

philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University · Loyola Heights, Quezon City · 1108 Philippines

A Cheerful Giver: Umfundisi

Review Author: Sister Ann Stephen

Philippine Studies vol. 8, no. 4 (1960): 878–880

Copyright © Ateneo de Manila University

Philippine Studies is published by the Ateneo de Manila University. Contents may not be copied or sent via email or other means to multiple sites and posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's written permission. Users may download and print articles for individual, noncommercial use only. However, unless prior permission has been obtained, you may not download an entire issue of a journal, or download multiple copies of articles.

Please contact the publisher for any further use of this work at philstudies@admu.edu.ph.

<http://www.philippinestudies.net>
Fri June 30 13:30:20 2008

doing is to encourage and provoke both discussion and further reflection on the key ideas of the authors. Thus the present volume would serve very well as the subject matter for an entire series of Study-Club or CFM meetings. To such groups as these, and indeed to all who are called to be "saints" in the married state, this little work can be heartily recommended with the added caution that it should not merely be read; it must be prayed over.

SAMUEL R. WILEY

A CHEERFUL GIVER

UMFUNDISI. Missioner to the Zulus. By Father Thomas M. Calkins, O.S.M. Milwaukee, The Bruce Publishing Company, 1959.

"You want to be as happy as fish swimming in the water? Then worship God properly."

"You parents refuse to send your children to school, yet you send cattle to dipping tanks. God will treat you too as cattle."

Thus in the familiar Zulu idiom, the first and only Zulu bishop spoke to his Zulu flock of God, the Church and the need of the education of youth.

Using the incident of the visit of His Excellency, Rt. Rev. Bonaventure Dlamini, F.F.J., to the Ingwavuma mission in Natal, South Africa, Father Thomas M. Calkins, O.S.M. illustrates the necessity of the native clergy for that true contact necessary to the establishment of a living Catholicism.

Reflections stimulating a renewed awe of the tremendous power of the Sacrifice of the Mass, even in the remotest pagan hinterlands, and observations on the growth of the African Church from infancy to adulthood, give the reader of UMFUNDISI much material for consideration. Perhaps the greatest contribution of the young Servite missioner is the clear picture he has given of the role of the missionary priest. His own cognizance of the fact that the missioner's position in Africa or any other mission territory is a passing one, and that his prime concern is to work toward the cultivation of vocations and the establishment of an indigenous clergy, so that he, the missioner, eventually works himself out of a job, certainly compensates for any technical defects in the book. Father Calkins quotes the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* to illustrate the grave harm that results when the missioner fails to move to another field, leaving the seeds of

Faith which he has sown to be cultivated and nurtured by the native priest.

Father further uses the encyclical to illustrate the inestimable value and absolute necessity of an indigenous clergy. "The native priest...by birth, by temper, by sentiment and by interests is in touch with his own people. He knows in fact, better than anyone else, the best methods to follow; and so it frequently happens that he will often gain access where a foreign priest could never gain entrance. Moreover, foreign missionaries on account of their imperfect knowledge of the language are frequently prevented from expressing themselves. As a result the force and efficacy of their preaching are greatly weakened." In similar words throughout the book Father reiterates the absolute necessity of local clergy. His differentiation between the temporary character of the missionary's vocation and the permanent nature of the native pastor's vocation provokes thoughtful consideration on the part of the reader.

The fact that any missionary is handicapped by the obvious limitation of only two hands serves to emphasize for Father Calkins the primary importance of the catechist. The worth of these auxiliaries can never be overestimated and the author impresses us over and over again with the idea of how indispensable they are.

The value of a sense of humor in the missionary is repeatedly stressed, especially when reference is made to Father's attempts at learning and mastering the language. Even during such harrowing and gripping experiences as related in the chapters, "Death Comes Close," and "Wise Guys," that saving element of joy and humor is present. For one interested in the universal aspect of people, the sections on Zulu customs, values, rites and general culture, as well as the character sketches of Father's mission companions and the mission auxiliaries, lend a high degree of human interest to the chronicle. Vignettes of children and villagers, carefully and skillfully drawn, make the Zulus old acquaintances before the conclusion of the book.

Frequent use of slang as a medium of expression, however, tends to be wearing on the reader and causes the humor to be strained and thin at times. The use of "ignorant" in certain contexts urges the reader to ask, "Is the Zulu really ignorant, or is he only uneducated?"

In some passages a lack of delicacy in the presentation might be offensive, especially when one compares this to other accounts of missionary endeavors in the crudest and most primitive of conditions which have been handled in a realistic manner yet one still consonant with that dignity the Catholic attributes to priests.

The constant recurrence of the subjective element, though certainly entertaining to fellow Servites and personal friends of Father Calkins, is somewhat out of place considering that "UMFUNDISI" was published for the general public. It would seem that a more objective approach would have been more satisfactory to the casual reader. However, the message of this "Missioner to the Zulus" all but forces the defects of style into the shadows.

To any member of the Church Universal, the following words of Father Calkins, applicable to every era and clime, furnish the key to the motivation of the Catholic missioner going forth to bring the world to Christ:

"We deal in things of the mind and heart and will, not shovels and picks and forks. We have to get under the crust of the native with our wares; we must burrow deeply into their lives, touch the very core of their being, blast out paganism and lay in the Truth. That is why native helpers are so important to us. That is why we need good native bishops, priests, Sisters, Brothers, catechists and teachers.

"Ours is not a white man's religion to be used by the blacks. What we want down here is literally Black Catholicism. Anything short of that is failure."

SISTER ANN STEPHEN

SANTOS AND CARUNUNGAN

LIKE A BIG BRAVE MAN. A Novel. By Celso Al. Carunungan. Farrar, Strauss and Cudahy. New York. 1960. 275 pp.

BROTHER, MY BROTHER. A Collection of Stories. By Bienvenido N. Santos. The Benipayo Press, Publishers. Distributed by Bookmark. Manila. 1960. xiii, 244 pp.

I

Relatively few Filipinos achieve the distinction of having their books published abroad. Carunungan is one of these, and the distinction is well deserved, for the book is charming and entertaining. Several Filipinos of this reviewer's acquaintance have expressed themselves very much disappointed with the book: they find the humor forced and the details inaccurate. On the other hand, foreigners (Americans, Australians, British) have found the book highly interesting. Perhaps the reason for this wide divergence of reactions is that the