

Kapatiran



BROTHERHOOD OF CHRISTIAN BUSINESSMEN AND PROFESSIONALS

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PHILIPPINES

DECEMBER 1990-JANUARY 1991

IN THIS ISSUE

	Page
CBCP PASTORAL LETTER	2
PORNOGRAPHY: AN ATTACK ON CIVILIZATION	3
CYA: CASTING THE NETS WIDELY	11
THREE SYMBOLS OF CHRISTMAS	15
ANSWERING GOD'S CALL	17
HOW TO SHARE	18
THE ONLY CHRISTIANIZED DRINK	20
WHY DO CATHOLICS MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS	25
LIGHTER MOMENTS	31

*If we have died with Him
we shall also live with Him*

*If we continue to endure
we shall also rule with Him*

If we deny Him

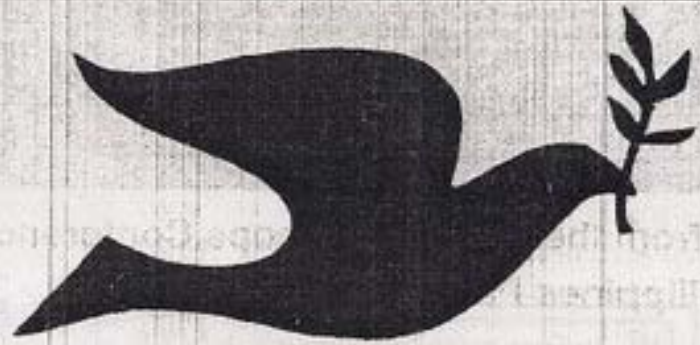
He also will deny us

If we are not faithful

He remains faithful

*Because He cannot be false to
Himself*

Timothy 2:11-13



Christmas Is A Gift Of Love

This priceless gift of Christmas

Is within the reach of all . . .

The rich, the poor, the young and old,

The greatest and the small,

So take God's Christmas Gift of Love,

Reach out and you receive,

And the only payment that God asks

Is just that you believe.

Helen Steiner Rice



Excerpts from the Catholic Bishops Conference on the Philippines Pastoral Letter.

To the *underprivileged* we say:

- * We are aware of your difficulties and although we are short of lay workers and volunteers, we are trying our very best to help you through our Commissions on Social Action, on Health, on Family Life, and other charitable bodies under the Hierarchy.

- * The Church believes in responsible regulation of births through a process that respects the integrity of the bodies of married couples. The church condemns contraception, sterilization and abortion. Your response to the call to natural methods of regulating births has been edifying.

- * Strive to practice the twin virtues of prudence and generosity in the natural regulation of births. God never abandons those who are heroic and who depend on Him for all things.

To the *privileged* we say:

- * Keep the fountains of life open. Christian spouses are married to one another in Christ. Please do not forget that the Trinity — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — plays an integral part in your married life. Let God work freely in your relationship.

- * Do not give in to the lure of materialism. Those whom life has given more should give more for the promotion of life.

- * Help those less privileged couples so that they too many be able to accept cheer-

fully the challenge of parenthood, experience their children as sources of joy, and raise them in a manner befitting their dignity as human persons.

To our *Government Personnel* we say:

- * Strive to form and maintain a Christian conscience and give witness to the religious and moral convictions that follow from your commitment to Jesus Christ. By calling you to the Church through Baptism, Jesus relies on you to witness for him in the place where you work.

- * To dispense contraceptives or to refer husbands and wives to sterilization clinics is wrong. Do not allow yourselves to be used as a counter-witness to the Gospel.

- * Our government has acknowledged your right to object and not to act on any orders that are contrary to your Christian conscience. Do not be afraid to stand up for Jesus!

To our *Policy Makers* we say:

- * In your public decisions, you too must reflect the convictions of your Faith.

- * Let us give highest priority to developing our human resources. Money is the sake of human development, not vice versa.

- * We must not become the slaves of lending institutions. Through programs of population control, we become both collaborators and victims of contraceptive imperialism.

THE BISHOPS' MOVES

+ JAPAN: Towards NICE II. In their last plenary assembly, Japanese Catholic Bishops decided to hold the Second national Incentive Convention (NICE II) on the topic of family life. The next meeting of the Bishops's Conference, scheduled for this December, will decide other related aspects such as the venue for NICE II and the composition of the preparatory committee. Meanwhile, government figures reveal that Japan's birth rate last year was the lowest since World War II. In order to reverse the declining trend in population, the government is encouraging Japanese families to raise children.

+ BRAZIL: Demanding Release of Funds. Brazilian bishops are calling President Fernando Collor de Melo to release US \$15 million that was seized from 200 churches and church organizations as result of the economic program implemented since last march. The bishops say the money is needed to maintain the social assistance programs sponsored by the Catholic church.

+ NICARAGUA: Calling for Reconstruction and Peace. In their latest message to Catholics and men and women of good will, Catholic Bishops of Nicaragua call for reconciliation and peace, needed in order to face the deteriorating economic situation of the country. The bishops say that "the present deteriorated economic situation demands from all a patriotic attitude" that "reconciliation implies the commitment of all sectors of society." In their document the bishops restate their commitment to the plight of the poor saying: "The situation affecting the poor compels us to reaffirm our option, not exclusive, but preferential for them."

+ VIETNAM: Bishops Unable to Leave. Vietnamese Catholic bishops have been unable to leave the country to attend international meetings. Vietnamese delegates failed to attend the Fifth General Assembly of Asian Bishops in Bandung, Indonesia, July 17-27. A delegation of 10 Vietnamese bishops also failed to visit Rome in July. The situation seems to indicate a setback in the climate of openness towards the church and in the general "doi-moi" policies of the Vietnamese government.

THE REWARD OF OBEDIENCE TO THE LORD

*Happy are those who obey the
Lord,
who live by his commands.*

*Your work will provide for your
needs;
you will be happy and
prosperous.*

*Your wife will be like a fruitful
vine in your home,
and your sons will be like young
olive-trees round your table
A man who obeys the Lord
will surely be blessed like this.*

*May the Lord bless you from
Zion!*

*May you see Jerusalem prosper
all the days of your life
May you live to see your
grandchildren!*

Peace be with Israel!

BISHOPS MOVE... from p. 2

+ PHILIPPINES: Bishops Favor Debt Relief. The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines made a call for a national debt relief strategy based on church teachings on humanistic development. In a statement the CBCP says that "An enormous debt was created at least in part by wrong calculations, wrong investments, wrong decisions of individuals and organizations, and most likely by their wrong moral values as well." The country is paying an estimated average of US\$3.2 billion annually to service the foreign debt of US\$27 billion.

Information taken from the WORLD MISSION MAGAZINE, November 1990 issue.

PORNOGRAPHY: AN ATTACK ON CIVILIZATION

Why should a few pornographers dictate the social and moral environment for the children of millions of parents?

William Stanmeyer of the Citizens for Decency through Law (Phoenix, Az.) believes that as a parent he has a Constitutional right to bring up his children in a decent social and moral environment. In one of his articles recently published in The National Observer, he insists that pornographic literature displayed on the newsstands and sexually explicit scenes visualized on T.V., in movies and in home videos are violating his right and his children's right to a decent, civilized environment.

Bluntly speaking Stanmeyer writes that pornography is exploitation and it teaches exploitation, it is degrading and it teaches human debasement. It reduces the protagonist to a chemical urge and his foil to a function or an organ. She becomes a chattel, a robot, a toy for a moment's fun. It says: about sex there is nothing private, noble, or personal. It robs man of his dignity. The overwhelming message of pornography is: Man is garbage!

He sees pornography and obscenity as a frontal attack on civilization. By capitulating to obscenity, by allowing such to openly exist and to flaunt its nakedness, civilized society denies there is any difference between civilization and barbarism. Do we want our children to grow up to be civilized or to be barbarians?

Education to civility is an effort to make of man something more than a creature of elemental passions and sensations. To civilize is to help people internalize respect for others, sharpen their sense of reality, grasp the difference between the

decent and the indecent, desire the noble and eschew the ignoble, control their passions, do what is right even when it costs, stand in awe and wonder at such ultimate mysteries as the utter uniqueness of every other person, love, sex, suffering, and death.

With this as the goal of a civilized existence, we cannot afford to be neutral toward the proliferation of pornography, Stanmeyer says. It is not always easy to decide what conduct is "reasonable," what material is pornographic. But he says that we must try. The right to free speech and publication needs to be balanced by the harm caused to society and millions of impressionable children from pornographic materials.

Is censorship necessary? Some say, "The best way to deal with pornography is to let it run its course; once sated, people will get bored with it." This is somewhat like saying the best way to deal with the filth in Lake Erie (or Laguna de Bay) is to let the lake fill up till it can't take any more.

As a prominent lawyer involved in public morality issues Stanmeyer views the law as a guide to future generations. The law expresses to the young their elders' experienced judgement about right and wrong, a distillation of the mature community's experience and history. To ignore the issue of pornography, to refuse to enact laws and implement censorship is to teach the young that their elders do not know right from wrong; that we do not care how our young entertain - that is, educate - themselves.

What then is our answer as parents, as responsible elders, as Christians, to this affront against societal morals, to this attack on civilization, on our children, on our children's friends, and on their future?

CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

- Dec. 8 Quezon City Christmas breakfast. Joint breakfast for both men and women with guest couple sharing. At Alfredo's. Come and join in the fun, fellowship and surprises.
- Dec. 9 BCBP Singles and Lumen Christi Christmas fellowship. 5 p.m. at the residence of Louella Riale in Q.C.
- Dec. 14 Makati: chapter Christmas fellowship for the whole family. Exchange gifts, fun, games.
- Dec. 15 Greenhills: Lord's Day celebration, chapter Christmas fellowship and thanksgiving. Venue: Univ. of Life, Hall A

BCBP MEN'S BREAKFASTS

- Wednesdays - Architectural Center Club, Bel Air
- Thursdays - Club Filipino, Greenhills, San Juan
- Fridays - Malacanang Canteen, Malacanang
- Saturdays - Ayala-Alabang Country Club, Alabang
- Sherryland, Old Zapote Rd., Las Pinas
- Alfredo's Steak House, Tomas Morato Ave., Q.C.
- 2nd Thurs. - Philippine Navy Headquarters, Roxas Blvd.

BCBP LADIES' BREAKFASTS

- 1st - Architectural Center Club, Bel Air
- 1st - Alfredo's Steak House, Quezon City
- Saturdays - Sherryland, Old Zapote Rd., Las Pinas
- 2nd - Ayala-Alabang Country Club, Alabang
- Saturdays

BCBP LADIES' LUNCHEON

- 3rd Beijing Garden, Shaw Blvd.
- Thursdays (Ctr. for Peace)



Community Gathering

Makati Chapter

BEAR WITNESS TO THE LIGHT

Araneta Coliseum rang with mighty songs of praise and worship on November 25 as the LNP community and all its partners-in-mission held their first ever evangelization rally. The rally whose theme was "Bear Witness to the Light", was a rare opportunity for the charismatic communities under the umbrella of the Ligaya Ng Panginoon to come together for a morning of praise, fellowship and worship.

