filipino personnel. Given the shortage of clerical and religious personnel, the future effectiveness of the Catholic Church will depend more and more on the laity.

The *apostolates* of the Catholic Church have been and continues to be parochial ministry, education, welfare, and more recently, social and community action. The parochial ministry has been hampered in large part by the shortage of clergy. One consequence is that the priest is looked upon more as a functionary than the leader of the Christian community. This is one of the problems that have to be faced in the future development of Christian community. Social action has become a general concern of the Church only since 1965; this concern coincided with the growing awareness within Philippine society of the urgency of the social problem. The worsening social crisis in the Philippines makes it a moral imperative for the Church to face seriously and realistically the challenge of becoming what Christ meant it to be, not only a Church for the rich and the elite but a Church for the poor and the great masses of the people as well. Since other religious groups carry on similar works of education, welfare, and community development, they will be faced with the same problems and challenges.²²

²² One of the most promising social action programs is the pilot diocese program of the Philippine Independent Church and the Philippine Episcopal Church. See Denis Murphy, S.J., "A Program of the

The *structure* of the Philippine Church, like Philippine society of which it is a part, is fragmented in many directions and beset by "contradictions" which do not facilitate rational planning. Among the multifarious problems of structure and organization which face the Philippine Church, we can only mention here the question of ecclesiastical finances, the lack of organized impact of the religious and laity on Church policy, and the more pressing problem in recent years of the "Filipinization" of the Church. The sweeping changes that have taken place in the Church abroad in the wake of post Vatican II reforms are beginning to be felt in the Philippines. A new generation of priests, religious, laity, and more recently, students are expressing dissatisfaction with the "old" ways in doctrine, liturgy, and works, with the "traditional" methods of the "institutional" Church, with "triumphalism" and religious and social conservatism. Now orderly social change cannot come entirely through the process of education but structural changes must also be introduced. By means of new structures which are not based on authority alone but also on consensus and a new style of leadership and particularly through common *activities*, there are grounds for hope that a fairly substantial consensus may develop at some levels in the Church, a consensus based on a common understanding of the Second Vatican Council and of the needs of the people of God in the Philippines.

THE TASK OF THE PHILIPPINE CHURCH

If the Philippines is an unfinished society undergoing the process of "rationalization" or "Christian secularization", then a threefold response on the part of the Church to the challenge of "rationalization" seems called for.²³ First, theologians and social scientists should investigate and explain the religious meaning of the process of rational development. Secondly, the entire Philippine Church should recognize that

Philippine Independent Church and the Philippine Episcopal Church," *Concordat*, 2 (February, 1969), 2-4.

²³ For the meaning of "rationalization" or "Christian secularization" see footnote 1.

rationalization is not a matter of fact but a matter of intention; its goals and direction are not imposed by outside forces but chosen by man himself. Christian community is not an accomplished fact but a task to be achieved. It must be possible for every Filipino to become more fully human and Christian within his culture, in freedom and in social responsibility. Thirdly, the Church should participate in the rationalization process by more systematic planning and allocation of its own resources among the multiple tasks which it could undertake. All this can be brought about by a growth of consensus, the structures of dialogue, e.g. the recently organized study committee for a Pastoral Council of the Archdiocese of Manila, and a new style of leadership.

Building the Philippine "Community"

The purpose of the very cursory survey above is two-fold. First, to place the problem of Christian *koinonia* in proper perspective and within a much broader context of problems and challenges which face the Church in the Philippines. Secondly, to point out that the task of the Church is to transform Philippine society as it exists into an authentic Philippine "community", that is, the "fully human" community. For the religious community is nothing but a deeper dimension of the human community; Christian *koinonia* is but the fulfillment and perfection of the same human community.

Philippine society is a fragmented or split society on the social, political, economic, and religious levels. When we speak of a "community" we mean a kind of human relationship that is not primarily functional but interpersonal. Human beings form "communities" first and then only later a "bureaucracy". Historically, "primary groups" form communities, e.g. the early Filipino *barangays*, and then out of many communities one nation is formed with its own organized structure or "bureaucracy". Socially and economically, Philippine society is split between the rich and the poor. Politically, Philippine society is split between the Filipino community and the political bureaucracy. As it exists today our government bureaucracy which should be the instrument of

the nation is not serving the interests of the whole Filipino community.

