Postmodern Spirituality in the Making: Filipino Catholics at the End of the Century

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Asian spirituality is a large and complex topic to explore. It is extremely important in the world today because of the growing ascendancy of Asian demographics and culture. To start with, let me tell you a story I recently heard at Sophia University in Tokyo. Professor William Johnston, the author of *Christian Zen*,¹ had just returned from Europe and, while traveling, had read Hans Kung's memoirs, *My Struggle for Freedom*.² Commenting on Kung's book, he exclaimed, "Imagine a world class scholar like Hans Kung, writing his life story in this day and age and not saying one word about Asians, or about Asian spirituality!"

When finishing my recent book, *A History of Canadian Catholics*,³ I discovered few references to Asians or Asian spirituality and immediately began working on a sequel about the increasing prominence of Asians in Canada. Thus jelled in my mind a study entitled *The New Faces of Canadian Catholics: the Asians*. There is need for such a survey in Canada because since 1970, Asians have been

¹ William Johnston is the author of *Christian Mysticism Today* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984); *Christian Zen* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971); and other volumes on related topics.

² Hans Kung, *My Struggle for Freedom: Memoirs* (William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2003).

³ Terence J. Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics: Gallicanism, Romanism, and Canadianism* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002).

arriving in substantial numbers. Asian Catholics are filling Canadian churches, supplying Canadian clergy and seminarians, and exerting strong influence on Canadian Catholics and Canadian parishes. Asians come to the Canadian Church with strong families, accomplished professional skills, and committed faith. Asians are suitable candidates for the Canadian nation and desirable parishioners for the Canadian churches.

My projected volume, *The New Faces of Canadian Catholics: the Asians*, demands not only a study of Asian Canadian Catholics, but also a study of their spiritual sources, namely, Asian spirituality. An examination of the Asian spiritual matrix undergirding the Asian North American religious experience in the post-modern period is timely. This investigation focuses on interviews with Filipino Catholics and is based on Philippine sources. The interviews were made by convenient sampling, and names written were used with permission of the interviewees who were also given an opportunity to approve the interview transcript. The study employs the techniques of narrative analysis and traditional historiography and has an eye on the extensive horizon of Asian spirituality as a foundation for understanding Asian Canadian Catholic spirituality.

My initial study focused on Filipino Canadian Catholics in Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Toronto. A second study looked at Tamil Catholics, a third at Chinese Catholics, and a fourth at Vietnamese Catholics. The interviewing techniques were submitted to the University of Toronto Ethical Review Board, and convenient sampling procedures were approved. Initial interview subjects were chosen because they were Asian Canadian Catholics with a demonstrated interest in the Catholic community in Asia and Canada. Then the research was expanded to Asian Catholics in the Philippines, Hong Kong, Thailand, and India. Filipinos were the subjects of the first detailed study and used as an analogue for Asian Catholics. Research followed in Hong Kong, Mumbai, Pune, and Bangkok.

By the techniques of narrative analysis, traditional historiographical research is extended to the contemporary experiences of living persons. People love to tell their stories, and stories are everywhere. In her volume *Narrative Analysis*, Catherine Kohler Riessman states that narrative inquiry assists historians to gather contemporary stories to record, assess, analyze, and interpret them. As memories are selective

reconstructions and contain plots of their own, historical analysis asks why these stories are being told in this way rather than another version. Narrative analysis attempts to unpack the loaded words and weighty meanings behind the storyteller's narration. It attempts to reconstruct the environment in which these events happened, check them with historical sources, and place them in a meaningful context.⁴

Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly in *Narrative Inquiry* explain that the techniques of qualitative analysis are heuristic and not necessarily seeking "certainty." Through careful attention to the dialogue, qualitative analysis seeks a clearer understanding in the midst of human ambiguity and complexity.⁵ Juanita Johnson-Bailey explains the delicacy of narrative analysis as "a joyous balancing act among the data, the methodology, the story, the participant, and the researcher."⁶ A leader in the postmodern approaches to ethnography, Norman K. Denzin, assures researchers that their balancing act will ultimately be rewarded with "an integrated synthesis of experience and theory."⁷ Thus the techniques of narrative analysis are part of new history and when they are verified and extended by the historical methods of library and archival research become doubly effective. Thus, as we shall see, the techniques of both narrative analysis and historiography are employed together throughout the study.

