

LEADERSHIP FOR SERVICE

**THE VISIT OF FATHER PEDRO ARRUPE
TO THE PHILIPPINES AND THAILAND**

July 24 - August 7, 1981

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Editor**

**CARDINAL BEA INSTITUTE
Loyola House of Studies
Ateneo de Manila University
1983**

"In recognition and appreciation of the inspired leadership and tireless service to our Society and the Church throughout his entire term of office, we, the members of the Provincial Congregation on behalf of the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus, wish to express to our Superior General, Rev. Fr. Pedro Arrupe, our profound gratitude and heartfelt affection and esteem, together with an assurance of our continuing prayers for him and for his intentions."

Resolution unanimously approved by the
Provincial Congregation of the Philippine Province
13 April 1983



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1 ADDRESS AT THE SPECIAL CONVOCATION
OF THE ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY

Quezon City, July 30, 1981

Your Eminence, your Excellencies, distinguished guests, dear friends.

We are gathered here today to celebrate with an academic convocation a historical event: the arrival in the Philippines 400 years ago of the Society of Jesus. The history of these four hundred years concerns all of us here today in a special manner. For the establishment and growth of the Ateneo de Manila is an important part of the history of the Society of Jesus in the Philippines. As General of the Society, I am pleased to be here with you today for this historical celebration.

History, however, can be viewed in different ways. In its most common form it is a record of events and achievements, of social, cultural, and economic relationships, of successes and failures. I feel that I have neither the competence nor the need to dwell on history in this sense. This has been done masterfully in the past with tongue and pen by my friend and colleague, the late Horacio de la Costa, a distinguished alum-

The Ateneo de Manila University, founded in 1859 as the Ateneo Municipal de Manila, was raised to university status in 1958. It has 447 professors (25 of them Jesuits) and 10,355 students. At the convocation in honor of Fr. Arrupe, special centenary awards were given to Jesuits and collaborators of the Jesuits, either as individuals or as representatives of groups and apostolic activities.

nus of the Ateneo. Moreover, the events of these four hundred years have been called to mind by eloquent speakers on many occasions during this Quadricentennial Year.

But there is another way of viewing history. That is to try and see its spiritual significance as lived out in freedom by men and women according to the mysterious plan of God. This is history "written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God" (II Cor. 2:3).

This is the view I take today. I hope it will help you to see not only where you have been or where you are but, more important, *where you should be going*.

Looking with this perspective at the first Jesuits who came to the Philippines in 1581, we may ask *why they came*. Founded barely forty years before "for the defense and propagation of the faith," the early Jesuits felt an obligation to share that faith with others. The first Jesuits came to the Philippines to help awaken the people of the Philippines to the call of Christ and to help them to answer that call with generosity.

It seems to me that the task of the Jesuits in the Philippines today and tomorrow is *much the same*: to help the Philippine people realize their mission in the world and to help them to accomplish it with generosity.

Your mission for today and for tomorrow, has been clearly indicated to you by the Holy Father John Paul II during his recent visit to the Philippines. Making his own the words of Pope Paul VI on the occasion of his pastoral visit to the Philippines in November 1970, the Holy Father went on to say:

Among all your neighbors in this part of the world, the citizens of the Philippines are unique. Your country alone has a majority of Christians. Indeed you number more than half of all Catholics of Asia. In view of this, I ask: has not the Lord of history destined you to play a prominent role in the missionary effort of the Church in this region? Has he not prepared you "to give shining witness amid the ancient and noble cultures of Asia"? Are

not the last words that Jesus spoke to his disciples especially relevant for you at this point of time: "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation" (Mt. 16:15)? (Pope John Paul II Homily at the Mass for Indigenous Tribes, Baguio City, Feb. 22, 1981)

As the only Catholic nation in Asia you are to stand forth as a light on a mountain, as a beacon on the sea, for all the world and especially the world of Asia to see.

If this is the mission of the Filipino people, the question arises, given your past history and present resources, as to what the *specific contribution* of the Society of Jesus and of the Ateneo de Manila is to be in helping the Filipino people to fulfill this mission.

This contribution, it seems to me, will be two-fold. It will involve, first of all, a continuing concern for that process of Christian self-realization which we call inculturation. For unless you are truly yourselves both as Filipinos and as Christians you cannot be a beacon on the sea for non-Christian Asia. Secondly, it will involve an interdisciplinary reflection illuminated by faith on the issues and problems facing the Philippines and the world today.

