
St. Joseph's House ♦ Mindanao ♦ Philippines

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

The Big Announcement

Here in the Philippines, traditional Catholics in Mindanao literally jumped for joy when Fr. Couture announced plans for planting a new house on the big Southern Island in the early part of this year 2011.

Some Historical Background

The beautiful Philippine Isle of Mindanao (the great southern island of the Philippines) was missionary territory up until the 1960s. It was animated by such missionaries as the Columban Fathers whose main work was reanimating and maintaining the Catholic Faith of a large Catholic population that had been converted by the Spanish several centuries earlier. It is an incredible testimony to the intrepid faith and sanctity of these missionaries that the Filipinos retained the faith they implanted, even though priestly resources and assistance were so lacking after the initial missionary campaigns. In the 1930s and 40s, when the Columban Fathers first came to Mindanao, many villages had not seen a priest for years. The missionary would arrive in a village for the village feast, would hear hours upon hours of confession, rectify 10 – 20 marriages, and then offer Mass. After Mass, the waves of baptisms began: first a round of 30, then a round of 25 more, **then a round of 45 more...until the missionary would depart the village with a bundle of 150 certificates tucked under his arm. Then, the Bishop's confirmation tour had to be organized.** Such a tour through a particular sector could include something like 3000 confirmations in 4 days.

Today, the traditional missionary isn't so popular and there are no great crowds waving palm branches to receive him. Something has been lost over time. Un-

fortunately, during the 1960s, as the old missionaries began to move towards better organization of the circuits and the people, as they began to realize economic reforms to better the poverty of their flock, Vatican II hit the Church, and everything was affected. The situation they faced in the 1960s was too few priests for **too many people. It wasn't uncommon to**



Fr. Alexander Hora imposes scapulars with military backing.



Children absorbed in their new rosaries and prayer booklets.

find one priest struggling with 18,000 parishioners. The natural solution was adopted and lay catechists were formed and they did great work in educating the youth and in maintaining the faith so that the sacraments were fruitfully received. This work of forming catechists was taken very seriously and applied with vigour. For instance, the Catholic University in Osamis, was originally an institution for training a large body of well-prepared

catechists. Missionaries from St. Francis Xavier to Archbishop Lefebvre realized this necessity and carefully organised their teams of catechists.

Mind boggling Testimony on the Mentality Shift of the 60's

But something really changed in the 1960s, and to give you a clearer impression of the doctrinal mental shift that has had disastrous missionary consequences, I would like to make an extended quotation from "Mindanao Mission" published in 1978.

Patrick Cronin's generation were pioneers, builders of Churches and schools, but the tendency now is to spend more money on social action programs, for the young missionaries want to see the good things of God's world better distributed. The older men stressed the need for vocations, while the younger ones are concerned with developing a priesthood of laymen. The pioneer poured into his parishioners what he had brought with him; the new missionaries say they seek enrichment from the goodness found in their people. The early missionaries approached other religions as competitors, but the younger ones stress the value of all religions, searching out the inspiration in each.

These shifts in attitude were much discussed at a conference of Asian Bishops, Priests, Religious and laity held in Hong Kong in the spring of 1977. They said, for example, that one of the Church's problems is learning "how to enrich its Christian identity and life by opening itself to the great religious traditions of Asia." They believe the Church will have to become allied with other religions in a fight against atheism; it will need to become really "catholic" by introducing into its life the riches of all nations.

(Continued on page 12)

St. Joseph's House ♦ Mindanao ♦ Philippines

Floods in Mindanao

A tropical storm hit the southern Philippines on 16th December triggering flash floods that swept villagers on the north coast of Mindanao island into the sea. The official death toll is now over 1200 including the father of one of our faithful. Nine families among our faithful have also suffered in the floods of which three lost their houses.

Mindanao island happens to be the headquarters of ACIM, "Association Catholique de Infirmieres et Medecins". The ACIM together with Fr. Tim Pfeiffer and Fr. Hora, put together an emergency medical mission assisted by a squad of soldiers from the Philippine Army and members of the Legion of Mary and Apostles of Mary (the Catholic youth group in the Philippines). Over the four days of the mission, much food was distributed, over 160 patients were examined and treated and many scapulars and rosaries imposed and distributed.

