

# philippine studies

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

---

## Editor's Preface

Jesuits in the Philippines: 1581-1981

*Philippine Studies* vol. 29, no. 3 & 4 (1981) 263–270

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](mailto:philstudies@admu.edu.ph).

<http://www.philippinestudies.net>  
Fri June 27 13:30:20 2008

## Editor's Preface

### Jesuits in the Philippines: 1581-1981

We present a double issue of *Philippine Studies* commemorating the 400th anniversary of the coming of the Jesuits to the Philippines in 1581. For a Philippine Jesuit periodical, such an issue might seem obvious. There are, however, some nagging misgivings. For one, since Vatican II the Church has been particularly sensitive to the charge of triumphalism — an accusation previously leveled against it, not without reason. Does not the celebration of this quadricentennial by Philippine Jesuits smack of pre-Vatican II triumphalism?

There is the further charge, moreover, which has been directed against Vatican II itself at times, of a certain ecclesiastical self-centeredness. Let the Jesuits celebrate their own anniversaries if they wish — but why tax the goodwill of *PS* readers? There could well seem to be far more important issues needing open critical discussion in a quality Catholic humanistic journal of a Third World Asian country, such as *PS* strives to be.

#### GROUND S FOR CELEBRATING

The dangers which such practical, perhaps slightly cynical objections point up, are real enough. Yet ultimately they function as cautions and checks — not to let a good and needed thing go wrong — rather than as an apodictic rejection. For it *is* fitting to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Jesuits' arrival in the Philippines, both by the Jesuits themselves, as well as by anyone interested in "things Filipino," such as the average reader of *PS*. The articles that comprise this double issue speak eloquently for themselves in both the sheer amount of information concerning

the Philippines and its people, and — more importantly — the critical evaluation and understanding of the significance of these data for a deeper appreciation of this country. There is no doubt that even a cursory reading of the following essays will clearly manifest how intimately the Jesuits have been involved in Philippine history over the past 400 years.

From the Jesuits' side there is equally solid ground for this celebration. Anthropologists and liturgists are of one voice these days in stressing man's need for celebration. Although the western world seems to need celebrations to moderate the overemphasis on its so-called "task-oriented" thrust, here in the Philippines it is not a question of overcoming a lack, but of preserving and deepening a precious natural quality. The Filipino is personally and culturally able to "celebrate life" in a manner seemingly already lost by many in the First World countries. The importance of this quality deserves greater reflection, if only to avoid the mistake of relegating celebration to the "expendables" of human life — something to fill in the gaps when there's nothing better to do.

#### NATURE OF CELEBRATION

Celebration is natural to man as a symbol-creating being. Our symbols develop spontaneously into ritual and celebration. Scholars show us how ritual celebrations function as instruction, or interpretation, or even indoctrination. Also, the natural thrust of celebration is toward wholeness and unity. Wholeness in the sense that the whole person is involved: feelings, attitudes, relationships, especially that most unique relation to God. In practical language, this can be expressed in the common sense observation that something is missing in the typical slide-rule, pocket-calculator man, the technician. Necessary as he is, incredibly valuable as science and technology are, yet both are ruined themselves and are ruinous to man once they are taken for the whole of life. There is something almost diabolically inhuman in taking the computer as the human ideal.

The unity which celebration fosters is not only of personal integrity; rather it is principally a unity of community. We find ourselves with others, forming the basic personal environment needed for human life. Celebration, in all its infinitely varied forms, is the life-blood of community.

How, then, does this issue of *PS* "celebrate" the quadricentennial of Jesuits in the Philippines? Phenomenological analysis reveals three basic aspects of celebration.<sup>1</sup> In the first place, celebration points to a reality, making it present to us without however being identified with it. Not just a brute fact, but a reality-event with a richness and depth that needs celebration to be understood and realized. Through repetition, a built-in dimension of celebration, the individual person and the community gradually appropriate for themselves a deeper appreciation of the event celebrated.

Celebrations, secondly, are essentially *temporal*: they are memories of the past (*anamnesis*) in their descriptive or narrative dimensions. They bring this past into the present (*kairos*) by their performative aspect; and this present is pregnant with future expectations (*eschaton*), i.e., promissory in character.