Worship was interspersed with inspirational talks and musical interludes. The BCBP choir delighted the audience as did the CYA dance number; Lingkod presented a lively musical skit. The morning ended with a most moving and spirit-filled Eucharistic celebration.

The participants included: Ligaya ng Panginoon, Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals, Couples For Christ, Christ's Youth in Action, Lingkod ng Panginoon, Tahanan ng Panginoon, Lumen Christi, Women for Christ, Light of Jesus Community and its out-reaches. Chairman of the Steering Committee was Frank Padilla; Arben Visenio took charge of physical arrangements while Toto dela Cruz was in charge of the liturgy and Mass. Rouquel Ponte handled the audio-visuals.

6:15 FELLOWSHIP NOW TWICE MONTHLY

November 22 saw the 6:15 Men's Fellowship begin its second monthly fellowship. Previously meeting only every second Thursday evening, now the 6:15 will meet every second and fourth Thursdays; venue remains at Arc Cuisine, Jupiter St., Bel Air.

Sharer Chuck de Leon related to the group how the Holy Spirit through the Brotherhood had changed his drug-filled life to a life of hope and promise. He said that the Lord had just poured out blessings upon blessings on him as after he had joined the renewal, the Lord gave him a lovely wife, and recently had added a bouncing baby boy.

CHAPTER SERVICE ASSIGNMENTS

December	Las Pinas
January	Quezon City
February	Makati
Sports Fest	Greenhills
March	Alabang
April	Greenhills
May	Las Pinas
Family Day	Makati

Makati Chapter**UNIT ASSEMBLY:
A JOYOUS AFFAIR**

A unit of the Makati chapter composed mostly of CLP #15 graduates, headed by unit leader Jessie Manalo, held a unit assembly on October 11 at the Knights of Columbus Headquarters in Merville, Paranaque. The evening began with the celebration of Holy Mass, sharing of "baons", followed by several inspirational talks by chapter head Rollie Ona and mission director Jun Catan.

The action groups headed by AGLs Art and Susan Olarte, Johnny and Marite Calixto, Cheng and Lucy Legaspi, Jules and Elvie Villamor, and Dr. Brigs and Pilar Legaspi turned out in full force and with their usual vivacity and enthusiasm. Virtually, all the unit members were present plus Rollie and Emma Ona and Jun and Nancy Catan. The lively and inspired unit music ministry headed by Cheng and Lucy Legaspi had many dancing for joy during the closing songs.

Rosie Malarky, wife of Danny Malarky who was the former action group leader of Tissy and Jane Manalo, Art and Susan Olarte, Cheng and Lucy Legaspi, Johnny and Marite Calixto, was also present as she was on a home visit from her new home in Toronto, Canada. Rosie talked about their experiences in forming a Christian community in Canada. She expressed her joy in seeing how their former action group of five couples with God's grace had grown into a unit now consisting of 60 members divided into five action groups. She encouraged all to continue with their commitment to service to the Brothehood.

Unit leader Jessie Manalo expressed his appreciation to the speakers and to all AGLs and their members for their cooperation, enthusiasm, commitment and continuing support of the unit and the Makati chapter. He related that the unit assembly was the culmination of the ongoing



ing cross groupings of the different action groups within the unit during the past months that had seen the growth of unity and harmony among all the unit members.

"One of the objectives of these cross groupings and this unit assembly is to foster close Christian family ties and to provide an additional vehicle to give members more opportunity to inter act and share their ex-

periences on how the power of the Holy Spirit is working in their lives," Jessie said.

He announced the unit's plans for a father and son out-of-town fellowship sometime in December and a unit outing to which other chapter units will be invited.

The evening ended in songs and dancing, fellowship. Everyone agreed that this would be the beginning of many such unit affairs.



Our military chaplains from left to right: Fr. De Leon, Ruazol and Esquila.

NEW APPOINTMENTS ANNOUNCED

Executive Director Fernando de Larrazabal announced the following appointments during the first Friday general assembly on Nov. 3.

Berns Jimenez as Dagupan Chapter Head Ranky Yu-pangco as Dagupan Mission Director, Eric Teotico as Greenhills Mission Director.

MUSIC MINISTRY WORKSHOP HELD

The Word of Joy Foundation conducted a Music Ministry Workshop November 10 and 17 at the University of Life Hall A in Pasig, Metro Manila. Several members from the various BCBP music service teams attended the lively and energizing sessions.

Mike Joseph, Jr. was the main presenter. Topics included: music and worship; forming a music ministry, choosing the right song at the right time, and characteristics of a music ministry member.

Greenhills Chapter MISSION TEAM

The mission team of the Greenhills chapter faces a busy year as it lays down plans to conduct Life In The Spirit Seminars (CLSS) in business establishments at least once a month.

This was revealed by Eric Teotico, newly appointed mission director for the Greenhills chapter as he and the rest of the mission team prepare for their first LSS to be, hopefully, conducted in December 1990.

Teotico said that two complimentary programs will be offered. The first is the weekend-long LSS for interested offices and companies. The second will be a "sustaining" program wherein LSS participants will be encouraged to come together in one venue for mass, prayer assemblies, sharings and teachings. During the second program, participants will be organized and trained to enable them to sustain and support themselves. Of course, Teotico added, the participants will be encouraged to join the BCBP.

All these, Teotico said, is in line with the BCBP's main objective of bringing Jesus Christ into the marketplace. He is also inviting BCBP members with their own

employees to be involved in the said programs to contact him or any of the mission team members of the Greenhills chapter.

The mission team, led by Eric and his wife, Kathy, have as member couples: Gus and Fely Leonardo, Buddy and Lily Halili, Cesar and Bing Liza, and one other couple which, as of presstime, has not been named.

Greenhills Chapter

CLP #16 PLANNED FOR FEBRUARY 1991

The Christian Life Program, CLP, #16 of the Greenhills chapter is scheduled to begin February 21, 1991. BCBP members who would like to sponsor a couple/individual from the Greenhills and nearby areas are advised to contact Mark Katipunan, chapter head, or Manolet Siojo, the CLP team leader. The CLP sessions will be held at the Lay Formation Center.

REJOICE!

For your
insurance needs,
contact:

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Unit Manager

Insular Life Greenhills D.O.
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Ortigas Ave., Greenhills,
San Juan, MM

Tels. 721-9349, 721-6908 - office
70-64-96 - residence

WITH EYES OF FAITH

Kytt Mier, Las Pinas

In the South chapters alone, there are a number of brothers, or members of a brother's immediate family, who are sick, either in the hospital or at home. Many of us may immediately interpret this as harassment as it happens during CLPs.

And this is a possibility. We are aware that activities that bring the reign of God closer to reality, like the CLP, could be lethal to the designs of the Evil One who is likely to resist strongly. We also know that

our commissioning and empowerment give us the power of the Holy Spirit and that 'the one who is in (us) is greater than the one who is in the world.' (1 John 4:4) This realization should be enough to motivate us to conduct ourselves in a manner that will maximize God's work while, at the same time, minimize the influence of the world, the flesh and the devil.

Let us now consider another possibility. In his first Letter to the Corinthians, Paul reminded the group of believers to give due respect to the Breaking of the Bread. (1 Cor. 11:26-29) He affirms the sacred nature of the consecrated bread and wine and warns against taking the Body and Blood of our Lord unworthily.

Most of us in the BCBP understand this truth, but do we live out this truth in our communal as well as personal lives? How seriously do we take the Holy Eucharist? Is it possible that we have relegated it to a secondary position vis-a-vis other BCBP

generously many years ago. For there are many among us in the Brotherhood who adversely affected by the economic slump and reversals of fortune in the marketplace, would be in need not only for food and clothes, but also for the assurances of acceptability and love in a community that claims itself to be Christian.

We can test our special BCBP charism by organizing the channels for the sharing of goods without creating undue stress to families that shall provide the blessings, and without putting the recipients of these blessings in situations of embarrassment. Surely, these efforts will require humility from everybody. Jesus came to earth as a baby in the supreme act of humility. Let us remember Him as we open ourselves to one another and learn the true meaning of Jesus' command to "love one another."

Lost in prayer one night, I said to the Lord, "How lucky your apostles were. They

"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE."



(JOHN 6:35)

activities? This is not to pass judgement on those among us who are currently sick. I would like merely to point out the constant need for deep soul searching to sort out our priorities.

Come to think of it, if we cannot visit a sick brother or sister in the hospital or at home because we're too busy with work, maybe we should change our name into simply "Brotherhood of Businessmen and Professionals"! At least the new name would justify our being busy with our work.

This could be our best Christmas ever. Hounded by political instability and economic problems, we go into a period of great opportunity to do justice to the label "Season of Giving." We can start practicing among ourselves the 'communion of spiritual and material goods' which the early Christian communities practiced so

got their commissioning from You personally." Came the Lord's immediate answer, "Have I not been with you since your baptism years ago? Didn't I enter your heart and your very life everytime you received Me in communion since the first time you partook of My Body and Blood almost 32 years ago? My apostles were far advanced in years when they met Me, and they had to wait till after three years before being empowered by My Spirit. But I was with you even from your childhood. Has no one told you this?"

With much embarrassment, I had to say, "Yes, Lord, it is true You were with me all the time those years. My parents and teachers tried to remind me about you but I was busy growing up to become a man and earn a living. Forgive my narrow-mindedness and strengthen my weak faith, Lord Jesus, for Your greater honor and glory."

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Q.C. PLANNING CONFERENCE

In preparation for 1991, the Quezon City Chapter held a planning conference at the East Asian Pastoral Institute.

Chapter head Benjie Quinto together with the different heads of service met in a presentation and discussion type meeting to thresh out the activities of the chapter for 1991.

The whole day affair began with a

prayer and worship session. The first topic on the agenda was a presentation on the mission statement and the membership covenant.

After a short break, the group went into an evaluation of the Chapter's activities.

The afternoon session began with the preparation of the Group Presentations

in relation to their evaluations and the recommendations.

The day's activities culminated in the open forum and the eventual summarization of the recommendations. The chapter plans however will still be presented to the Executive Committee for approval. The announcement of the Chapter plans is tentatively set for the Chapter's first assembly in 1991.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Nene Tayag, Alabang Chapter

Witnessing for Jesus Christ has been my commitment since I accepted Him into my life. My husband and I joined the Brotherhood in 1981 and since that time, I have always taken every opportunity to witness for God's marvelous deeds in my life and those of my loved ones. Everytime I taste and see His perfect plan being fulfilled in me, boldly and courageously, I stand up and share what He has done for me. I get so inspired when I share for I experience God's generous love through the listening attitude of our brothers and sisters.

Lately I could sense God wanted me to do again what I used to do when the Alabang chapter was not established yet. I would always glorify the Lord through my sharing in our Friday prayer assemblies at Assumption College in San Lorenzo. For one reason or another I have lost touch with these brothers and sisters over the years. I felt the Lord prodding me to find ways to keep in touch.