On Saturday 31st December, the marriage of Mark Danuco took place. His family lost their home in the flood and his rented apartment in the same neighbourhood that was also severely damaged.



Aftermath of the flood: mud and more mud.



"God sends us natural disasters in His mercy!" Fr. Tim Pfeiffer gives relief to suffering souls...



... while the ACIM medical team look after their bodies.

(Continued from page 10)

Missionaries realize that the Church should not just teach; it should learn too. Many are learning to enrich their own lives within their own religion by drawing inspiration from the spiritual experiences of those in other religions. The time is right for this.

Cardinal Bea, when head of the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity, said in January of 1964, "The Counter Reformation is over." It had been a long siege, four hundred years of militancy, rigor, and uniformity, characteristics of any organization that is attacking or counterattacking. Now the period is past when the Roman Catholic Church is conditioned to react to Protestantism. (. . .)

Father Walbert Buhlman, a Swiss priest with years of experience in the missions, said, "When we do come to the Baptism of an individual, this should not entail a final break in his loyalty to his social, cultural, and religious past. As Hinduism is, in the first place, a form of social community and leaves plenty of room in matters of faith, we could in the future think of "Catholic Hindus". These would be persons, or preferably whole families, who have become Christian but continue to celebrate Hindu rites, interpreting them in a new way and receiving Christian sacraments in addition . . . just as the apostles continued to attend the synagogue and celebrated the Eucharist in addition. (Mindanao Mission, Edward Fisher, 1978, pp 141-142)

Corruption and Catholicism (mostly corruption)

The fruits of the novel attitude laid out above by an objective Edward Fisher are all too evident to the missionary today. Protestantism and the sects are as prolific as the Catholic is ready to receive them. Keep in mind that the Philippines are sup-

posedly 80% Catholic. But the distinction and definition of the Catholic catechism has been lost to an ecumenical-sociological spin on the faith that enables it adapt to any religious denomination. In the villages, it would appear that Catholics simply follow the religion that the fellow most interested in them will impart. As a Priest from Manila told me: **"People follow Religion based on their relationship with others. Protestants are forming those relationships."** In practice, the new **"Catholic"** missionary method developed in the 60s was that laymen went into the villages, almost like the catechists of old, but they would gather the people for Bible reading and the **"Liturgy of the word"**, rather than clear catechism and distinctly Catholic prayers. Though they were instructed to unite themselves to the Mass in the distant Parish in the 60s, they began simple **"priestless Masses"** later on. The current practice in one of our Villages is for a lay minister to come, read the Bible and distribute communion once every two or three months. The faithful in this village have not been to confession in years. In this context, a common abuse was that the lay minister, running out of hosts, would touch un-consecrated hosts to consecrated hosts in order to **"consecrate" them**, and then give them as communion to the faithful. With this transformation from catechist to lay minister presiding over a Protestant style liturgy, all distinction of the Catholic population from the heretical denominations was lost, and so Catholics continue to pass without a murmur to the Protestant sects, often without even realizing what they are doing.

Even though things are really bad, it is important to realize that out of all of Asia, the Philippines stand alone as a country reportedly 80% Catholic. One of the largest English speaking countries in the

world, it retains the deeply Religious Eastern spirit lost to the Asian countries dominated by Communism. At first sight, the Philippines can impress with its Catholic devotion. Even in the airport, Our Lady of Fatima is honoured and it is not unusual to see people praying the Rosary there before Her statue. And, throughout the country, Catholicism is in evidence, and it is publicly practiced. Nevertheless, its Catholicism is chiefly of the popular and devotional variety that is poorly enlightened. And so while many Filipinos pray the Rosary, their country is well on the way to implementing a massive and aggressive Birth control bill (RH (6 Bill) that will prosecute uncooperative Catholics. As they publicly visit statues, they privately practice contraception. Meanwhile, the Bishops have publicly stated that, should it pass, they will protest the birth control bill in public disobedience, but their public reason is to safeguard human rights. They neglect to take up the weapon of Revealed truth and sacred theology, choosing to fight with the **enemies' weapons with which they can only lose.** Given this situation, it is unlikely that the tide of materialism and immorality can be stemmed, unless dogmatically doctrinal Catholicism is quickly restored. And that means re-educating 75.5 million Catholics just to begin with.