I

Let us consider first *your contribution to inculturation*. The term itself is a relatively new one. The reality is as old as the Church itself. It may be defined as "the incarnation of Christian life and of the Christian message in a particular cultural context in such a way that this experience not only finds expression through elements proper to the culture in question . . . , but becomes a principle that animates, directs and unifies the culture, transforming and remaking it so as to bring about a 'new creation' " (P. Arrupe, Letter to the Whole Society on Inculturation, May 14, 1978).

Inculturation has been a primary concern of the Society of Jesus during the four hundred years of her history. It could

not have been otherwise if the kingdom of Christ was to be made present in any more than a superficial sense in the new cultures where the Society carried on its work of evangelization.

Though this is not the occasion to develop their individual contribution, I would propose to you six Jesuits who have been and remain today models of inculturation. First, there is the figure of *St. Francis Xavier*, apostle of India and Japan, who has left us an extraordinary example of appreciation for the values and character of the people he was sent to evangelize. He spoke of the Japanese as a people “admirable in their social relationships [with] an astonishing sense of honor . . . [who] follow reason wonderfully” (Letters to the Society in Goa, Nov. 5, 1749 and July, 1551). Then there is *Alessandro Valignano*, Visitor to the Mission of India, China, and Japan, who insisted on the need for a native clergy in the face of unsympathetic directives from the West. Next consider *Matteo Ricci* whose synthesis of western science and oriental wisdom in China remains even today a remarkable achievement. Having studied the Nine Classics of China to win the cap and robes of a Mandarin, he tried with his knowledge of astronomy and dialectic to preach Christ in China.

In India there was *Robert de Nobili* who made himself a Brahmin for Christ, identifying himself with the people he served. In South America there was *St. Peter Claver* who identified himself with the poorest of the poor in the slaves at Cartagena. And finally, closer to our own times, there is the figure of *Teilhard de Chardin* who sought a synthesis of modern scientific thought with Christianity, developing his Christo-centric vision of reality in terms of a theory of convergent evolution. These six men, I submit, have much to teach us still about inculturation.

The efforts of the first Jesuit missionaries in the Philippines were marked with this same concern for inculturation. It is highly significant that Father Pedro Chirino’s report of

1604, the first published work on the Philippines by a Jesuit, should be even today a primary source of information on Philippine history and culture.

That *this same concern continued and continues today* is evidenced by the work of your historians (beginning with Father de la Costa himself), by the work of the Institute of Philippine Culture, the issues of Loyola Papers devoted to problems connected with inculturation, the music of Father Hontiveros and others, the work of other departments of the Ateneo, including the high school with its Dulaang Sibol, and by the journal Kináadman, jointly published by the Ateneos of Davao and Zamboanga and Xavier University, to mention but a few of your initiatives in this line. I would encourage you to intensify this activity in the years ahead.

And I should like to take this opportunity to recall the *attitudes* that should characterize your concern for inculturation. You should have, above all, a spirit of *docility to the Spirit*, who has since the day of Pentecost been the moving force of inculturation. This implies *discernment* in the face of the myriad essential and accidental elements that constitute your rich and varied culture. Thirdly, you will need *humility*, conscious that your own perception of the Christian message will always be a limited and partial one. Looking at the long history of the Church's missionary activity, one realizes how much more progress could have been made if this attitude of humility had been fostered. Fourthly, you must have *patience*, realizing that it takes time and laborious research and experiment to bring forth what we might call "the Filipino face of Christ." Fifthly, you will need a *discreet charity*, combining your burning concern for inculturation with prudence and sensibility for others. And, finally, you should have a *love that is universal*, that maintains, at all costs, communion with the entire pilgrim People of God united under the Holy Father, the vicar of Christ. As a model of all these attitudes I would recall once more the late Father Horacio dela Costa,

a genuine Filipino, a genuine Christian, and a great Jesuit.

The encounter of Christianity and Philippine culture has immense possibilities for mutual enrichment, many of which have not yet been realized. Where else have so many cultures met in one? In God's providence, to your original Malay culture were added the influences of the Arabian, Chinese, Indonesian, Spanish, American, and even Japanese cultures. Though in different ways and in varying degrees, they have left their mark, proving not a weakness or impoverishment but a strength and enrichment. The world knows and respects your spontaneity, natural hospitality, and warmth, and yours is a profoundly Christian culture.

But the process of inculturation is never ended. You are faced now with perhaps the greatest challenge of all in the form of a worldwide technological culture which, while it promises undoubted benefits to mankind, threatens to weaken or destroy other precious cultural values. We can observe today the tragedy of so many peoples in the process of losing what is rightfully theirs in the name of progress. As the only Christian people in Asia, you are called on to be a model. It is essential that you preserve and deepen all that makes you at the same time truly Christian and truly Filipino. Real discernment is needed if you are not to sell your cultural birthright for a bowl of technological porridge. I feel that the Society of Jesus and the Ateneo de Manila have an important part to play in this discernment.