I got a confirmation of what the Lord was asking me to do through Nancy Catan. We were seated together at one table during the Alabang Ladies' Breakfast anniversary last August and she asked me to send in a contribution for the KAPATIRAN. Nostalgically I remembered the time during my spiritual formation

when listening to experiences of other brothers and sisters had made me feel the personal touch of Jesus. I truly missed those days but know that God had a different plan for me at that time.

After having missed all my brothers and sisters from the Assumption prayer assemblies for all these years, in God's time, in God's own way, through the KAPATIRAN, I will be in touch again. As God provides, I will now be able to share with my brothers and sisters from all chapters through this newsletter.

As a member of the BCBP I need to get in touch and keep in touch; we all do. I praise God for He has found that missing link to the family that I belong to. Through the KAPATIRAN God brings us in touch with each other and closer to Him. Absence makes the heart grow fonder, God makes our love grow deeper.

Ed's Note: Beginning with this issue our sister Nene Tayag will be writing a column on thoughts and experiences as a BCBP member under the column title: Keeping In Touch.





CYA Reports to the BCBP:

CASTING THE NET MORE WIDELY

Rogel Plata, present head of the Christ's Youth in Action, a partner in mission with the BCBP and an outreach activity of the Ang Ligaya ng Panginoon, reported on the past year's CYA activities before a meeting of the chapter heads of the Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals, October 11, at the Metropolitan Club, Makati. He stressed that in spite of their limited funds they were able to operate in faith and reach out to more than 3000 students on various campuses in Manila and throughout the country.

The CYA approach is 'strategic evangelism', reaching out to many but zeroing in on quality — the leaders, initiators and organizers among students and young men and women. They are offered a more meaningful relationship with Jesus, greater meaning in their lives, constructive peer activities and fellowship, spiritual formation and leadership training.

As part of the CYA report, Reena Calayco, a CYAer from Ateneo, witnessed through song; Jody Claudio from Don Bosco gave a short personal testimony; Lorna Santiago, a staffer, shared her experiences as a persevering witness on campus. Five students from UP demonstrated their joy in knowing Christ Jesus in a dance presentation. A slide show of CYA activities capped the report.

Among the ways discussed by the group that the Brotherhood can help the CYA in its mission were finding ways of interfacing

activities between the BCBP and the CYA, identifying definite projects that the BCBP members could help out with, and helping with job placements. It was also suggested that occasional joint BCBP-CYA prayer assemblies be held.

The Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals is one of the major supporters of the CYA.

Attending the meeting from the BCBP were Louie Morales, Rem Gopez, Jun Catan, Spanky Meer, Rollie Ona, Fernando de Larrazabal, Nelson Yuchongtian, Manny Banigan, Arturo Orlina, Nancy Catan, Tony Pedro and Sadi Saguisag. Representing the CYA were Rogel Plata, Renee Punzal, Francis Iturralde, Gil Galeste, Lorna Santiago, Terry Savage and Jake Yap. Also attending were Tahanan ng Panginoon representatives Eli Lademora, Jr. and Peter Bautista.

CYA BRIEF

+ Christ's Youth in Action (CYA) is an outreach of the Ligaya Ng Panginoon Community composed of young Catholic men and women dedicated to spreading the Christian gospel in Filipino universities and other young people's environments.

+ There are CYA staffers (full time workers) in the University of Santo Tomas, Far Eastern University, University of the Philippines, Miriam College (formerly Maryknoll), Ateneo de Manila University, Don Bosco Technical College, and St. Scholastica's College.

+ The CYA helps interested groups through teachings and other inputs in La Union, Los Banos, Tiaong, Pandi, Gen. Santos, Roxas City and Tondo.

+ Aside from weekly prayer meetings, all of the above groups meet for periodic recollections, members' meetings, sports days, teachings, Days of Renewal, worship, sharing and fellowship.

+ There are presently 16 full-time CYA staffers with salaries ranging from P3,000 to P3500/month.

+ CYA activities, based primarily on establishing one-to-one relationships with students who are potential leaders, have resulted in over 300 committed Christian young people, with about 700 college students attending weekly prayer meetings on campus. The twice a year Days of Renewal attract over 800 young men and women, who enjoy meeting for worship, sharing and spiritual formation.



Five students from UP demonstrated their joy in knowing Christ Jesus in a dance presentation.

TAHANAN NG PANGINOON REPORT

The Tahanan ng Panginoon, a foundation engaged in evangelization in squatter areas in Metro Manila, presently has 1400 members in 11 communities. This was reported to the BCBP heads during their October 11 meeting (see CYA Reports) by Eli Lademora. The TNP is an outreach of the Ligaya ng Panginoon.

Five full time workers spearhead community activities that focus on a wholistic approach to the conditions of poverty. Not only are evangelization and formation activities undertaken but these go hand in hand with helping the families in the community meet their survival needs through development of their skills and gifts. Medical services and legal services are also provided when necessary.

Tahanan began in 1986 with a first CLP batch of 70 members coming from two barangays in San Juan and Mandaluyong. At that time all 17 leaders, the service teams and household heads came from the LNP and CFC. Now there are eleven Tahanan communities with members comprising 1312 individuals including 260 youth. Involved in serving them are 237 leaders and workers out of which only 57 are from LNP and CFC, the rest are 'home-grown'.

Existing TNP communities include St. Joseph, Corazon de Jesus, West Crame, Joriz, Pineda, E. Rodriguez, Tomas Claudio, Maricaban, Tambacan, Loyola Heights and Bagong Silang. There are standing requests for TNP to expand to Cogeo, Taytay and Welfareville.

Eli Lademora requested the BCBP to consider in addition to possible financial assistance, the possibility of lending technical assistance in small business credit programs, marketing assistance, skills training programs and placement of trained personnel. During the ensuing brainstorming session, it was suggested that each BCBP chapter coordinate with a TNP area in or near their chapter area in whatever ways they can. However, such help should not deflect the BCBP members from the BCBP's marketplace charism.

Kap: What kind of BCBP do you envision in the year 2000?

Fr. Herb: A bigger one than now! I like to envision at least an organization more or less the way it is now but, of course, expanded to other cities throughout the country. This would necessitate more dynamism in the present BCBP leadership, more coordination in carrying out our evangelism thrust.

I'd like to see two things established in the Brotherhood by the year 2000. One has been tried before but never really succeeded, sort of a business service task force that could be a real service in helping BCBP members in business. It could offer services and consultations in various areas of business like marketing, feasibility studies, product management, finances and financial planning and things like that so that BCBP companies could have an access to the expertise and help that they might need. This requires much planning and prayer but I feel that this kind of task force is an achievable goal.

Fr. Herb: I would like to see every member of the Brotherhood trained in more evangelization, like everyone should really be able to give a very good, solid, simple, clear personal testimony whenever called upon to do so. Secondly, everybody should be able to present the gospel message to someone in a clear way including all the scripture passages needed and memorized.

Kap: Presently there is the Catholic Evangelization Training Program or CETP that a core group from each chapter have taken. Is this what you mean?

Fr. Herb: Something like this, but maybe even in a simpler version. The point is that everybody should be trained, every member should be an evangelist. I also believe that all BCBP members should be trained to pray with the scriptures privately and personally. They should be trained in gospel sharing methods and bible study methods as well as in group dynamics so that action groups don't deteriorate into so-

TOWARD THE YEAR 2000

A Dialogue with Fr. Herb Schneider

The second one would be that the Brotherhood would cooperate, let's say with some organization like the Tahanan ng Panginoon, and help in the development of depressed areas, not by giving money but by employing people, by training people for jobs, by supporting people in studying business and undertaking livelihood projects. This is a special type of social service, the God-given talent for business being used to help the needy develop their own resources and become productive members of our society.

Maybe a third area I would like to see the Brotherhood in is for the BCBP to become a real voice in our country, in business and the professions, influencing many in doing things according to the values of the gospel.

Kap: What other programs or activities would you like to see the Brotherhood adopt during the next decade?

cial gatherings and parties just to keep the members interested.

I think we need to have something like task forces in place that would think of ways and means as to how the Brotherhood should expand and how to utilize the resources for this, both manpower and money resources.

I think the Lord is working very strongly in the Brotherhood so I am very optimistic of the future. I have also learned that true growth takes time. Just by looking back over the last 10 years I know that the Lord was faithful and I think we owe it to Him to work till finally we really are the way He wants us to be. We need to go on together serving the Lord in the business milieu and pray that with His help we will continue to bear rich fruit and bring about changes in the future.

MARY SMILED AT ME!

Nancy Catan, Makati Chapter

The weekend of October 7 was an unforgettable weekend for me. We went to Baguio by divine appointment, Mary smiled at me, and our daughter Ruth delivered a lovely baby girl, Beth Rosario.

On Friday morning Jun and I received a telephone call from our sister in Christ Agnes Baizas from the Central Bank Charismatic Community asking us to go with her to Baguio for the first Friday recollection at the Sacred Heart Community there. After confirming by long distance that indeed there was a recollection on-going, we rushed to take the bus that afternoon.

When we reached the bus terminal in Quezon City, the bookings were full, no space available. We prayed and waited for closing time at 4 p.m. The bus conductor said that if there were any chance passenger space it would only be for one or two; there had never been as many as four (we were four) chance spaces available. At 4:01 Jun climbed on the bus and the four front seats were empty, just waiting for us! So off we went to Baguio.

Saturday morning we attended the collection given by Bro. Paul Aguas. It was all about the recent apparition of Mary at Akita, Japan. But Bro. Paul was sick with the flu and unable to continue the recollection. He said that we were answers to his prayers and asked us to share and conclude the recollection that afternoon so he could rest. This then was one of the purposes that we were called by the Lord to Baguio.

During the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament that afternoon I experienced for the first time a state of deep contemplation, an immersion in the Presence of the Lord, which left me with a wonderful reservoir of inner peace and joy.

Sunday morning after mass and fellowship with the Sacred Heart

Community, we visited the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes at Mirador Hill. When we arrived at the top of the long flight of stairs, Jun after greeting Our Lady went off to one of the side gardens to pray on a rock overlooking the valley. Agnes and I remained before the grotto. No one else was there.

As I was meditating, I thought Mary looked different but I wasn't so sure as the weather was misting with wisps of clouds drifting around the hill. Then Agnes beckoned urgently to me, "Halika dito. You stand over there and look at the Blessed Mother." So I did. She was standing at the right side of the top of the stairs, while I stood at the left side. After about 40 minutes of silent prayer, we turned to each other and she asked me what I saw.

"I'm not sure but I'll tell you what I think I saw," I replied. "When I first gazed at Mary, she was looking out over our heads, looking very far away, as if she were gazing out over the whole world. And she looked so sad, I expected to see tears at any moment. Then she looked up to heaven and her face became radiant, glowing with an inner light of intense joy and brightness, as if she were face to face with God the Father and her Son Jesus.

Then she turned her face downwards and smiled directly at me. I will always remember her eyes and her smile, so sweet, so lovely, so heart-warming."