I would like to divide the investigation into the religious experiences of Filipino business people, university academics, and lastly, volunteers and their organizations. These religious experiences of Filipino Catholics will be placed in the postmodern historical context. This means that Catholics and their post-Vatican II institutions, local dioceses, religious orders, lay prayer groups, while at the same time

⁴ Catherine Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Analysis* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1993), 1-7.

⁵ D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 1-10, 54-55; N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln, eds., *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998).

⁶ Juanita Johnson-Bailey, "Dancing between the Swords: My Foray into Constructing Narratives" in *Qualitative Research in Practice: Examples for Discussion and Analysis*, edited by Sharan B. Merriam and Associates (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 323-325.

⁷ Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds., *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998), 80.

preserving the core religious values, are inculturating themselves in the Asian environment. As Asian Catholics, they express themselves in ways they feel suitable in Asian song, language, vestment, and symbol.

Business People

Let me share with you some stories I received from Filipino business people. Born in Manila, Francisco Colayco completed at Ateneo de Manila University an AB in Economics in 1965 and a Master in Business Management in 1969. In recent years, he has appeared on a long-running Hong Kong and Filipino radio show, in which he instructed Overseas Filipino Workers on “the fundamental rules of wealth generation, income, and debt management.”⁸ Mary Anne Busuego received her AB-BS in Commerce in 1968 from Assumption College and a Master in Business Management from the Asian Institute of Management in 1970. Francisco and Mary Anne met in Manila and married in 1971. They have three adult daughters who have in turn graduated from Ateneo de Manila University and are engaged in businesses in Manila except for the youngest who lives and works in Rotterdam. Successful in their own businesses, they have traveled for both business and family visits in Europe, North America, and Asia.⁹

The Colaycos have shared their values “of respect for the elderly, family ties, honesty, hard work, and love for God” with their children. Generally they find that their children respect these values and Filipino traditions. They note that in the provinces children were more likely to follow their parents’ direction, but that this is less likely to happen in urban areas such as Manila where the youth are more westernized. Once teenagers leave the home for the day, the young will dress as they like. They might wear short skirts, exposed midriffs, and publicly display their affection for the opposite sex. It is conceded that living a chaste life within the protection of the family home and receiving the sacraments on a regular basis is less the norm in Filipino society today. In large urban centers, living with partners without the benefit of marriage is more common. By family discussions, Francisco and Mary

⁸ Francisco J. Colayco, *Wealth within Your Reach: Pera Mo, Palakiin Mo!* (Philippines, 2004), 7.

⁹ Interview with Francisco J. and Mary Anne B. Colayco, St. Rose of Lima, Manila, 14 September 2004.

Anne Colayco both share the decision-making even if the husband is ultimately credited with the decision. Francisco delights in the fact that as he is engaged in his public career and has little time for domestic concerns, while Mary Anne, in addition to her own business interests, guides the home economy and makes sure family functions happen.¹⁰

Their three daughters attended an Opus Dei school in Manila, but were not active in the school or Opus Dei. One daughter is unmarried and a second daughter married a Filipino Catholic, and they practice their faith in the Philippines. The third daughter married a Dutch non-Catholic and lives in the Netherlands. They travel regularly for business and find it difficult to attend to religious activities. The Colaycos and their remaining children intend to remain in the Philippines, do business, and make a difference where they can. In addition to the minimal government health care coverage, they have private coverage which gives them security for the future. Living in the Philippines to them promises a simpler, more pleasant life style than in North America or Europe.¹¹ Revealing spiritual maturity, the Colaycos would welcome psychiatry if necessary as a valuable tool by which chemical imbalances can be discovered and corrected.

Francisco Colayco is a very private person when it comes to his spirituality and prefers to pray on his own, whereas Mary Anne attends daily Mass, meditates regularly, and enjoys novenas, rosaries, and seeing a spiritual advisor. Both partners find their school friends to be their support groups with whom they can talk and pray without pretensions. After many years of friendship with their school friends, they know each other well and cherish one another. These school alumni groups, besides providing mutual support to their members, provide education to the less fortunate, give assistance to abused teenagers, impart medical help to those with disabilities such as cleft palates, and empower them to look after themselves in the future.¹²

The Colaycos identify the Filipino national charism as that of a caring and hospitable people who volunteer to work for the betterment of their neighbor. The Filipinos show leadership by forming economic cooperatives which lead ordinary people toward an improved standard

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

of living. While they receive great nourishment from the Church, they regret the multiplication of the sacred liturgy in secular shopping malls and the exhaustion of scarce clergy in this multiplication.¹³