II

I turn now to what I consider your second contribution to help the Philippine people accomplish their mission: *an interdisciplinary reflection, illuminated by faith, on the issues and problems facing the Philippines and the world today*. This reflection presupposes the concern for inculturation of which I have just spoken, in all its dimensions and goes beyond it,

seeing your own political, economic, and social problems as they are related to the world.

It would be presumptuous of me to try and identify these problems in the Philippines. This you can do far better than I. I will instead propose a vision of today's world: as graphically depicted in the Decree "Our Mission Today" of the 32nd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus in 1975 (20-21).

There are millions of men and women in our world, specific people with names and faces, who are suffering from poverty and hunger, from the unjust distribution of wealth and resources and from racial, social, and political discrimination.

Not only the quality of human life, but human life itself is under constant threat. It is becoming more and more clear that despite the opportunities offered by an ever more serviceable technology, we are simply not willing to pay the price of a more just and more humane society.

At the same time, people today are somehow aware that their problems are not just social and technological, but personal and spiritual. They have a feeling that what is at stake here is the very meaning of man: his destiny, his future. People are hungry: but hungry not just for bread, but the Word of God.

Would I be wrong in thinking that this picture finds its echo here in the Philippines?

The interdisciplinary reflection which I am suggesting as your second contribution to help the Philippine people accomplish her mission in the world today will include the efforts of physical and social scientists, of philosophers and theologians, of those versed in pastoral work and spirituality working together. For man is a unity and any single discipline can provide only a partial diagnosis and give only partial solutions. You are to come to this reflection not with fixed answers but with well-trained and questioning minds.

And this reflection should also include the experiences and insights of ordinary men and women especially of those who are the victims of the inequalities I have referred to. This

is an aspect to which we cannot be blind. Their problems are to become ours in a real and not a notional sense.

Moreover, for all who are to take part in this reflection there will be one constant: the word of God as found in Scripture and in the "signs of the times" through which God speaks to men. And it is important to remember that "to read the signs of the times" is not simply a question of observing facts and analyzing tendencies but likewise of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. For only with Faith in Him who is the Lord of history can we hope to find solutions for the problems of our times.

I feel that the "least" Society of Jesus in the Philippines and the Ateneo de Manila are providentially well equipped to carry out such reflection. You are united first of all in a common vision of faith. This is the essential precondition and will enable you to work together, too, with all other men of good will.

Beyond this, however, you have among you men and women capable of such reflection and through contacts with the other Ateneos in the Philippines and similar institutions throughout the world: Sophia University in Tokyo, Sogang University in Seoul, Fujen University in Taipei, the Philosophical and Theological Institutes in Indonesia, to mention just a few in Asia, you have ready access to other experts as well. This is important, since for this reflection to have its full effect it must be intercultural as well as interdisciplinary. For the world is becoming increasingly one.

But more than this, the Society of Jesus also has contacts with men and women of every age and condition here in the Philippines and throughout the world, especially in Asia. There are men at home in the world of the media: in publishing, radio, and television. There are student chaplains, pastors in both large cities and small barrios, animators of labor and social action, chaplains in hospitals, orphanages, and leprosaria, men who give retreats and conferences to in-

dividuals and groups of all kinds. And the Ateneo, as well, through the efforts made especially during the past ten years, has also reached out into society, broadening the composition of your student body and becoming more and more involved in service activities through ACIL, the CLC, the SCA, Tulong-Dunong, the Office of Social Concern and Involvement, and Immersion programs. You have recognized the just aspirations of the poor and less privileged. You have taken a stand against the seemingly inevitable cycle of wealth, power, and privilege. And this stand, I realize, has had its cost, at times, in misunderstanding and even opposition from close friends. But it is a stand in which, I, as General of the Society of Jesus, support you fully.

This kind of involvement is most necessary if the interdisciplinary and intercultural reflection of which I am speaking is to be more than an abstract and utopian exercise. Your double commitment to academic excellence and humble service to mankind must be realized together.

I should like to dwell for a few moments on this *ideal of service*. I have done so before on numerous occasions, acknowledging with regret our past failures in this regard. I do so again today, because I am more convinced than ever that this must be an ideal for every Jesuit, for every member of our faculties, for every student, for every graduate, for every parent. All of us must have as our ideal "homo serviens:" the man for others, the person who serves, who works with and for others to build a world that is "at once more human and more divine" (G.C. XXXII, d. 2 "Jesuits Today," no. 31). This is an ideal which you as a Christian people can appreciate and make your own, conscious that its most perfect realization was in the person of Our Lord who lived among us "as one who serves" (Lk. 22:27). But it is also an ideal which can, if properly presented, be appreciated by others who do not share our faith, since it appeals to the noblest sentiments in man.