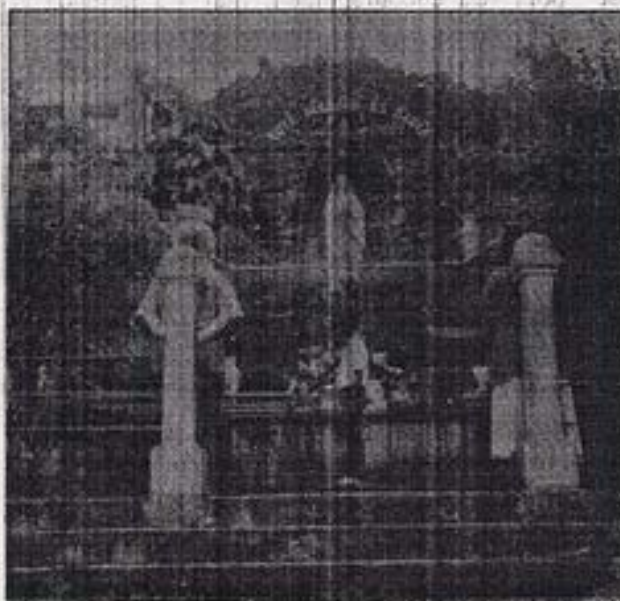
"Yes, yes," Agnes broke in excitedly, "that's exactly what I saw too! And what did she do then?" "She repeated the same sequence of three different facial expressions again in exactly the same way," I replied. And Agnes again confirmed what I had seen.

Agnes said that she saw Mary come out of the grotto towards us, but I said that I didn't see her do that. Jun was meanwhile taking pictures of us and of Mary in the grotto. It was only after looking at the developed pictures that I realized that Mary had indeed come down toward us because in the picture she was quite far away from where we were standing, yet I remember her face and her eyes as being very close, as if she standing in front of me talking to me.

Mary gave us no message that day. Both Agnes and I continued praying for the meaning of our October 7 experience. It happened on the Feast of the Rosary, was there a connection? For almost three weeks we wondered and prayed.

Then on October 23 the answer came. Agnes received a letter from a charismatic friend living in Australia. The letter had been written on October 7. Her friend said that during his prayer time that day the Lord had asked him to write to Agnes with this message: Tell her that the message is: "Make known to all the Blessed Mother is blessing!"

So through this short sharing, I am making known to you all that the Blessed Mother does care for us as a mother cares for her children. She lovingly entreats us to turn and gaze with joy on her Son Jesus. Why did she smile at us? Perhaps to give us her



ODYSSEY FOR THE LORD

Gil Abejo, Greenhills Chapter

I have long been on an odyssey for the Lord! And this odyssey is being undertaken through the BCBP. It all started in July 1984 when my wife, Letty, and I joined the CLP 8 at Metro Club at the insistence of Pete and Rose Padre of the South Chapter. We were staying in Fairview, Q.C., but my office is in Ermita, Manila.

On the morning of CLP talk #7, I attended my first BCBP breakfast at Club Filipino, Greenhills. The following week saw me at the BCBP breakfast at Metro Club. In October I began attending at the Army and Navy Club. On 21 November 1984 I "graduated" at the Metro breakfast and received my white BCBP card. My odyssey had begun in earnest as I found that I received much spiritual strengthening from the sharings and fellowship among the BCBP brothers during the breakfasts. It became my joy to start out early in the morning from Fairview just to catch up with the breakfasts.

On 25 January 1985 I attended the breakfast at the Army and Navy Club and continued to have my BCBP breakfasts there until 16 January 1987 when I followed the breakfast to its new venue at the Philippine Columbian Association at Plaza Dilao, Paco. There I stayed until the breakfast group transferred to the MOPC sometime in 1988, and still later, followed the same breakfast group to Malacanang where I attend up to the present time.

Since I joined CLP 8, the South chapter has been divided into the Makati and Alabang chapters (the latter subsequently sub-divided into Alabang and Las Pinas), and the North chapter has been divided into the Greenhills and the Quezon City chapters. I ceased to be a member of the South chapter even before finishing CLP 8 because I was assigned to Danny Carreon's action group in the North chapter. Our action group was later assigned to the Greenhills chapter where we saw

action in the household group of Albert Grupe and succeeding that, in the group under Roly Aberion. In October 1989 we were asked to head an action group composed mostly of members of our 1988 group.

We have had our own odyssey in prayer assemblies, too. When I attended my first assembly, it was at Mary The Queen in Greenhills, San Juan. Later the venue moved to the chapel in White Plains, Q.C., and still later, at the University of Life in Pasig. Lately, the chapter prayer assembly moved to the EDSA Shrine at Ortigas-EDSA intersection, and now has its home at the Center for Peace along Shaw Boulevard in Mandaluyong.

I still reside in far-away Fairview. But I remain a member of the Greenhills chapter. The members of my action group are all Q.C. residents but members likewise of the Greenhills chapter. I continue to attend the BCBP breakfast at Malacanang because that venue is nearest my office in Ermita.

Why am I sharing my odyssey with you? I have found out that it is not where one attends the BCBP breakfasts or the prayer assemblies that is important. It is the support and encouragement that we receive from these BCBP activities and from our BCBP brothers and sisters that is important. Attending such activities and serving the Lord in whatever ways we can has helped Letty and I to flesh out our commitment to the Lord, at the same time giving us the perseverance and joy to continue on our journey toward holiness.

Where is my odyssey taking me? God only knows. To me, it really does not matter where my odyssey takes me as long as He is with me. The Israelites wandered 40 years in the desert before entering the promised land. And so I will remain in the BCBP and in the service of the Lord. Praise God!

MARY SMILED ...

From page 11

blessing for trying to live lives in obedience to her Son. I believe that she is also blessing all of us, our nation, all believers and interceding for us with her Son.

I was never a Marian devotee. Now praying the rosary daily and interceding for others in prayer is a MUST! And I still have that deep sense of peace and joy, a sense that whatever happens - war, economic crisis, or whatever - everything is going to turn out all right for Jesus is our real refuge and strength. And Mary will bring us to Him. Praise God!

NO TIME

*I knelt to pray, but not for long,
I had too much to do,
Must hurry off and get to work
For bills would soon be due.*

*And so I said a hurried prayer,
Jumped up from off my knees;
My Christian duty now was done
My soul could be at ease.*

*All through the day I had no time
To speak a word of cheer
No time to speak of Christ to friends -
They'd laugh at me, I fear.*

*No time, no time, too much to do -
That was my constant cry;
No time to give to those in need -
At last 'twas time to die.*

*And when before the Lord I came,
I stood with downcast eyes,
Within His hands He held a Book,
It was the "Book of Life."*

*God looked into His Book and said
"Your name I cannot find.
I once was going to write it down,
But never found the time."*

Anonymous

Last August we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the BCBP. Come February next year, Serge and I will be celebrating our 10th year in the BCBP. I feel so privileged being part of this group whom God has commissioned to be his workers in transforming the marketplace. Although I take a supportive role in this evangelical task, I praise God for the gift of the Brotherhood for it has given me every opportunity to bring Jesus Christ and his gospel not only to the marketplace but more significantly to our four children who have also taken their own Christian Life Program in the BCBP. With every occasion to serve, God has given himself not only to those people whom he has brought me to. He has given himself to me through all these years in spite of my failures and shortcomings in my daily walk with him.

As I look at myself, there is no more trace of the woman who had lived a life full of fears, anxieties and pressures. Before my Brotherhood days, I would be greatly affected with what was going on around me. The peace and order situation, news of wars and other disturbances, economic unstabilities like soaring prices of basic commodities resulted in endless migraine headaches. The only way I could find to relieve myself of these pressures was to blame those in the government specially the economic technocrats, business wizards and even the lowly market vendor.

Financial tension remained one of my greatest fears. It was one area in my life that ruined my whole outlook on life. My fears and tensions affected my relationship with the people around me. Having been exposed to the law of supply and demand and other economic principles that had taken root during my college days, I became more concerned with applying these principles, keeping meticulous track of income and expenses rather than spending time with my family.

But God has always been faithful for He took me out of this bondage when I surrendered my life to Him. Knowing Him and loving Him with my whole being has given me the privilege of having somebody whom I can run to everytime I get caught in a situation that is too much for me. I was no longer afraid of price increases and other economic problems. I found out that

ON GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

Nene Tayag, Alabang Chapter

it's not my knowledge of economic laws and principles that will help me, it is God's grace and His wisdom and knowledge that will solve the problems. As long as I do my share in handling my household responsibilities, I am sure God will guide me in coping with whatever happens.

The book of Proverbs speaks to us of an ideal wife as one who "is clothed with strength and dignity and she laughs at the days to come. She opens her mouth in wisdom and her tongue is kindly counsel. She watches the conduct of her household and eats not her food in idleness."

The book of Proverbs speaks to us of an ideal wife as one who "is clothed with strength and dignity and she laughs at the days to come. She opens her mouth in wisdom and her tongue is kindly counsel. She watches the conduct of her household and eats not her food in idleness."

I have learned of energy saving ways like teaching my laundry woman to do the ironing once a week, cooking and preparing foodstuff in larger amounts and storing them in the freezer in quantities just enough for my family consumption. Instead of boiling one kilo of beef, I'll double it, then use it for three preparations like nilaga, sinigang and pochero. All I need to do is to add the other ingredients for quicker meal preparation.

I market weekly and concentrate only on the more basic items, no luxury items, no junk food, no storage of unnecessary foodstuff. In short, no way for panic buying.

Another area that I fear most is losing a competent and efficient househelp. Last September, our helper

who had stayed with us for the past 7 years got sick and went home to her parents for a needed rest. Although I resented it, we parted in peace for I understood her situation. I prayed each day that God would bless her with complete healing so she could come back to me. However when she was ready to work, we had to part ways and this time it was for keeps. I had to choose between keeping her again or tolerating some of her ways that were not in accordance with God's ways. I prayed and we parted ways.

But God faithfully was with me for He supplied me with energy and vigor so that I was able to meet the daily load of household responsibilities by myself for more than a month. If this had happened before, I could never have coped. But God was so good that He taught me how to be more patient and to do just what my physical capabilities could handle, not to try to do too much. What really kept me up and about were my prayers. I did not complain and I did not feel bad about my situation; I accepted it with joy and peace.

Barely a month after that God blessed me with three helpers. Now I not only have one to help me in the housework, but two more to help me in my business if the need arises. How fulfilling it is to be helping others for in spite of the additional expenditures for helpers, I feel happy that I could help them through my business.

All the days that I had no helper I just continuously praised and thanked God for allowing me to be in this situation. With my 3 older children in the office and my youngest in school plus Serge attending to his business activities, I had to do everything. And God was at my side holding me up.

I treasure this experience in trusting in the Lord and leaning on His faithfulness. God has always been with me in His perfect faithfulness. As the prophet Isaiah says: "Then you shall call and the Lord will answer; you shall call for help and He will say: Here I am." Praise God!

I grew up with some knowledge of God. We children were all baptized Catholics but we went to church only on special occasions like Lent and Christmas. My father was a fisherman turned businessman and my mother, a tindera of "tinapa", turned also businesswoman, managing store and restaurant and, of course, us 10 children. He was a 2nd grader and she was a 3rd grader, but somehow, through hard work and determination, they were able to send us to school.