Rodrigo Naquiat completed a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy at Ateneo de Manila University in 1970. He took additional courses for a Master of Arts in education and human resources management. Since that time he has worked with Ayala Corporation in strategic human resources, and has traveled in Asia, the United States, and Europe for business and family visits. He and Josefina Quiazon were married in 1975 and began the shared enterprise of raising a family. Josefina raised the children and, at the same time, was a professional nutritionist. Later, she initiated her own family business that went well until she shut it down for personal reasons. Their four children were educated in the Philippines and grew up bilingual. Two children, Maria Felisa and Ramon Jose, work in the Philippines while two children, Maria Teresa and Francisco Javier, are in nursing school. After completion of her nursing program, Maria Teresa may accept work in North America. Rodrigo and Josefina have shared with their children the virtues they prize: personal integrity, the habit of honesty, discussion of problems and differences, and the importance of celebration in their lives.¹⁴

As members of a charismatic prayer group, Rodrigo and Josefina Naquiat have learned the importance of family discussions to work out mutual problems and to bring the siblings and parents closer together. By dialogue, they schedule suitable times for dinner, agree upon family recreations and vacations, and talk about strengthening family bounds. For the friends their children bring home, the Naquiats make themselves available. They also plan family celebrations, such as, when a family member comes home with a successful report card or a promotion. The children have benefited from an Opus Dei school that has affirmed their faith and reinforced family dialogue. The charismatic prayer group is not only for adults but prepares its youth for adulthood by its Children's Formation Program and the Young Adults Formation Program. In discussion groups they discuss such topics as sports, entertainments, and group dating for the teens. In regard to inter-faith or inter-ethnic

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Interview with Rodrigo C. Naquiat, Ayala Corporation, Manila, 27 September 2004.

marriages, Rodrigo and Josefina Naquiat pray their children will chose partners with a deep sense of faith.¹⁵

The Naquiats have carefully saved up for their retirement and feel that their own savings are the best insurance for health care, retirement, and a secure future. They like living in the Philippines and do not have a strong desire to migrate to another country. Both partners have siblings in the United States. Rodrigo has six siblings in California, but it is an open question whether the Naquiats will remain in the Philippines or possibly join relatives along the American west coast. Should their daughter Maria Teresa after completing nursing school decide to migrate to the United States, they might follow and join their siblings.¹⁶

Beginning with traditional prayers, Rodrigo Naquiat enjoys the quiet of regular prayer and moves quickly to reflection on the Scriptural readings of the day. To renew his inner life, he utilizes the daily examination of conscience of St Ignatius Loyola and makes a five-day retreat yearly. He delights in being a lector at some of the daily Masses at Ayala Corporation. In addition to a regular prayer life, he and Josefina attend meetings of a charismatic community. The community members support one another in Christian living and community building. They evangelize the business community by sponsoring Empowered Christian Living Seminar (ECLS) breakfasts and defend the Gospel message when the opportunity arises. They sponsor seminars for the young encouraging their relationship with Jesus Christ and their baptism in the Spirit.¹⁷

ECLS has an outreach at university campuses. The seminars include talks, discussions, and the participants' prayer for the reception of the Holy Spirit. These seminars are followed up with the post-initiation program to guide young people in the practice of Christian life. They evangelize single professionals to form prayer groups and develop their own career and discipleship. They teach catechism to the urban poor. The community tithes ten percent of their personal income to support these many ministries, and thus, activities are free to members. Their charismatic community is associated internationally with the *Sword of the Spirit*, a charismatic group led by Steve Clark who dwells in the

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

United States. The charismatic group in Manila has fostered the growth of the Naquiats in the life of the Spirit through private, liturgical, and charismatic prayer and provided them with regular spiritual direction throughout year.¹⁸

Fanny Ricafrente was born in the Philippines and received her arts degree from Santo Tomas University at Manila in 1958 and a second degree in science in 1970. In 1960 she and Mariano Quimson Jr married in Manila. Her husband was a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) in Manila and had an MBA from Northwestern University in Chicago. He worked for the daily newspaper, the *Manila Bulletin*, for twenty-seven years and became its president. Moving to the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, he as its president turned it into a major Manila newspaper. Fanny Quimson worked as a real estate broker and property manager of condominiums. The Quimsons have two daughters, Clarissa and Maria Felisa. Clarissa completed her first degree at De La Salle University in Manila and her MBA at Northwestern University in Chicago where she now works. Maria Felisa also graduated from De La Salle University and earned a master's degree in advertising from the Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University in New York State. She is married and works in Toronto, Canada.