Finally, celebrations personalize by a dialogical movement of "turning in" and "turning out": of internalization by contemplating, reflecting, listening for the significance and meaning of the reality-event celebrated, aiming at union and intimacy; but also of externalization, a reaching out, expressing, sharing, serving, being "missioned."

Given this structural pattern of celebration, it is not difficult to recognize how the following essays as a matter of fact do "celebrate" to a rather remarkable degree, the quadricentennial of the Jesuits' arrival in the Philippines. They are not just articles written "on the occasion of . . .," but individually and collectively *celebrate* this anniversary. Let us see how.

### JESUIT PHILIPPINE PERSONNEL

We begin with Fr. Schumacher's magistral historical study, "Early Filipino Jesuits: 1593-1930," which presents with painstaking research the story of Jesuit vocations in the Philippines. Particularly noteworthy is his careful analysis of the cultural interplay involved in native Jesuit vocations as well as priestly formation. In his concluding pages, the author shows how the very strength in one area can be the cause of lamentable failure in another, especially regarding openness to cultural and national

1. A useful summary of anthropological and theological work done in the past decades on "celebration" and allied concepts can be found in George S. Worgul, *From Magic to Metaphor* (New York: Paulist, 1980), especially chaps. 5, 8 and 12.

change. Thus in Fr. Schumacher's article, the past vocation policies have been vividly made present to us in a way that provides guidelines and cautions for vocation promotion and priestly formation in the future, not just for Jesuits but for the Philippine Church as a whole.

This historical study is complemented by the demographic and sociological study of "Jesuit Personnel of the Philippine Province, 1968-78," by Fr. Francis Madigan and Magdalena Cabaraban. The carefully tabulated results of their study bring out in clear detail what the vocation crisis means for the Philippine Jesuit Province today and for the next decade. The interrelation between the "turning in" reflection of Philippine Jesuits on their manpower problem in order to better continue and fulfill their present and future ministries — the "turning out" factor — is clearly manifest throughout their essay.

This topic of priestly vocation and Jesuit manpower is also developed tangentially in two other studies by former Superiors/ Provincials of the Philippine Jesuits. Fr. Leo Cullum's "San Jose Seminary" outlines the intriguing history of this eminently valuable Jesuit ministry of forming Philippine diocesan clergy, while Fr. Francis Clark's essay presents the more recent checkered history of the Jesuits' own house of studies. Both essays bring out the interaction between the physical locations, current attitudes on priestly formation and on church ministry itself, and the concrete individual authorities responsible for the decisions made. Certainly a more vivid memory of these two histories (past) could act in heuristic fashion in the (present) effort to discover new and more adequate means of Jesuit formation and (future) renewal in today's complex Philippine world.

### JESUIT MINISTRIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

But what are the Jesuit ministries in the Philippines? We can begin with two detailed historical studies of individual Spanish Jesuits who were outstanding in their Philippine ministries. Fr. Hubert Jacobs offers a meticulous study of the *Discurso Politico* of Fr. Francisco Combés, providing a wealth of data regarding the Spanish colonial Philippines of the mid-seventeenth century, especially the interrelations of Church and State — a not uncommon topic in the Philippines of the late twentieth century! Fr. Jacobs presents the times and work of Fr. Combes with admirable clarity,

offering for our present reflection the convoluted plots and intrigues of those times with pointed comments on their significance for today. The following study by Fr. Manuel Ruiz Jurado on "Fr. Pedro Chirino, S.J., and Philippine Historiography," not only fills a gap in Philippine Jesuit historiography, but brings to light the personal interior trials and limitations of an obviously extremely talented Jesuit missionary. In great simplicity the author reveals the efforts of Fr. Chirino to overcome his choleric temperament, and the various reactions of his fellow Jesuits in coping with him. Here, then, is a thought-provoking reality-event from the past, helping our own community-forming efforts of today and to come.