There is need of scholarship, but even the scholar can no longer have as his ideal the renaissance ideal of "homo universalis," somehow above the concerns of ordinary men and women. For we realize that no individual, no social class, no one culture, no one discipline, no one system of thought can possess all truth. No, even the man of science today must use his knowledge in a spirit of humility and service. Indeed, we are all witnesses of the results of a science and technology not ruled by this spirit.

And so today, I encourage those of you who are blessed with the talent for scientific research to use that talent as part of the interdisciplinary and intercultural reflection which I see as a particular contribution of the Society of Jesus and the Ateneo de Manila to help the Philippine people fulfill their mission in the world today. And I encourage you to use it in a spirit of humility and service.

And for those not called to strictly scholarly pursuits, I call on you to use your other God-given talents for the service in particular of the less-privileged, the poor, the oppressed, the "little ones" (Lk. 10:21) so dear to the heart of Christ, and thus work for a more just society in the Philippines, in Asia, and in the world. This must be your burning concern. I would hope that more and more of you will take up careers as doctors, nurses, teachers, leaders and animators among the poor.

I have a special message, too, for those of you who are called to other forms of public service to leadership from the top. I ask you to be men who seek the common good above your own comfort and security. I ask you to be men of the Church who know and live her social teaching. I ask you to be men who use power only to serve. I ask you to be men of integrity who can restore the confidence of people in the possibility of leadership that is not corrupt and self-seeking. I ask you to be men of humility who will seek the opinions of all and not only of your partisans. I ask you to be men of

the gospel who realize in your own lives the values to be found there: mutual respect, brotherly love, justice, a concern for the poor.

My call to all of you is a demanding one. It will require sacrifices. It will mean a change in your way of living, a simpler life-style. It will mean resolving not to profit from the unjust structures of today's society and today's world. It will mean committing yourself to change these structures, each in his own way, working from above and from below.

But where will you find the wisdom to pursue true inculturation? Where will you find the wisdom to identify and help solve the problems of your nation and the world? Where will you find the strength to live self-sacrificing lives of service? I believe you will find it only in a *deep interior life based on the Exercises of St. Ignatius*, the greatest treasure of the Society of Jesus.

The Exercises were brought to the Philippines by the first missionaries four hundred years ago and have ever since played an important role in the apostolate of the Society in this country. In the providence of God, they are no longer seen as the exclusive preserve of religious, but as the basis of a sound lay spirituality as well. In the Spiritual Exercises we find a vision of man and his world according to God's plan. In the Spiritual Exercises we find the spirit of Christ who lived, suffered, died, and rose again in a spirit of service for others. In the Spiritual Exercises we find the inspiration to cooperate with the Lord in building an ever more just world. And most of all, in the Spiritual Exercises we find the principles that enable us to discern and make the right choices in our daily lives of service and in our united efforts at inculturation and interdisciplinary and intercultural reflection. For to do anything that will be of lasting value, we have need of a wisdom much different from "the wisdom of the world" (I Cor. 3:19). As the Lord reminds us, "Without me you can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5).

This, then, is my vision of the four hundred years of the history of the Society of Jesus in the Philippines, in which the history of the Ateneo de Manila has played such an important part, and of the tasks that this history points to. You are called to help the Philippine people carry out the missionary mandate given them by Pope John Paul II to stand forth as a beacon on the sea for all men and especially the people of Asia to see. Your particular contribution will be two-fold: a continuing concern for inculturation, and for interdisciplinary and intercultural reflection illuminated by Faith and carried on in a spirit of service in order to help build a more just society and a more just world. May the Lord of history who has guided you for four hundred years help you to make this contribution with discernment, courage, and generosity nourished by the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.

In closing, I turn to Our Lady, as St. Ignatius bids us do in the Exercises, and ask her to intercede with her Son for your success in the two-fold task that is yours: Our Lady who, as the Immaculate Conception, is the patron both of the Philippines and of the Ateneo. Who could be a better patron for your efforts at inculturation than she who, as Our Lady of Antipolo, is so much a part of Philippine life? Who could be a better model for your efforts at reflection than she who “kept in mind all these things, pondering them in her heart” (Lk. 2:19)?

I recall to you the refrain of your Graduation Hymn:

Mary for you,
 For you white and blue;
 We pray you'll keep us Mary,
 Constantly true.
 We pray you'll keep us Mary,
 Faithful to you.

God bless you all! Thank you.