The Quimsons have shared with their daughters the values of personal gratitude, respect for elders, and love of their extended family. Although the young take time to assimilate these values, the parents maintained open lines of communication with their children. They took time to explain to their daughters "the why of every decision." As a result of their family discussions, the children were prepared to make their own decisions. For instance, the parents encouraged their daughters to marry persons who have the same faith, but they left their daughters the freedom to make their own decisions. The first daughter is not married, and the second daughter married a Filipino Catholic.¹⁹

Fanny Quimson began saying vocal prayers as a schoolgirl and continued as a young mother. In Manila, she and Mariano became members of Bukas Loob sa Diyos (BLD) Covenant Community and learned in the early part of the day to meditate on the Gospel and

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Interview with Fanny R. Quimson, Jesus the Way, the Truth and the Life Parish, Manila, Luzon, 22 October 2004.

contemplate the Scriptures and in the evening to say the rosary and make an examination of conscience. The Quimsons moved to Toronto in the spring of 1990, and they immediately gathered eight couples and two singles to found a Toronto prayer group. On 17 October 1990, their group constituted the first branch of BLD in North America.²⁰

Twenty-two months after their arrival, Mariano Quimson was found to be with cancer and died before the end of the year. During this period of malady, BLD members and the Toronto Jesuits extended emotional and moral support to Mariano and Fanny. From the Jesuit Church of Our Lady of Lourdes in Toronto, Mariano Quimson was anointed and buried in 1992. As the grieving period was ending, Fanny accepted the advice of the rector of Regis College and enrolled in a graduate program. She completed a master's degree in ministry in 1995. As a single person, she loosened her affiliation with BLD and worked as a part-time parish secretary at Our Lady of Lourdes Church. As the trauma receded, Fanny Quimson founded a bereavement support group at Our Lady of Lourdes. She continued to live in Toronto until she returned to Manila in 2004. Fanny has many close friends and family members in Manila, yet her daughters and their children live in North America. She retains an address in both Manila and Toronto.²¹

William Keyes was born in Brooklyn, New York, and entered the Society of Jesus in 1952. He accepted an assignment to work in the Philippines in 1956, where he still lives. He worked with the poor and the needy in Manila, and deciding to leave the Jesuits, continued to work for poor families. He completed an MBA at the University of the Philippines. After completing the degree, he married Nightingale Tan. They have four boys, Dennis, Jerry, Charles, and Henry, Nightingale's children from her first marriage, who are now adults working in the Philippines, Thailand, and the United States, and their daughter, Marie, who recently completed college.²² William Keyes tells his own story:

²⁰ Letter to the Council of Elders, *Bukas Loob sa Diyos Covenant Community*, 17 October 1990, reprinted in *Living Water*, 17 September 2004, 1, 4 and 5.

²¹ Interview with Fanny R. Quimson, Jesus the Way, the Truth and the Life Parish, Manila, Luzon, 22 October 2004.

²² Interview with William J. Keyes, Executive Director, Freedom to Build, Inc., Manila, 22 November 2004.

In 1976, I organized the Freedom to Build Corporation whose purpose was to assist lower income families to achieve home ownership. The corporation's involvement in social housing dates back to more than 30 years ago when, initially, it was assisting and encouraging relocated ex-Manila squatters to improve on their initial *barong barong* (makeshift shanties). It should be explained that Freedom to Build is not really a business corporation in the ordinary sense nor is it related only to social action activities nor is it primarily involved in programs implying direct philanthropic donations to poor communities. Its work at present is to build and develop housing projects that, by price, style and density of units, are made affordable to people who could not otherwise aspire for even the lowest cost house as developed by ordinary real estate practitioners.²³

It is like a business but with a social purpose; targeted at serving the poor in their housing needs. It is also targeted, as a second step, to help the new homeowners organize themselves into an on-going community for purposes of project management, safety, athletic and social activities and basic neighborliness. In its earlier projects, strategies included providing a construction supply store, which sold essential building materials at affordable prices and loaned tools.²⁴

Freedom to Build was also engaged in conducting group dynamic seminars, and setting up a network of *paluwagan* savings clubs for the relocated families and keeping contacts open with the parish priest of the area. In 1983, Freedom to Build undertook the development of social housing projects in the Manila area, firstly on the southwest corner of the Ateneo de Manila University campus and, in coordination with the Jesuit communities in four other locations, all serving some portion of Metro Manila's urban poor.²⁵