On the religious level, the Philippine Church suffers from a threefold split: (1) between the bureaucratic or institutional Church and the Christian community; (2) between the hierarchy and the faithful; and (3) between the Christian faith and the native culture. Hence the task of the Church today is the formation of the Philippine "community". Justice and development is another name for the task of building up the human community. This task consists in: (1) building communities, (2) linking these communities with common national goals, and (3) recapturing the bureaucracy to serve the Philippine community as a whole.²⁴ Building the Filipino community is the same as building Christian *koinonia* in its unfolding and perfect form.

The Cursillo

Within the Catholic Church in the Philippines, no single movement in the last decade has had more publicity and success as the *Cursillo de Cristianidad*, a powerful force for revitalizing the religious practice of large numbers of Filipinos and perhaps one key instrument in the formation of Christian *koinonia*. An initial study reveals the effects of the Little Course on Christianity, the causes of these effects, and some questions which might be raised concerning its present and future status.²⁵

First, what effects of the Cursillo have been observed on those who make the three days and four nights of intensive religious indoctrination? At the personal level, Cur-

²⁴ For a more detailed exposition of the formation of the Philippine community, see Francisco Araneta, S.J., "Justice and Development," (Manila: Institute of Social Order, 1969). (Unpublished mss.).

²⁵ William P. Bruton, S.J., "New Movement in the Catholic Church: A Study of the Cursillo," IPC Papers, No. 7, *Modernization: Its Impact in the Philippines—IV* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1969). Founded in 1949 and introduced to the Philippines in 1962), today the Cursillo numbers some 60,000 Cursillistas.

sillistas feel changed by it; they become more friendly, less aloof, and more understanding of others. At the interpersonal level, they meet people and make new friends and form a new in-group whose bond is the Cursillo experience. At the social level, Cursillistas are more active; they identify with the Church and get involved in a good number of Church connected projects; they are more conscious of the poor.

Secondly, what makes the Cursillo work? No single factor can be the explanation but rather an interaction of factors. (1) People who run it are friendly; they belong to the group and group-thinking changes the attitudes of the individual. (2) Group discussion elicits the desire to conform to a group of Christians who are serious about their religion. (3) Cursillistas take a stand and make a commitment. (4) Unpleasant associations with the Catholic religion are replaced with pleasant associations. (5) Finally, the use of primary groups or face-to-face interactions capitalizes on the Filipino emphasis on each individual being treated as a person.

With regard to the future of the Cursillo, many questions can be asked. Many criticisms have been leveled that the Cursillo is a pressure group, that it has become class conscious, that it is in danger of "triumphalism", that the emotionalism of the "Junior Cursillo" is excessive. The Cursillo certainly is not a pressure group and the question of the perseverance of the Cursillistas in their renewed Christian life is the problem of the whole Church and of Philippine society. It is questionable whether freedom of conscience is preserved in a state of high emotional exaltation. Only history can tell what the positive influence of the Cursillo has been in the revitalization and renewal of the Church in the Philippines. But much can be learned from the group dynamics of the Cursillo, of what it means to the individual to belong to the authentic Christian community. Whether or not the Cursillo employs some of the techniques of the present day T-groups (training in human relationships) remains to be studied, but it is worthwhile to explore the possibilities of T-groups in the formation of leaders for the Christian community.