To these two studies of outstanding Jesuit missionaries of the past — one writing on "affairs of State," the other presenting Europe with its first account of the Philippines — are added two historical accounts of corporate Jesuit work in the Philippines in the past. Fr. Angel Hidalgo presents a summary of the Jesuits involved in Philippine cartography, and specifically the work of the Manila Observatory. The maps we have been able to reproduce are merely sample exhibits of the serious scientific work carried on by the Society of Jesus in the Philippines. In a completely different line, Doreen Fernandez describes the work of Jesuits in the birth and early growth of Philippine theater — a dimension of Jesuit pedagogy that seems in danger today of being eclipsed in this TV, Beta-max-dawning age. The exceptional success of theater in evangelization as well as in Jesuit pedagogy certainly confirms the contemporary phenomenological analysis of celebration outlined above. In this case we are celebrating a Jesuit propensity for, and work in, theater celebrations.

#### THE EDUCATIONAL APOSTOLATE

But undoubtedly the best known Jesuit ministry in the Philippines is education. Three essays in the present issue develop this core ministry. Fr. James Meany provides an excellent summary "insider's" account of Jesuit cooperation in Philippine education over the past twenty-five years, concentrating on three basic organizations, the JEA, the CEAP, and the PAASCU, with an insightful look to the future of each. The Jesuit thrust for justice, predominant since the 32nd General Congregation of the Society, and its impact on Philippine Jesuit universities, are the themes discussed by Fr. Edmundo Martinez. His essay is a forceful, well-grounded

plea for institutional Jesuit commitment to a critically formed, intellectually responsible promotion of faith and justice, grounded in the nature of justice itself and in Christian conversion.

The third contribution on Jesuit education is the explanatory note of Fr. Bienvenido Nebres on the official grounds for this dominant Jesuit thrust for justice. Clarifying the essential bases is indispensable for any effective social program, and even more necessary in effecting the needed revisions in Jesuit schools.

The final section of this issue is devoted to texts and comments — in this case, a description of Jesuit missionary work in the Agusan River area, 1875-1935, presented in translation by Fr. Francisco Demetrio; a careful comparison of St. Ignatius' meditation on the Three Pairs of Men in the *Spiritual Exercises* with a similar text in the Koran (Qur'ān in the text of our Islamic scholar); and a manuscript bibliography of Philippine Jesuits, 1859-1900, by Pedro Torra, S.J., presented with careful research by Fr. José S. Arcilla. These three works exemplify a more hidden Jesuit ministry: the intellectual apostolate. The appearance of this issue of *PS* — as well as its sister Jesuit Philippine publication, *Kinaadman*, edited by Fr. Miguel A. Bernad, S.J. — offers practical witness that this scholarly work has not completely disappeared.

It is impossible in one commemorative issue to cover all the many works of Jesuits in the Philippines: the Apostolic Center with its social work, the retreat houses, the parishes in Bukidnon and Zamboanga, the Christian Life Communities (CLC), the Media Center — just to mention a few of the contemporary Jesuit ministries that will have to remain unsung. Yet to stop here would be to leave out an essential. For what is there that unifies the apparently disparate studies included in this "celebration" issue? Surely there must be something beneath the surface that can help integrate all the various facets of Jesuits in the Philippines that have been brought to light in these articles. That something must clearly be the driving force of the Jesuit: Ignatian spirituality. For despite the highly accentuated individuality of Jesuits — only too well known by friend and foe alike — there has been and is a typically common "Jesuit" manner of working for Christ's kingdom. It is this manner, based directly on the Ignatian spirituality, that grounds this "celebration" and all the varieties of Jesuits and their works touched on in this issue.