The Freedom to Build program in the Manila area has built 7000 low cost homes for small profits which sell for 185,000 pesos. These homes include running water, toilets, and landscaping. A Homeowners Association is created which fosters health and education of the families

²³ Email submission by William Keyes, Manila, 14 December 2004.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

of the new home owners and looks after the environment of the community. Homes can be expanded by adding a room at the rear, or even, a second storey. The object of Freedom to Build is to provide low cost housing which working people can purchase. Being a home owner provides them with a piece of capital equity which places them in the lower middle class. From being squatters on government land, they become land owners—a status of great significance in Asia. This step gives the ordinary working class family social status in their society and a stake in the community.²⁶ William Keyes continues his story:

In 2001, I and my engineer/architect Eduardo Bautista launched H. De La Costa Homes V which included in phase one the construction of 1200 homes east of the City of Manila, and since then in phase two, another 1200 homes. They have found it necessary owing to the cost of supplies and land to increase the price of their homes to 225,000 pesos. Sales of completed homes go rapidly, and there is a lineup waiting to buy into the community and attend community meetings. The Homeowners Association is responsible for the collection and employment of monthly dues. The dues defray basic expenditures including garbage collection, streetlights, security, and maintenance of homes.²⁷

The Freedom to Build creates a community of persons committed to the economic and moral betterment of all. *The Homeowners Manual* explains that “everyone is expected to take an active part in the Homeowners Association.” The owners should get to know their neighbors, take an active part in community affairs, and work on gradual project improvements. Small convenience stores are permitted to open in the community, but public beer gardens or illegal drug sales are not tolerated.²⁸

Yet corruption within the business world and public life has to be acknowledged as endemic against these manifestations of the altruism and corporate care of the community. Public corruption is hard to explain amidst the good works of the Filipino business community.

²⁶ Interview with William J. Keyes, Executive Director, Freedom to Build, Inc., Manila, 22 November 2004.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *The Homeowners Manual*, Manila, ca. 2002; Guidelines For House Expansion, De La Costa V.

While making the country work, Filipino business people also take time for their spiritual life and the material needs of others. For instance, the Colaycos raised their children in a comfortable milieu of Catholic schools, went through the family learning experience of generation conflict, and are now concerned with cooperatives for workers and schools for those who are developmentally challenged. The Naquiats are fully involved in the evangelical tradition of a prayer group which teaches family dialogue, personal availability, and life in the Spirit. Fanny and Mariano Quimson dealing with loneliness in a foreign country founded BLD at Toronto to evangelize themselves and others in the things of God. William and Nightingale Keyes committed themselves to build low-cost affordable housing and create caring communities in Manila. These business persons represent the best and the brightest who care for themselves and for others.

University Academics

Let me now share with you some of the stories I have received from Filipino academics. Professor Maria Elena Samson was born in the Philippines and prepared for studies from an early age by her scholarly parents. Elena's grandmother, who cared for her during the week when she was at school, would not let her go outside to play for fear that she would mix with children beneath her station. Nor was Elena allowed to look out of the window as that would violate the modesty expected of a young Filipina. Elena proved to be a good student, did well in the lower schools, and earned a master's degree in psychology from Indiana University and in sociology from the Asian Social Institute in Manila. Professor Samson is currently involved in a doctoral program in applied cosmic anthropology at the Asian Social Institute. She has visited American, Australian, Asian, and European nations for study, business, and family reasons. Her daughter, Tara Elena, was educated at the Brent International School in Manila and the University of Michigan in the United States to earn a degree in chemical engineering. She is currently pursuing a second university degree at the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music majoring in voice and minoring in piano.²⁹

²⁹ Interview with Maria Elena C. Samson, Asian Social Institute, Manila, 13 September 2004.