In my teens I was involved in church activities, in college I was an "interno" but with a bunch of "prodigals", you know, the spoiled brats! Despite almost daily attendance at Mass the life I lived then was not lived in the way of Him who became man to save all of us, sinners and captives of sin.

Jesus Christ. I was starting to seek the truth by opening the Bible, sitting on the sofa alone. While I was reading silently His words in Matthew: "Go and sin no more," I felt His presence before me. My eyes were focused on the Bible but within the scope of my vision, I saw His feet, His legs and up to His shoulders. I was so blessed that somehow I knew deep in my heart and my entire being - Siya na nga iyon!

I could not understand this personal relationship with the Lord thing before that. The two young sons of my Kumadre from L.A. during an excursion to Villa Escudero had tried to proclaim Jesus Christ to me but I thought, who are they to tell me, an Atenista, about Jesus? 'Yun pala, it is not enough that we know about Him but we must know Him personally and accept Him

birthday so I am sure that she was praying for me at that time.

Currently, with the loving support of my BCBP brothers and sisters I have become closer to God and am increasingly aware of His presence and grace. His blessings come at the exact times when I need them. One example was when I needed funds to pay for the tuition of our children. It was Saturday and I could not think of any source, so I prayed and lifted it up to the Lord. The following day, Sunday, I received a letter from Guam with a One Hundred Dollar Bill enclosed. On Monday I was able to pay the necessary tuition and even had a few extra pesos pa!

About my legal practice, I still continue to practice but only in moderation and only if I can be of service to the cause of justice

GROWING IN THE AWARENESS OF GOD

A Mini-Sharing

Jimmy Cruz, Las Pinas Chapter

Eventually, nanlamig ako sa ating Simbahan. My wife and I became involved with a medium and her "engkantadas". Our mysterious activities persisted for many months until I realized that in all that time, I had never heard the name of our Lord Jesus Christ mentioned. When I finally called upon His Name we were released from whatever power was holding us. It was as if Tita and I were awakened from a long and deep sleep.

My Personal Encounter with Jesus

It was October 11, 1984, when I opened the Word of God. I had come to the realization that although I had read many books and magazines and newspapers over the years, I had never really read the greatest book ever written. I began to thirst for the Word.

Vividly, I remember that wonderful day, the 11th of October, when I had that first close encounter with our Lord and Savior,

as our Lord and Savior, not only in words but in our way of life and in our deeds and actions.

Then I was invited to the BCBP breakfast by Manny Sison and together, we joined CLP 11 where once again, I felt the strong presence of God. Then the BCMR taught Tita and me a lot about how to make a go of our married life. We participated in all other BCBP activities, too, where we got mutual support from and love from among the members.

However, in early 1988, we were drawn to another group meeting at the Rizal Theater. The group seemed all right and we became deeply involved. But at a certain point in time, I felt that my love for the Blessed Mother might have to be compromised and so I became a 'balik-brotherhood' in January 1989. Thanks to the prayers of Mary, Our Lady of Lourdes, God chose Her Feast Day to be my

and equity. I cannot in conscience continue to adhere to the sayings: "The end justifies the means" and "dancing with the music" which are of this world.

And since life is a gift from God, and I've always been praying for Him to give me long life, I realize that I'll have to cooperate with God and, once and for all, quit smoking.

All these changes for a better life are happening to us because of my acceptance of Jesus as my personal Lord and Redeemer. Siya na ang hari ng aking buhay hindi na ako o sino pa man. And every morning, upon waking up, I accept the lordship of God over me, praising and thanking Him for everything that will happen during the day and praying that I shall always be mindful and sensitive to God's will every moment of the day.

Praise and Glory be to God!

THREE SYMBOLS OF CHRISTMAS

Billy Graham

There are three symbols which mean Christmas — the real meaning of Christmas.

The first is a cradle. There, in Bethlehem, were cradled the hopes and dreams of a dying world. Those chubby little hands that clasped the straw in His manger crib were soon to open blind eyes, unstop deaf ears and still the troubled seas. That cooing voice was soon to teach men of the Way and to raise the dead. Those tiny feet were to take Him to the sick and needy and were to be pierced on Calvary's cross.

That manger crib in remote Bethlehem became the link that bound a lost world to a loving God.

The cross. There were both light and shadow on that first Christmas. There was joy with overtones of sadness, for Jesus was born to die. Jesus, approaching the cross, said, To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world. To Christians the joy of Christmas is not limited to His birth. It was His death and resurrection that gave meaning to His birth.

It is in the cross that the world can find a solution to its pressing problems.

The crown. Jesus was crowned with a crown of thorns and enthroned on a cruel cross, yet His assassins did something, perhaps unwittingly. They place a superscription over His cross in Greek, Latin and Hebrew: "This is the King."

Yes, Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords, and He is coming back someday. He will come not as a babe in Bethlehem's manger. The next time He comes it will be in a blaze of glory and He will be crowned Lord of all.

Cradle - cross - crown. Let them speak to you. Let the power of Him who came to us at Christmas grip you, and He will surely change your life.



ONE MINUTE MEDITATIONS

Fernando de Larrazabal

(1) Who is a Christian? The conventional definition is - they are those who believe and follow Christ. In a real sense everyone is a Christian, the Jews, the Muslims, the Buddhists, the Hindus and all others, for they owe their possible salvation to Jesus Christ who died to save them as well. Christ died for all humanity therefore everyone, whether they know it or not, belong to Christ. Does this not make everyone a Christian?

A number of conventional Christians wish to monopolize Christ for themselves and exclude him from others of different faiths. Are we to suppose a loving God becoming man, dying only for one fourth of the world's population? Let me point out there were no Christians at the time God promised a redeemer in Genesis 3:15. The purpose of a Savior was to do away with evil from the world so that all creation may have the chance to be saved.

God is the God of all men who were made into his image and likeness. In Matthew 25 God says he will separate the good from the bad by how they lived his tenet to love one's neighbor. This in no way creates a cleavage between Christians and those of other faiths.

(2) Understanding "who is a Christian" also involves understanding "who or what is the Church". Let me share with you some

thoughts taken from the Vatican II Week-day Missal.

It is most important to have a correct understanding of "Church". Many followers of Christ develop difficulties with the Church. Part of the difficulty is that they do not understand properly what the Church is.

The best explanation of "Church" is to be read in the masterwork of the Second Vatican Council: the "Constitution on the Church." This document explains that the idea of Church - of a community or organization of Christians - comes from Christ. The Church is a community of God's people. It is made up of us all. It does not belong to anyone but Christ. All of us together are in it, are co-responsible for it. The Church helps us to relate to Christ, to worship, to receive the Bread of Life, to know what to believe and do.

What is the best picture we can get of the Church? It is that seen when we look in a mirror, but with all other followers of Christ in back of us.

These Minute Meditations are part of an on-going series by BCBP Exec. Director Fernando de Larrazabal. They are translated into several dialects and are aired several times daily, nationwide on 42 stations, free of charge, through the facilities of the Radio Mindanao Network.

MISSION WORK:**Answering Gods Call***Rem Gopez, Mission Team Head, Las Pinas*

In the New Testament, the calling and sending of the twelve apostles (and later that of the seventy disciples), to preach the Good News, represent the task which has been given to the Church as its responsibility till the end of time: to evangelize all nations. Today, like the twelve and the seventy before them, BCBP members are called and sent to undertake the same activity. This is because the BCBP's mission is to bring Jesus Christ to the marketplace, and in so doing, its members literally become the modern-day disciples of Jesus, and His teachings become the Brotherhood's current operating principles.

God, with his loving heart and tender Word, is calling all souls everywhere to consider and voluntarily accept the challenge of evangelization. He calls us through His Word; at times, He calls us through the mysterious action of His Holy Spirit. The same call is coursed many times through His servants in the community. Sometimes we discern this call as it emer-

have never answered the call to repentance, and yet are busy serving and sacrificing in their evangelization work. I wonder if their service is acceptable.

We must heed the call of Jesus and all his apostles to repent and turn to God. Only then when Jesus Christ dwells within us and the Holy Spirit directs our efforts will we be found acceptable in God's sight. Jesus himself said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? And in your name have cast out devils? In your name done wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them: 'I never knew you; depart from me, you that work iniquity.'" (Matt. 7:22,23)

Pitfalls Along the Way

Mission work is not without its pitfalls along the way. One great stumbling block can be temptation to self-elation. In theory, it is good to be well informed about

is overwhelming. We need to remember that on judgement day, God will look us over not for our medals but for the number of scars that we have!

Intellectual Pride. Jesus said, "Thank you Father, for hiding these things from the wise and the learned..." (Matt. 11:25-27) What is this thing that is hidden? The mysterious power of the Gospel to transform people and show them the truth. Proud, over-rational and self-sufficient people are not usually well disposed to be enlightened by Jesus' revelation. Jesus does not vilify the wise and the learned; He is just against what we call the 'intellectual pride' that prevents us from attaining the conditions for Christian discipleship: humility of heart and openness to God.

Rewards of Faithful Service

In the gospel of Luke (10:17-20), Jesus reveals to us two precious rewards for faithful service. Firstly the disciples were exposed to the marvels of God's glory. They said, "Lord, even the demons obeyed us when we called on your name." They had experienced first hand miracles taking place and the transforming power of His

ANSWERING... From p. 16

fers an easier way for us to carry our burden. And it is actually true just like so many people testify. Our problems, trials, and tribulations seem to have increased after making Jesus the Lord of our lives, but we find that these burdens are no longer as formidable as when we were struggling to carry them alone.

As Christians we are supposed to bear the burden of His Kingdom, the task of proclaiming it to the ends of the earth, of bringing it to others. It is sharing what Jesus Himself has carried for the last 2,000 years: the work of saving human kind, evangelization of all nations, the reconciliation of men and women to God, the renewal of the Church, the renewal of the whole world. These are the only burdens Jesus wants us to carry.

He does not want us to be weighted down with the problems of this world: financial, political, "I have no car," "what shall I eat tomorrow," "what is the future



of this country," and other secular concerns. These are the burden of the pagans. He tells us that He will supply all our needs (Phil. 4:19) as we put Him first in our lives and share His burden of evangelization.

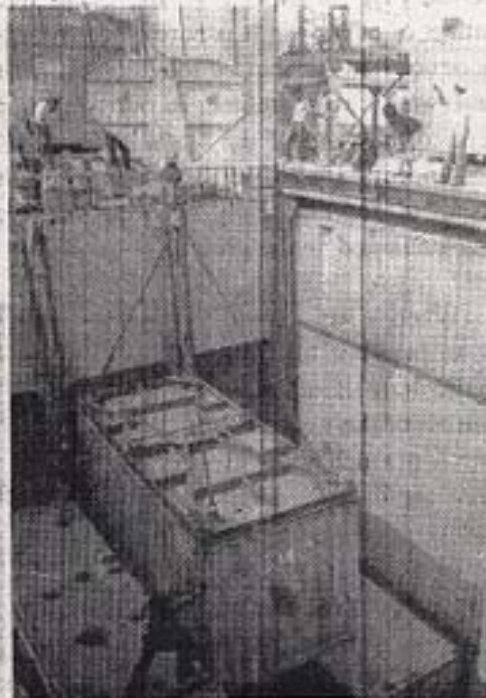
We need then as committed brothers and sisters in the BCBP to answer His call for service, for mission work, for evangelization, fully trusting in Him to show us the right way.