Messianic Movements

In our search for those key cultural factors that account for the rapid growth of Philippine religious sects and their appeal-value to the masses as well as for those positive elements that can contribute to the formation of the Filipino Christian and the development of Christian *koinonia*, a study of the social phenomenon of indigenous religious movements cannot be overlooked.²⁶ Like all "messianic movements" in the world, Philippine messianic cults show the following key characteristics: (1) They emerge from a crisis-situation, e.g. the "colonial situation". They appeal to the poor, alienated, discontented and oppressed and offer freedom from subjection to foreign powers and the "Establishment" (Government; Church) which fails to do justice to all. (2) They commonly center around a charismatic leader, e.g. Felix Manalo of the *INK* or Tatang Valentin of the *Lapiang Malaya*. (3) Among the leaders and the followers, ecstatic tendencies can be observed or super-human powers are claimed making them immune to pain, death, or invulnerable to the bullets of the police (e.g. *Lapiang Malaya*). (4) These messianic movements center around an apocalyptic idea, i.e. they offer the hope of spiritual and perhaps material salvation. (5) Most of these movements are strongly nationalistic and directed against the "Established Powers". Hence they are usually anti-foreign and anti-established churches. (6) Most often they show a strong syncretism, i.e. the beliefs of the "old" order are blended with the beliefs adopted from Christianity, often in distorted forms. Besides the aspect of importation and syncretism, Philippine messianic cults are characterized by a strong nationalism and separatism from established churches.

Though many of the messianic movements have a negative result on the established order, their positive function can be directed towards the building up of the Christian community. (1) They are a positive force for the revitalization of Philippine society. People are no longer indifferent towards the evil state of affairs around them but show concern and try

²⁶ Gottfried Oosterwal, "Messianic Movements," *Philippine Sociological Review*, 16 (Jan.-April, 1968), 40-50.

to do something about it. (2) The reforms these movements generate for a smaller group can lead to greater social, economic, and political reforms for the country as a whole. (3) These movements can help transcend small group centeredness, family and kinship units, ethnic groups, individualism and factionalism. They give people a new group with which they can identify themselves and feel a sense of belonging. (4) They prepare the way for the transition from a traditional to a modernized society and promote the process of democratization. For in a two-class structured society (the "haves" and "have-nots", the elite and the masses, the old and the new), the members form a third force not based on social status, money, or land. (5) These movements give the oppressed a psychological and spiritual liberation which somehow the established churches and our technological civilization have not been able to give. Often a "new morality", a new ethos, and a new way of life are the result of membership in these movements. Messianic movements are not merely protest movements but movements of reform and accommodation. Their protest against the Established Order, Government or Church, calls attention to the "Unfinished Revolution", the existence of poverty, injustice, and exploitation which cry for reform.

The relevance of messianic movements to our discussion of Christian *koinonia* is twofold. First, the sociological explanation for the origin and rise of messianic movements seem to be insufficient.²⁷ Here is where the religious explanation and the uniqueness of the Christian revelation and the history of salvation become most germane. Part of the answer to our Philippine national problems must come from much needed socio-economic-political reforms but in the last

²⁷ In general, four factors have been offered to account for the origin and rise of messianic movements: (1) deprivation, (2) distress and anxiety, (3) the hope of salvation, and (4) the urban situation with its high degree of specialization. According to Oosterwal, *Ibid.*, p. 48 f., culture clash, discontent, injustice, and many other socio-economic, political, and psychological factors may work as catalysts, but as an explanation of the origin of messianic beliefs, they seem to be unsatisfactory.

analysis the ultimate answer must be sought in religious reform, in the Gospel and the Christian message of love. Secondly, the protest value of messianic movements call attention in our day to the charismatic or prophetic role of demonstrations calling for civil and Church reforms. It must be recalled that the strong prophetic voice of protest against injustice came from the Old Testament prophets who were the spokesmen for the people of God.

The Iglesia ni Kristo

One strong criticism leveled against the Catholic Church is that as an institution it is a failure; it suffers from a lack of direction and has failed the great masses of the people. The most telling proof alleged for the Church's failure is the rapid growth of the *Iglesia ni Kristo*. According to one critic, the Catholic Church should learn from the group dynamics of the *INK* and try to capture the sense of belonging, social justice, and nationalism, in short, a sense of community, which a "worldly" and "impersonal" Church has not been able to give to the poor and the oppressed.

Founded in 1914 with an aggressive anti-Catholic orientation, the membership of the *INK* has risen from 207,104 (Census of 1960) to about 3,000,000 (1964) (Central Office information), a 206.5% increase in the period 1948-1960. The first study made of the *INK* shows that it was an instance of a complete break from the older patterns of religious behaviour.²⁸ Let us briefly consider the forms of social interaction in two phases of the *INK* activities; namely, the growth of membership and the norm of discipline.