The New Mission, ACIM and the Work of Restoration

The new Priory of St. Joseph will serve 6 Missions regularly, 5 more once or twice a month, and in addition will pray and ponder on what to do for nearly 9 other villages that require our real presence. Roughly 660 souls scattered throughout our missions attend our Masses, and more than double that number are on the fringes to be gathered in. The most encouraging part of these numbers is that we have about 10 Praesidia of

St. Joseph's House ♦ Mindanao ♦ Philippines

the Legion of Mary at work in our Missions, and 3 clans of the Apostles of Mary, and from these strongholds, we can do the double work of consolidation and new conquests. For instance, just two weeks ago, in following up the work of our Apostles of Mary, I baptized a sick child who died 3 days later, gained for the Kingdom of heaven through the zeal of our Apostles in the nick of time!

One of the great blessings that falls within the purview of our new house is the HQ of ACIM, "Association Catholique de Infirmières et Médecins", located in General Santos, one of our mission centers. This Association which runs a Medical Mission every year in needy parts of the Philippines, staffs their Gensan office year round. This small office represents real follow-up on the yearly Medical Mission and maintains links to over 14 villages in Mindanao wherein souls are assisted both medically and spiritually. ACIM works in close connection with both the Legion of Mary and the Apostles of Mary in these South Cotabato and Sarangani Province villages, and as such ACIM is a precious *clef-de-voute* of an incipient Traditional Catholic Social infrastructure. May it please God that this great initiative continues to grow and bear ever abundant fruit.

Another key component of our Philippine-wide apostolic plan calls for collaboration with Manila and Iloilo in preaching consistent and frequent Ignatian Retreats. This Island hopping strategy envisages going to the different Islands periodically and organizing local retreats accessible to the Missions of the concerned Island in order to provide ease of access for Catholics throughout the Archipelago.

A part of the original plan for the foundation of our new Priory in this Southern tier was to simultaneously relocate the Bethany Sisters from their cur-

rent, but temporary location near Iloilo. Since the implementation of this plan involves a donation of 1 hectare and the construction of a suitable building that will serve as a Novitiate for Oblate Sisters of the Society, the move of the Bethany Sisters must wait until their new building can be constructed. And this brings us to our current situation with our Priory building.

The Needs of the Mission Right Now

The three immediate material needs and the one big spiritual one.

1. Pay off 3.8 million Pesos (USD 87,000) on the property.
2. Purchase a vehicle - we already have 108,000 Pesos (USD 2,500) on hand thanks to the Singapore Knights.
3. Remodel the house with about 2 million Pesos (USD 45,000).

Our most pressing spiritual and cultural need is to save and foster the Philippine family. The infamous RH 96 Bill (making it an offence to oppose immoral family planning policies) has not yet become law, but seriously threatens to do so. But even if it does, most Catholic families have become contraceptive anyway. In your daily rosaries, and in your extra rosaries for the current SSPX Rosary Crusade, think of the Philippines and pray for your fellow Catholics

struggling to fulfil the law of God in a very difficult economic and social situation. If there is any chance of salvaging Catholic Philippines, we must come up with a real practical plan to help the Catholic family find meaningful and useful employment for the father and to reorient the mother to virtuous domestic motherhood. The general situation is a broken family backbone with the father forced into domestication and the Mother forced into breadwinning. We need Divine inspiration to proceed to fixing a situation so systemically bad that it almost seems hopeless of solution. Nevertheless, when matters look the worst, divine Grace works the best.

Adios

Your prayers and support are necessary ingredients to keeping us going and we are deeply appreciative. May St. Joseph both enable you and inspire you to help in some way.

To help, contact me by e-mail at jtpfeiffer@juno.com, or by phone at +63 905 291 7032. May St. Joseph bless you and reward your generosity with longevity and divine blessings.

In Our Lord,
Fr. J. Timothy Pfeiffer.



"Now listen up! It's about time we put some order into family life here..."