JANUARY 4

Deadline for submission of news, articles, sharings, letters, pictures and advertisements for the February-March KAPATIRAN.

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HOW TO SHARE

Nanette Ferreria, Makati Chapter

The basic purpose of the BCBP is to bring Christ into the marketplace, to move other people into a closer relationship with Jesus. This purpose can be accomplished by sharing how He has worked in our lives. Necessarily, for a talk to have great impact on the lives of people, it should be so powerful spiritually that it moves those who hear to change their lives for the better.

Sharing powerfully can be learned. My talk this morning (this talk was given during a Makati ladies' breakfast) attempts to give you some guidelines that hopefully can lead you to share your lives in a very powerful way to others.

There is more to sharing than just relating our life story. We share 1) to glorify God, and 2) to build each other up spiritually. We accomplish this by delivering a sharing that does not slip into gossip or scandal but rather serves as an inspiration to the listeners to grow closer to Jesus Christ.

A good question to keep in mind which could guide us in sharing is: "How can I evangelize my audience? Will what I am about to say help them become more mature spiritually?"

Structuring Your Personal Sharing

A personal testimony or sharing can be divided into three parts. First is your life before conversion, second is how you were called by the Lord to the Renewal, and third, but most important of all, is the living out of your life according to God's call for you to change.

Life Before The Lord's Call

In relating our lives before we entered the renewal, we do not really need to follow

the bible format, that is, starting with the annunciation, then conception, birth, and plodding through all the rigors of elementary, high school, your first job, your many firsts in life. These high points can be summarized in a very few sentences that are short and direct to the point. We should ask ourselves always how these things, these high points in our early lives would enhance the sharing. How do these incidents relate to your conversion? How was God working in your life during those times?



Our being succinct about our past life however, does not mean that we are licensed to give bland uneventful sharings on our past life. What I am saying is that for most of us, the most significant part of our life is our adult life where we are confronted to make decisions which we are accountable for. Our adult life really starts towards our late teens, our early work life and our early married life. It is in this period that we experience the peaks and valleys of our lives. It is here where we experience how life can be tough on us. It is here where we sometimes in our confusion turn to the ways of the world to "survive", not knowing that if we turn to the world's ways we are not really surviving but are being damned in the process.

When we write down our past life, our initial draft should contain all of the events of our life which we feel are significant; after having written it all down on paper, we can then proceed to determine one by one how each incident relates to our sharing and

whether the incident answers our guiding question: Does it glorify God? Will it build up the faith of those who will hear it?

Answering His Call

After sharing about your past life, you now can go into how the Lord called you into the renewal. This is not too difficult to relate for there usually is only one single event that made us turn to Him. It can be in varied forms from personal traumas or triumphs. What is more important is for your audience to realize that it was indeed the Lord who called you by name. Ask yourself, who were the people the Lord used for my conversion? What were the circumstances surrounding the Lord's call? What made me realize that I needed to follow this path laid before me? As a sidelight, you could also elaborate on your experiences during the Christian Life Program and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Life with Jesus

The third and most important aspect of any sharing is the last part that deals with your new life with the Lord. The renewal is called "renewal" because we are all called to change for, as scripture has it, all have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God. When we share our lives, this part should stand out as the best part because this is the time when we are leading our lives according to God's direction.

There are certain areas in your renewed life that should be shared. Primary among these is your personal relationship with the Lord as illustrated by your prayerlife. How did you get into it, what were the difficulties you encountered and how did you



hurdle these difficulties? How do you and your spouse pray? How does your family pray? How does the Lord answer your prayers? Do you suffer disappointments or setbacks in your prayer life? How do you teach your children to pray? How do you attend mass? How do you go to confession now? How do you teach your children about God's word? How receptive are you to God's message?

Perhaps the Lord may have directed you to repair relationships, or to cut out from your life serious wrongdoings, or to cast off the old and put on the new life. How did you respond to His directions and how did you feel about following His will for you? What effect did this obedience have on your life, on the lives of your family and friends? How has the Brotherhood helped you along your path to holiness?

Aside from our prayerlife, the way the Lord is working in our fami-

ly life and business life are also worth sharing to others. How has the Lord helped you improve your communication lines? How do you respond to the needs of your spouse, your children, your employees? How do you help your spouse to grow? Do you pray for your spouse? Do you pray for your business associates? Do you still have resentments or hurts that you need to deal with, if so how do you and the Lord plan to handle them? How are you able to bring Christ into your own particular marketplace?

Sharing: Our Christian Duty

It is not easy to share. But when we share with others, our listeners will hopefully realize that the difficulties they have are not theirs alone but have also

been experienced by others. Through our sharing our personal life with them, we pray that they will realize that the Lord cares for them, too, as He has cared for each of us.

God truly works in our lives, more strongly now that we are in the renewal. It is our Christian duty and service to share these happenings in our life with our brothers and sisters that they may also grow in the realization that God is in-

deed alive and working through us and in us to make us better persons, a better people and a better nation.

We should therefore be bold and not be afraid to stand up and proclaim His goodness through all the land. So I hope when your time to share has come, we will never again hear "I do not have anything to share" as your reason for declining to share. Yes, we do have something to share, each and every one of us - it is the life we live in our love for Jesus Christ. Praise God!



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LYDIA MABINI-FIGUEROA
Manager



7 DEADLY SINS OF MODERN BUSINESS

1. Policies without principles.
2. Wealth without work.
3. Pleasure without conscience.
4. Industry without morality.
5. Knowledge without character.
6. Science without humanity.
7. Worship without sacrifice.

From Fr. Candalaria's talk during BCBP General Assembly, Nov. 2, 1990.

WINNERS AND LOSERS

The Winner — is always part of the answer.

The Loser — always a part of the problem.

The Winner — always has a programme.

The Loser — always has an excuse.

The Winner — says: "Let me do it for you."

The Loser — says: "That's not my job."

The Winner — sees an answer for every problem.

The Loser — sees a problem in every answer.

The Winner — sees a green near every sand trap.

The Loser — sees two or three sand traps near every green.

The Winner — says, "It may be difficult but it's possible."

The Loser — says, "It may be possible but it's too difficult."

— Time Talks.

BUSINESS BITS

The only Christianized drink. Europe in the 16th century was introduced to a new drink that had almost magical powers. It could ease fatigue and renew strength; it could counter the paralyzing effects of shock or poisoning. So great were the powers ascribed to it that it was believed touched by witchcraft. It was subsequently banned by European churchmen.

In 1592, however, a sensible Pope Clement VIII studied the 'infidel' drink and cleared its reputation by pronouncing it fit for Christian consumption. We now know it as COFFEE.

Burst bubble. Shortly after it was founded, the Coca-Cola Company was offered a twice-bankrupt company in the same line of business. The seller, Charles Guth, preferred to concentrate on a larger company called Loft, Inc., and was willing to let his subsidiary go for a mere \$1,000. Coca-Cola spruned the offer, thus blowing the opportunity to stop the business that would later become its arch-rival, the Pepsi-Cola Company.

Business sense: logic or intuition? Intuition has been defined as "the ability to divine an insight into reality without using rational thought." Unfortunately, training in rational thinking often runs counter to the nurturing of this gift. Exceptionally creative individuals have shown a history of an unwillingness or inability to conform. Winston Churchill, for example, was not good enough for entry into Eton. Giuseppe Verdi was considered lacking in musical talent by the Conservatory of Milan. Albert Einstein fared poorly in school and quit at age 15 without a diploma. Ogilvy was kicked out of Oxford for, according to him, "incapability of logical thought."

Business ethics. Malaysian Tun Ismail bin Mohamed Ali, Chairman of Per-

modalan Nasional Berhad and of Sime Darby, when asked if business ethics are matters of personal or professional concern, replied: In my opinion, ethical conduct is both a personal and a professional matter. Ethical values should be taught at home by caring parents. At home my mother cared and provided for us all. My father spent most of his time after work at home with us. He recognized the importance of education, good behavior both inside and outside the home, and did not spare the rod.

As for professional ethics, the professional services — particularly banking and accountancy — should lay down a precise set of ethics among their members and should strictly police observance of those ethics.

I think religion plays an important role in fostering a culture that is ethical and morally upright. PNB (a holding company for some of the largest companies in Malaysia) believes that strong moral and religious principles which provide us with a basic value system are imperative for success and achievement.

Simple thoughts.

The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak. — Hans Hofmann

Simplicity, of all things, is the hardest to be copied. — Sir Richard Steele

Nothing is more simple than greatness; indeed, to be simple is to be great. — Ralph Waldo Emerson

Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not one bit simpler. — Albert Einstein

Compiled from World Executive Digest, 1989 and 1990 issues.

CONTROLS

(from an Engineer's View)

You cannot control the length of your life, but you can control its width and depth.

You cannot control the contour of your countenance, but you can control its expression.

You cannot control the weather, but you can control the moral atmosphere that surrounds you.

You cannot control others' opportunities, but you can grasp your own.

You cannot control the distance that your head shall be above the ground, but you can control the height of the contents of your head.

You cannot control others' faults, but you can see to it that you yourself do not develop or harbor provoking propensities.

You cannot control the growth of others, but you can decide spiritual growth for yourself.

So don't worry about the things you cannot control, for God so controls everything that imploring His help and seeking His guidance enable you to control the things that depend on **YOU**.

Ester Uychoco

THE LOVE THAT LIVES

W. D. Dorrity

*Every child on earth is holy,
Every crib is a manger lowly,
Every home is a stable dim,
Every kind word is a hymn,
Every star is God's own gem,
And every town is Bethlehem,
For Christ is born and
born again,
When His love lives in
hearts of men.*

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Robert Louis Stevenson

Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

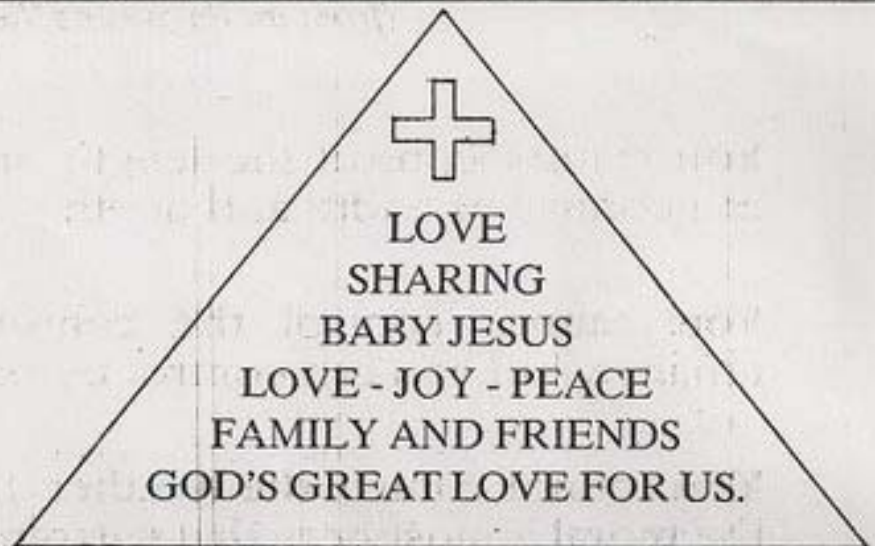
Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be Thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen!