Its proselytizing success is mainly due to the use of the dialect, organization and leadership, and sole reliance on the Bible and the teaching of Christ. Likewise its rapid growth is attributable to the use of open forums, religious rallies coinciding with town fiestas, the circulation of its official organ,

²⁸ Principal source is Julita Reyes Sta. Romana, "Membership and the Norm of Discipline in the *Iglesia ni Kristo*," *Philippine Sociological Review*, 3 (Jan., 1955), 4-14. Cf also *Sunday Times Magazine*, Jan. 11, 1959 & Aug. 9, 1964.

Ang Pasugo, the recruitment of ministers, and the increase of literacy. Two other factors of conversion are very weak foundation in the Catholic religion and the unemployed population. Most of the *INK* members come from the poor, less educated lower middle class.

The *INK* norm of discipline stresses high moral standards of behaviour and a system of strict surveillance. Being of a minority group, the members are very cautious and suspicious, tend to be closed and exclusive, and intolerant of outsiders. They are afraid of one thing and that is ridicule and so they erect a wall of caution and members obey precautionary measures. One appeal value of the *INK* lies in its real concern for all phases of daily human existence—baptism, courtship, marriage, recreation, church contributions, education, employment, and politics. Today the *INK* has become a social and political force to be reckoned with in Philippine society. Their voting unity and political influence has already become the object of student demonstration. The chief bond which unites *INK* members is based on fellowship (each one is a *kapatid* or brother), a sense of belonging.

The *INK* is a closely-knit society whose leaders are loyal, aggressive, and hardworking. The deacons who are the eyes and ears of the sect exercise a systematic supervision of local units. Disputes are settled from small beginnings and delinquent members are expelled for definite specific offenses. Strict regulations and surveillance can really make an *INK* member very cautious and suspicious but it can also make him ally with fellow-members for self-defense and protection. What is striking about *INK* discipline is surveillance which has proved beneficial to the best-known and best-organized sect. This idea of surveillance which functioned in traditional Philippine society is one of the causes of tension not only in today's society but in the Church in the modern world, and yet it seemed to have worked in favor of the *INK*.

The Lapiang Malaya

The *Lapiang Malaya* came to the public eye with the violent clash between this sectarian group and the Philippine

Constabulary in 1967, in which 34 people died. A cursory study of the *LM* membership, organization, and its implications to present Philippine society reveals two major points: (1) that the present set-up is considered foreign; (2) that the Government and the Catholic Church must be made relevant and understandable to the common man, to the rural population, and the large masses of the people.²⁹

The majority of the members of the *LM* come from an economic class lower than the national average; they come from the rural areas and often have broken off from one of the traditional religious groups. In organization, their religious beliefs are very personalistic and they want a concrete understanding of supernatural phenomena. There is a strong element of rejection of anything foreign, e.g. the Church is Roman. They are impressed by the "beautiful way" their leader, Tatang Valentin, taught them how to pray, to worship God, and how to relate to others, a way not found in other religious churches and sects. To them priests were associated with building churches and schools, holding town fiestas, preaching rather than praying. With regards to the present Establishment, *LM* members are discontented with the way things are and so affiliate with this sectarian group as an expression of their discontent. The *Lapiang Malaya* is a reaction to a "foreign" Government and Church and against an "unjust" social order to which the present set-up is linked. This distorted image of the Government and the Church is mainly due to a language and communication gap. Hence the importance of transmitting the Christian message in a language that is understandable to the people.

The appeal of the *Lapiang Malaya* is threefold: (1) non-violent, nationalistic precepts, (2) highly personalistic teachings that are more concrete and understandable to the people, and (3) the importance given to human dignity and the seeming

²⁹ Estefania Aldaba-Lim et al., "A Cursory Study of the *Lapiang Malaya*—Its Membership, Organization and Implications to Present Philippine Society," *Philippine Sociological Review*, 15 (July-Oct., 1967), 151-162.

provision for brotherhood and fraternity. The last point is closely akin to the Christian deal of *koinonia* or fellowship.