But that we might end where we began. Let us make clear that no triumphalism is intended here. Many and great are the works

in history and today of other religious orders and congregations of men and women, and of the countless lay men and women, working for Christ's kingdom in the Philippines. In Ignatius' own favorite expression, our "least Society" recognizes its enduring debt to its many co-workers in the vineyard of the Lord. No, this Jesuit "manner" is not proposed by any manner of means as the "better" much less the "best" way; rather, it is simply the "Jesuit" way, for better or for worse. Or rather, one possible description of the Jesuit way.<sup>2</sup>

### THE COMMON GROUND: THE IGNATIAN VISION

How can this underlying spirituality that makes sense of, and give coherence to, the 400 years of Jesuit Philippine history, be described? Perhaps the Ignatian vision can be sketched in terms of a world view that embraces a definite insight into the core of man himself. Jesuits are supposedly noted for their "practicality" — they have always been involved in the "affairs of men." This is not by chance: Ignatius worked fundamentally from the ordinary things of daily life, of men in their "busy-ness." In all this he struck the hand of God; these daily realities were not secular in our contemporary sense of the world, but composed the whole arena where the Jesuit was to "find God in all things," and respond in wonder, reverence and service of the Divine Majesty. So the great beginning and ending meditations in his *Exercises* — the Principle and Foundation, and the Ad Amorem — find God literally in all things.<sup>3</sup>

But it is not just "God" who is discovered in the world, rather it is God in a Christ-centered world, vivified from within by the Holy Spirit; in brief, Ignatius' vision was a Trinitarian insight. So the *magnalia Dei* do not lead Ignatius toward an angelic contemplation. On the contrary, the works of God themselves are interpreted and evaluated against one norm: the Risen crucified Savior, Christ our Lord. So the great meditation on the Kingdom, and the whole second week of the Exercises, ground the "Jesuit way" in the humanity of Christ.<sup>4</sup> Personal love of Christ our Lord is the key to

2. See Jean Danielou, S.J., "The Ignatian Vision of the Universe and of Man," *Cross Currents* 4 (Fall 1954): 357-66; and Erich Przywara, S.J., "God in All Things," *Sursum Corda* 12 (1972): 155-65, 202-13.

3. See *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, trans. Louis J. Puhl, S.J. (Westminster: Newman Press, 1954), nos. 23 and 230-37.

4. *Ibid.*, nos. 91-99, 101-34.



Jesuit obedience — not any romanticized military analog. To find God's will in all things is to walk in the steps of Christ Jesus: small ordinary human steps, in all kinds of climes and occasions.

Finally, to God's presence in the realities of the world, to the personal, Christ-centered history with its mission in the Church today, a third dimension must be added. Following St. Paul, Ignatius had a vividly dramatic picture of history — of a fundamental conflict in all levels of life and being, between Christ and the powers of evil. So the meditations on the Two Standards, on the Triple Sin, and the Rules for Discernment of Spirits.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps it is this realism of the grace-life that most adequately explains the marked individuality of Jesuits and yet their typical "common" manner. Following Christ in ordinary affairs — an apostolic mysticism, as it has been called — is more difficult, more precarious, than other tried-and-true methods of Christian spirituality. But it is Ignatius' method. It presupposes an unrelenting effort toward a transforming union — a union with Christ in action (*contemplativus in actione*) that is transformed interiorly, from within, by Christ's Holy Spirit. Thus the Three Degrees of Humility in the *Exercises*, and the oblation of the Kingdom contemplation.<sup>6</sup>

#### INVITATION TO THE READER

In this overly extended introduction, we must leave for the interested reader the task of relating the individual articles that follow to this suggested pattern of Ignatian spirituality. The focus and involvement with "the things of this world" are obvious. Equally manifest are the struggles, tragedies and failures pushing the Philippine Jesuit toward greater awareness of his absolute dependence upon the Divine Majesty and His indwelling — or rather interdwelling — Holy Spirit. But ultimately neither the individual acts and lives of the Jesuits described here, nor the corporate work of the Philippine Jesuits, are really intelligible — make any practical sense — without seeing behind every page the figure of Him whose name Ignatius' little *compañia* is honored to bear.

Joseph L. Roche, S.J.

5. Ibid., nos. 136-48, 45-54, 313-36. See also Francis X. Lawler, S.J., "The Doctrine of Grace in *The Spiritual Exercises*," *Theological Studies* 3 (December 1942): 513-32.

6. *Spiritual Exercises*, nos. 165-68, 98. The classic work, of course, is Joseph de Guibert, S.J., *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice*, trans. William J. Young (Chicago: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1964). See especially Part 3, chaps. 13, 15 and 16.