WHAT IS CHRISTMAS TO YOU?



We conducted a survey among some BCBP brothers and sisters on their views on Christmas. We are sharing their replies with you.

For most BCBP brothers and sisters, the meaning of Christmas is primarily centered on the birth of Jesus Christ. Most respondents also linked Christmas to a season of generous giving and love, and to enhanced family renewal.

To the query "What makes Christmas meaningful to you?" we received these answers. Remembering and celebrating our Lord's birth. Preparing ourselves spiritually for the coming of the Lord. Sharing whatever we have with the poor. The Spirit of giving and sharing. God's great love for us. The family togetherness and feeling of love. A reliving of the greatest gift within God's power to give - His Son becoming Man. Reunion of our family. The birth anniversary of Jesus. Rejoicing in God's blessings to us.

We asked "What do you like best about the Advent and Christmas season?" Some of the replies were: It reorients our values towards Christian living and urges us to be more generous to the less fortunate. Being with family and friends. Joyful anticipation of the coming of the Baby Jesus. The very evident spirit of sharing. Relatives coming around and sharing love and gifts with each other.

A time of love and peace, a time for repairing and renewing relationships. A

time to put ourselves right with God. Renewal of relationships with God and with our family members. This is one period where even nominal Catholics remember the Lord! A season of love, joy, happiness and good will in spite of hardships and life's problems.

In response to our question "What do you dislike about the Advent and Christmas season", most of our brothers and sisters were one in denouncing the crass commercialism and materialism evident on all sides and fronts, especially in advertising media. Other comments included: The season is too long and often times the gift-giving is mostly among those who are already well-off. It is not celebrated throughout the year. The too great a contrast between reality, truth and the days after. Expenses, pressures of shopping for gifts and holiday preparations. About one third of the respondents liked everything about Christmas.

If you had been asked, how would you have responded? What does Christmas and Advent really mean to you?

We would like to thank the following for their cooperation. Makati chapter: Ramon Garcia, Beth Ginete, Tinos Castano, Cesar Santos, Rolly Cabilao, Antonio Florendo, Chito Abanilla, Joe Orosa, Wency Felix, RC Gaite, Rogelio Lim, Marianne Tirona, Emma Ona, Odette Nanagas, Rose Yec, Prudy Salas, two unreadable signatures. Alabang chapter: Wency Redito and Danny Roldan.

HUSBAND AND WIFE: EQUAL OR SUBORDINATE?

A Closer Look at the Sacrament of Marriage

This issue we continue with our series of articles explaining some of the basic facets of our Catholic faith. Fr. Dave Cloj discussed marriage as a vocation in unity in our last issue. We now look at marriage as an important sacrament, a source of grace and part of God's plan for mankind. We hope and pray that these thoughts on marriage will lead you into a deeper and clearer understanding of the married state of life in the context of the Catholic faith. — The Editors

Those of us who are married can clearly remember our own wedding day. Truly this was a turning point in our lives. From the state of being alone and caring only for ourselves, we entered into a covenant with our beloved and agreed in the presence of God to care in a very special way for someone else, our spouse. We were no longer alone; we took on a new identity before God and in the eyes of society. We were "married".

In the chaotic life today with all its worldly lures striving to pull couples apart, it becomes doubly important to be married in the Church so that through the Sacrament we can open ourselves to a wealth of sacramental grace. And I am sure we will all admit that we really do need these graces in order to remain together as man and wife, in order to survive the challenges of parenting, in order to remain united as a family.

Sacramental Grace

With God as the guarantor and guard of the marriage union, we receive the grace of togetherness or unity. This grace evolves around the 'giving' of oneself, of the ability to be intimate with and responsive to each other, and later on to the family. In unity we experience harmony and love flourishes.

We receive the grace of parenthood, the ability to mold children in the Christian life. How many of us remember the times when our brood of boisterous, vociferous youngsters demolished whatever peace our home had; did you ever wonder how you found the patience to bring about a semblance of return to order? The sacramental grace of parenthood came to our rescue.

Drugs, changing lifestyles, T.V., modern magazines — these all present temptations to our children. This is when we need most this grace of parenthood, and we need to pray for the constant renewing of this



A BCBP couple sign their marriage commitment and renew their vows during a Makati Chapter BCBP. Fr. Greg Buenavista and Chapter head Rolly Ona witness the ceremony.

grace, so we will be able to form our children, as Mary and Joseph did Jesus, into God-fearing children. In Sirach 16:1-3 we read: Desire not a brood of worthless children, nor rejoice in wicked offspring. Many though they be, exult not in them if they have not the fear of the Lord. Count not on their length of life, have no hope in their future. For one can be better than a thousand; rather die childless than have godless children!

As married people we are given the ministry to lift life to a higher plane by practicing Christian values in our lives, by

refusing to kowtow to everyday hassles, by trusting in God to supply all our needs as He has promised. Our ministry of marriage also requires us to radiate and influence many people through our good examples as spouses and parents. All these we are able to do through the graces of elevation and radiation which we receive in the sacrament of marriage.

A most important grace that God gives us in the sacrament is the grace of healing. This is a most comprehensive grace as it includes the ability to forgive one another when things go wrong, the ability to encourage one another when events seem to conspire against us, the gift of healing inner hurts of family members. We also receive the gift of being able to pray over each other and our children in times of sickness, in times of troubles, in times of need.

Equality in Marriage

This is a much talked about issue and perhaps one of the least understood. The bible speaks of the man's role as the head of the family with the woman submitting to his authority. Husbands who like to be the absolute bosses in the family and women who like being martyrs stop there and do not try to understand exactly what St. Paul meant in his letter to the Ephesians and in his other letters.

There is another dimension in understanding the marriage relationship. Commenting on the teaching in Ephesians 5:21-33, the Church's Confession of Faith (pg 318) states: "This passage doubtless reflects features of the prevailing understanding of marriage, according to which women were subordinated to men. Yet it also bursts through any patriarchal understanding of marriage. It speaks of the love and self-surrender of spouses and so of a mutual subordination."

Mutual and loving fidelity presupposes the fundamental equality of the partners in marriage. "Firmly established in the Lord, the unity of marriage will radiate from the equal personal dignity of wife and husband, a dignity acknowledged by equal and total love." (GS 48) St. Paul carried this principle of equal rights into the home in his letter to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 7:4:

A wife does not have authority over her own

body, but rather her husband, and similarly a husband does not have authority over his own body, but rather his wife.

St. Paul also calls the spouses "joint heirs of the gift of life." (1 Peter 3:7) Both the husband and the wife then share in the responsibility of building a Christian family. However, so that there would be good order in the spousal relationship, the husband and the wife are given through scriptural teachings different roles, each one important in itself, each one complementing the other, and each one contributing to Christian unity and harmony in the home. These roles are commonly referred to as 'headship' and 'submission'.

Headship

A reflective reading of Ephesians 5:21-33 shows that the heart of a husband's headship is love, affection and respect. Not just any kind of love, either, but the love that Jesus had for the church. Jesus came to earth not because He wanted to but to give Himself up for us, the people. Thus a Christian husband should be prepared to forego his own will and desires in order to love and care for his wife.

His headship is a deep responsibility as he is responsible to God for not only himself but also his wife and his children; he must be prepared to present them to the Lord as strong, joyful, holy Christians.

As Jesus was a servant, the husband should be a servant, that is, someone who is ready to spend himself completely in helping and supporting his wife, in terms of physical, material and spiritual needs, by exercising his headship authority for her good.

Jesus was a spiritual leader; so, too, must the husband be the priest in the family, leading his wife and his children to a deeper relationship with

the Lord. To make this aspect of headship work, the husband must himself have a dynamic relationship with the Lord, spending time each day in prayer, scripture reading, participating regularly in the sacraments and church life, and drawing support from fellow Christians and brothers in the BCBP.

Submission

Since the beginning (Gen. 2:18-24) the role of the woman has been that of a helper to the man. Nowadays society pays attention only to those who are in charge, but in the kingdom of God, the role of helper is highly honored.

The Samaritan woman at the well drew water for Jesus, He honored her with the secret of everlasting life. Mary, His mother, was helping out during the wedding feast at Cana, He honored her by listening

to and answering her request for more wine. The women took upon themselves the role of anointing His body for burial; as they went to the tomb He honored them by appearing to them first before He appeared to the disciples.

The ideal wife of Proverbs 31 and the Christian women described by Paul (1 Tim. 5:3-10) are strong, competent, faithful, wise, resourceful, and industrious. In today's terms, we could say that the Christian wife should be supportive of her husband (in the way she talks and acts), helping him fulfill his various commitments, providing him a home and family life that rests his spirit and strengthens him in love.

One phrase that bothers many wives is that "wives should be subordinate to their husbands as to the Lord," (Eph. 5:22) Personally this was hard for me to accept. I only came to terms with this aspect of submission when I realized that in the marriage union the Lord works for my good through my husband. I should therefore trust the Lord to even turn mistakes and poor decisions (what I think are mistakes or poor decisions of my husband) to the good. I let my husband know how I feel about the situation, pray for the grace of obedience, then follow his decision in faith that the Lord is in complete control. And, of course, I pray hard that the Lord will always guide my husband in the right way. My husband says that the more I pray for him and trust him to make the right decisions, the more he tries to decide responsibly as he feels the Lord



Stepping out in the grace of the sacrament are the young marrieds Stella and Raffy Garcia.



Jules and Elvie Villamor enjoy a light moment during the BCBP.

would want him to.

A favorite passage of mine that has strengthened my resolve to be a good

Cont. p. 25

Christian wife is 1 Peter 3:4 that says that it is "the hidden character of the heart, expressed in the imperishable beauty of a gentle and calm disposition, which is precious in the sight of God." I believe that love, a quiet spirit and a strong relationship with God goes far in forming the marriage bond into true harmony and unity.

A Sacramental Covenant

Marriage is a sacramental covenant entered into before and in the presence of God and as such demands the fidelity of both parties. Jesus demanded this in His teachings in Matthew 19:5-6 explaining that the earlier laws had been adapted to Israel's "hardness of heart" (Matt. 19:8). And even before Christ, the prophet Mala chi's introducing the consideration of marriage as a covenant (Mal. 2:14) made in the Lord's presence had given a whole new meaning to the marriage ceremony. We see in Tobit, especially Tb 8:5-8, marriage as a spiritual union with the couple living before God in prayer and fidelity, dedicated to the ideal of a life-long and godly marriage.