From the Filipino orientation of the *Iglesia ni Kristo* and the *Lapiang Malaya*, the conclusion emerges that in order to make Christian theology relevant to Philippine society and to make the Christian *koinonia* incarnate "from within" the culture, the Church in the Philippines must speed up the process of "indigenization" or "Filipinization".³⁰

DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN KOINONIA

The Christian community is not a static but an evolutionary reality; it is not an accomplished fact but a task to be achieved; it is not a question of either/or but rather more or less. Christian *koinonia* presupposes a philosophy and theology of development and so a final word on the religious meaning of development would be a fitting conclusion to this paper.

In another article I have already outlined a synthetic ethics of development which should inculcate in the Filipino people attitudes and values that are at once scientific, historical, ethical, human and Christian.³¹ The role of education in developing proper attitudes and values that are the *conditio sine qua non* for national development is crucial. It was the genius of Teilhard de Chardin to point out that the Christian viewpoint of man and of the world is the completion of modern man's scientific viewpoint of the evolutionary development of man and of the universe. In Teilhard's view, the evolution of the universe and the Christian history of salvation is one single continuous process of development. In other words, the whole universe and mankind is evolving towards Christ. If we follow Teilhard's line of thinking we can no longer

³⁰ The historical process of "indigenization" of the Church is the realization of God's plan to constitute a people, the People of God, whose members will manifest the infinite multiplicity of cultures, languages, mentalities and spiritual tendencies of the various races. Cf. *East Asian Jesuit Secretariat Conference*, April 16-20, 1968, (New York: Jesuit Missions, Inc., 1968), 31-42.

³¹ Vitaliano R. Gorospe, S.J., *Philippine National Problems and Development* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University, 1969), 58-69.

separate the scientific, historical, ethical, philosophical and theological way of thinking and dealing with the development. Social, political, economic development is for the sake of spiritual, that is, human and Christian development. 'The task of nation-building through science, technology, modernization; the task of humanization and "rationalization", of making the life of our Filipino people more and more human; the task of morality and religion, of the renewal of the Church, and of re-Christianizing the Philippines, is one single developmental process and task. From the viewpoint of Teilhard, even nationalism must help build the earth or Christian *koinonia*.³² If it is true that to be fully human is to be Christian, then the building of the Philippine community means the building of the totality of the Body of Christ which is the Church. Finally, just as there is no model technological society today, we know now that there is no modern Church patterned after some Western or Eastern model, but that the Church must incarnate itself within each culture.

From an ethical point of view, it has been suggested that mankind develops according to three fundamental levels: the level of instinct, the moral level, and the Christian-religious level.³³ This moral evolution applies not only to the individual but to each nation and culture. From a theological viewpoint, just as there are different levels of development of man's moral sense, so in the history of salvation there are different levels of Christian faith and therefore of the consciousness of Christian *koinonia*. The ancient world religions paved the way for Christianity which began with the way of Israel. Old Testament history shows three phases or periods of cultural levels of faith: 1) in terms of well being, i.e. God is good to our family, our nation; (2) in terms of the desire for a conscientious life and of the realization of individual

³² Vicente Marasigan, S.J., "Cosmogogenesis: Option for the Filipino Nation," in *The Guidon*, May 24, 1969. Also "Nationalism Must Help Build Earth—Chardin," in the same issue of *The Guidon*. Both these articles view nationalism as a "critical threshold" towards the building up of the Body of Christ.

³³ Louis Monden, *Sin, Liberty and Law* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1965), Ch. II.

dignity; and (3) in terms of men whose hearts are open to all human beings. These three phases can co-exist in each man.

Looking at humanity as a whole, and in our present case, at Philippine society, three levels of Christian maturation can be discerned: (1) an exclusive religion within a closed group; (2) the development of individual conscience and regard for others; and (3) the recognition that one is a member of humanity with social responsibility as one looks out purposively for a saviour.³⁴ These are the stages in which the Church as a whole and the Philippine Church are advancing towards Christ, the way in which Christian *koinonia* should be directed on its pilgrim way to the eschatological community of the risen and glorified Christ. When all is said and done, the adequate and ultimate solution to the problem of Philippine national development can only come from the religious-Christian approach. The mind and heart of the Filipino people must be converted to Christ to make the Christian community not merely a dream but a reality.

³⁴ A *New Catechism: Catholic Faith for Adults* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1967), 61-63.