In formalizing marriage as a sacrament the Church seeks to highlight Christ's own loving fidelity to Israel seeing marriage as a sign of Christ the Redeemer who never deserted His people but gave himself up for sinful mankind. God, because He honored the covenant He had made with His people, never filed for a divorce from His chosen ones, even though certainly He had grounds for such action. We know through Scriptures and through our own experiences that God truly is faithful, that His promises are always fulfilled. Should we not, then, see our marriage as a sacred covenant, as the visible reflection of His love on earth and do our best to make our marriages work now and till we are called to share His glory in heaven?

Nancy R. Catan

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Why do Catholics

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS?

This action of blessing oneself with the Sign of the Cross dates back to the early Church with the new Christians using this sign traced on their forehead to identify others of the faith. Today celebration of the Sacraments begins and ends with the Sign of the Cross. We should begin and end our days and our prayers with a reverent Sign of the Cross.

Using the Sign of the Cross not only witnesses to others our Catholic belief but it also serves as a reminder to us of our faith in Christ as our Savior. The cross is the sign of His death and of our redemption from sin. We are

of the Cross boldly and courageously. When the demons see it, they are reminded of the Crucified; they take to flight, they hide themselves and leave us."

Saint Ephrem the Syrian (306 A.D. - 373) wrote: "My son, mark all you do with the sign of the life-giving cross. Do not go out from the door of your house until you have signed yourself with the sign of the cross. Do not neglect to make that sign whether you are eating or drinking, or going to sleep, whether you are at home, or going on a journey. There is no habit to be compared with it. Let it be like a wall that protects you and

"Let me not have my forehead bare - let the cross of my Lord cover it," St. Augustine once said in one of his sermons on Psalm 141

reminded, too, that we should share in His sufferings by taking up our cross daily and following Him.

Every time we pray the Sign of the Cross we reiterate our faith in the fundamental truths of Christianity: we believe that there is a God, He is only one God, for He has only one name - "in the name of God." Yet there are three distinct persons Who possess the divine nature - Father, Son (Whom we know also as Jesus Christ) and Holy Spirit. We signify our acceptance of the Trinity of three Divine Persons as we say "Amen."

By making this sign we call God's attention to our needs as followers of Christ and particularly ask for help against our constant enemy who prowls about us like a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8). St. Cyril of Jerusalem as early as the 3rd century said, "Let us make the Sign

your conduct; teach it to your children so that they may faithfully learn the custom."

The way that we make the Sign of the Cross reflects on how seriously and meaningfully we regard our Christian faith. A swift pass over one's head and chest hardly demonstrates strong belief in God. Rapid multiple signs of the cross seem to say that one's faith in God's protecting power is weak and needing many booster shots. With a reverent Sign of the Cross, we not only reinforce our belief in God and the Holy Trinity, we express publicly His Lordship over us and witness to others that we do believe and that this faith is important to us.

It has been said that "actions speak louder than words". When we make the Sign of the Cross, what words do others hear?



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THE CENTER OF YOUR CHRISTMAS

I was fortunate to have had strong leaders during my formative years with the Brotherhood. One of the first things I learned was that our faith is not based on what organizations we join but on our relationship with Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ becomes the center of our lives and through him we lead powerful lives. A dedicated life of evangelizing others by living out the teachings of our Lord and Master.

I speak of centers today because the world's strong leanings towards materialism can sometimes mislead us into the wrong notion of what the Christmas season is all about.

Christmas is the celebration of our faith for it not only signals the birth of Jesus but more importantly, the Almighty Father has set his plans in motion for the salvation of our souls.

Who then or what then is the center of our Christmas Celebration. Is it in the toys we buy for our children, the nice clothes we are preparing for the "Simbang Gabi", the money we saving for the shopping sprees. What is Christmas to us.

Christmas to me is remembering that God loves me because He sent his Savior Son to deliver that message of love to me. Christmas is remembering not only Jesus birth but the destined death he had to go through, and the glorious resurrection that revealed God's power and might.

I celebrate Christmas then with a deeper faith in my heart, a deeper joy for its significance in my life.

God shows us by the humble beginnings of our Saviors Jesus, that Christmas is to be celebrated very simply. We do not have to come us with elaborate decorations or an overflowing table. We can celebrate and yet keep the celebrations simple.

A more important aspect of my Christmas is the dominance of the "Belen" or the nativity scene in the decorations we bring out during this season. My center does not rest with the Christmas tree but the "Belen" for the nativity scene reminds me of that special day which signaled the beginning of my faith.

Also, during this season I am reminded of how the Lord revealed his coming to the shepherds in the fields. Poor people being called aside from the affluent kings from the East. Rich and poor alike have a place in the heart of the Lord. Do we also share the same compassion.

I opened my article with my beginnings with Brotherhood because it was during this time that my action group leader showed me what having compassion meant. As part of our groups celebration, we gathered together toys, clothes and shoes, and so many things that we do not really use but are still in very good condition.

We would coordinate with the parish of a particular depressed area and spend time with our less fortunate brothers. We would distribute the mountain of toys and clothes that our action group collected to the poor children.

Christmas to me since I entered the renewal is a celebration of my faith. It leads me to reflect on who I am, who God is and what really is the center of my life.

May the Lord bless you all always. Have a happy Christmas. — JVF

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P1,800/1/2 page.

**OUR LORD REIGNS!
MAY HE BE PRAISED
ALWAYS!**

LIGHTER MOMENTS

Overheard at A BCBP Men's Breakfast

- Alam mo ba na mayroong telepono noong panahon ni Jesus?
- Hindi. Mayroon ba?
- Oo, kasi dinayal ni Peter si Jesus 3 times.
- Kahit nga sa Old Testament eh, mayroon ding telepono.
- Papaano mo naman palaman iyun?
- Kasi, laging B.C. eh!
- Did you know that Saddam has a relative in Quezon City?
- No. Who?
- Her first name is La-me.
- Ay, corny! La-me Saddam!!
- How many animals did Moses fit in the ark? After many wild guesses...
- None. Noah did the fitting, not Moses!

The Secret Word

Two BCBP members met during the chapter assembly. Said the first, "Do you think we should offer to serve on the mission team?"

The second BCBP member replied, "I have often thought of that but when I saw that the mission head seemed to have a chosen few who help him, I did not want to break into this inner circle."

BCBP member #1 agreed, "You always see the same group in our mission team. It is as if they have a mystery society that had a secret password among its members."

One of the mission team approached them and said, "It is, indeed, true that there is an inner circle of mission team members, and if you too would join, I will teach you the secret password."

"Let us hear it," chorused the other two.

"When our mission head took over, he needed many people to help him carry out the mission thrust. He asked many, but only those who knew the secret word remained to help. That secret word is 'YES'."

DRESSING PROPERLY

Will N. Guzman, Alabang Chapter

Sometime ago, I attended a mass at the Church of the Presentation in BF Phase III. Looking around that day, I noticed how everyone looked particularly. Almost all the men were wearing long-sleeved barongs, some were even in coat and tie, while the ladies were in their best fashion for the occasion. The reason? The person who was to celebrate the mass was none other than His Eminence, Jaime Cardinal Sin!

Sitting there, I remembered that at other times at other masses, unless there is a special person who will be the guest of honor, people, including many members of the BCBP come to attend mass in their most sloppy attire. T-shirts, jeans, shorts seem to be the order of the day. The sloppier, the better! Some even come in jogging suits, sweating and smelling like horses. Let us take Sunday, Sept. 23, as an example. During the 11:00 a.m. mass a man with his family (I suppose) walked in the offeratory procession, all of them similarly attired in T-shirts, shorts and no-socks.

How we love to insult the Lord! We dress properly for less personages like bishops and government officials, but we couldn't care less how we present ourselves when we pay homage to our Creator, to the Lord Jesus Christ, the greatest hero of all time, of all ages for all of mankind.

Have you ever seen a priest celebrate a mass in jeans and T-shirt; or have you ever seen a dead body at a wake dressed in shorts and T-shirt? Certainly not! Even if only symbolically, these people living or dead are properly dressed for the occasion. They are coming before the presence of the Most High God and the least they can do is to be properly dressed for it.

How about us, BCBP members? We have been taught and preached to about honoring and "worshipping the Lord in holy attire" but do we do it? Do you wonder why many of our prayers, although heard, are neither addressed or acted upon? What would you say to a man or woman who comes before you begging for help and who at the same time shows contempt and disrespect for you?

Once upon a time, not too long ago, people respected the house of God. Sunday was a very special day. The family prepared and dressed for it - rich and poor alike, for they were to come before the Lord in worship and prayer. The rich came in their finest clothes; the poor came in the best they had, clean and neatly pressed. Indeed, a fitting way in which to meet and worship the Creator.

Has time really changed our values that much? It seems that we take care to dress up properly for lesser mortals prospective employers when applying for a job, when visiting a girlfriend (if we are still single), or even when going to a party to meet our peers, but rarely when we go to attend Mass, to meet the Supreme Creator, the King of Kings. We treat Him even less than the beggar we meet in the street, for we pay lip service to His call and even mock Him by our open display of indifference to His Presence.

Perhaps I am just being too nostalgic about a sentimental past. Maybe my beliefs have become passe in time. Maybe this is really the way the Lord should now be worshipped and glorified ... and yet, when the church bells ring calling the faithful to prayers and worship, I cannot help but recall things the way they used to be, and the words "worship the Lord in holy attire", still echo in my ears.

JOSEPH AT THE CRIB

At last we are alone, just You and I.
The shepherds have gone;
how joyful they were,
jumping and shouting as they went!
Those mysterious visitors from the
East —
they too have gone.
How grand they were,
and yet they knew,
even as they prostrated themselves
before You.
Your Mother is yonder,
(do not fear, she is always near),
but for the moment she has left You in
my care.

And so we are alone, You and I.
What shall I call You?
My Son? And yet my flesh and blood
You are not!
My Lord? Yes, indeed You are; and
yet, how tiny You are, so pitifully
helpless!
So totally dependent - on me!

And who am I?
What have I to offer You?
A manger for a crib
when you should be in a palace?
Swaddling clothes for
the finest silks and linens?
You smile! Are You indeed happy with
these?
Why do I get the feeling
this is exactly how You wanted it?

I am but a poor carpenter,
thoroughly unlearned, unlettered.
So many things I do not, cannot under-
stand.
One thing though I know:
He who is the Source of all Wisdom
has chosen to put You in my care.
And care for You I will!
I can see it now:
You will grow up a fine, strong lad!



Everything I have is Yours:
I will be Your protector,
I will be Your provider
I will teach You the only thing I know:
You will be the finest carpenter in all
Nazareth!
I will be — Your father? Will You
look upon me as Your father?
Why do You grasp my finger so?
These roughened hands are not fit
to even touch your little toe!
And yet, O Little One, how snugly
You fit into these ugly, calloused
hands!

Sleep on, my Son.
My Son? Yes, my Son!
My beautiful Son!

I know not what the morrow may
bring, but tonight I am mightier
than any king!

For the One who holds the world in
the palm of His hand, Chooses to
slumber in the cradle of my arms!

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