To her daughter Tara and her students, Professor Samson communicates the values of family solidarity, love for people, involvement in the Filipino commonweal, and love for their Catholic faith. She finds that family solidarity and the love for their religion burn brightly in the hearts of young Filipinos who are sorting out their life and value systems. In her view, when generational conflict arises, it is during the adolescent period when the young are striving to establish their own identity. Yet she admits that chaperons and group dating can still be a norm for teenage women in the Philippines. More leeway is given to 25-year olds in a serious love relationship. Marriage, she believes, is best restricted within the categories of similar religion, similar ethnicity, and similar class. Inter-racial and inter-faith marriages, in her view, are frowned upon by Filipino and Asian societies and are often seen as being unsuccessful.³⁰

Professor Samson has a medical plan connected with her position, and she is comfortable with the equity she has in the Philippines. Although she is content to continue her work in the Philippines, she would accept a call to carry the ideals of ASI to other communities around the world. In many ways, like other Asians, she appreciates the faith healers and herbal cures for minor health problems. But most of all, she believes that Filipinos enjoy the help of support groups — the extended family and close friends whom they feel are sympathetic. As a result, suicides are minimal in the Philippines. Yet were psychiatric help necessary for herself or her daughter, Elena Samson who is intellectually mature would utilize its assistance. She believes in employing Western science and not regressing to antiquated customs. Elena has no intention of leaving the Philippines, but if she needed a pathfinder, being culturally adept, she would send the best-educated family member. She shares decision-making with her daughter, and they encourage each other in their careers.³¹

For inspiration, Professor Samson utilizes meditation, reflection, and contemplation but is also faithful to devotions, such as the rosary and novenas. She finds the Catholic Church leading her to spiritual growth and is her primary source of spiritual nourishment. She finds the church very supportive in the care of ordinary people, in social concern, and

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

justice. The Filipinos as a people, Elena Samson believes, are concerned with the care and well-being of others. Filipinos love fiestas to celebrate with food, friends, and music.³²

Catholics in other Asian countries may not have the same buoyant hopes of Filipinos, nor the continual need for communal celebrations. But like other Asians, Filipinos are slow to accept western psychiatry as an assist to a healthier life. They will visit a guidance counselor, but are reluctant to go to a psychiatrist. Professor Samson is a strong woman mentally and physically and has been able to pursue her academic career unimpeded. She is a loyal Asian and content to live the remainder of her life in the Philippines, but for altruistic reasons, she would travel to work in other nations. Enjoying academic enlightenment, she still remains loyal to the Gospel of Jesus as found in the Catholic Church.

Paul Dumol was born in the Philippines and, after completing his first academic degree at Ateneo de Manila University, traveled to the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto in Canada to complete his master's and doctorate programs in medieval studies in 1994. Returning to Manila, he taught philosophy and history at the University of Asia and the Pacific and was appointed the vice-president for academic affairs in 1996. The values which he identifies at the Opus Dei university are excessive student docility and the over-reverence for professors. Professor Dumol encourages students to retain respect for elders, including professors and authority figures, and recommends politeness, kindness, and warmth in dealing with others. Filipino students, Professor Dumol contends, "have difficulty finding the balance between respecting professors and critically engaging them in dialogue."³³

Students at this Catholic university, in Professor Paul Dumol's view, do not reveal great religious sensitivity by attending daily Mass or monthly Reconciliation. Presumably, they do attend Sunday Mass with their parents on the weekend. While the university chapel is full during weekday Masses, the attendees are seldom students but office workers

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Interview with Dr. Paul A. Dumol, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, the University of Asian and the Pacific, Manila, 21 September 2004; Dindo Rei M. Tesoro and Joselito Alviar Jose, *The Rise of Filipino Theology* (Pasay City, Philippines: Paulines, 2004), 38, 172-3.

and people from the neighborhood. College students do not pray on a regular basis, he observes, except to pray for good results on exams or in personal crisis. In difficulty, students go to the chapel to speak with Jesus or look for the priest with whom to chat. Once the crisis is over, the sincere students might make a retreat and seek further knowledge of God in their life. Prayer groups are not common on the university campuses, but the Charismatic Movement is growing. Some university students can talk about their personal relationship with Jesus and Mary. Their relationship with God is intuitive through symbols and devotions rather than by theological ideas. Filipino spirituality is intuitive and practical, not theological, and was not shocked by the violence of Mel Gibson's.

*The Passion of the Christ*³⁴

Lectures do not seem to change the religious life of university students, Professor Dumol points out. After leaving university, a number drift from religious practices. For many, an emotional and sentimental attachment to Jesus Christ does not hold up in the educated world of postmodernism. Young graduates who go to North America after university fall in with new friends, become secularized, and drop religious practice for a time. In fact, many cast off their sentimental childhood beliefs, which as educated adults they have outgrown, and they find it necessary to search Catholic theology for adult understanding. For Filipino students, the umbilical cord to the Catholic Church is seldom entirely severed, and after a time, they see the need to renew their commitment. Often a life crisis provokes the return to faith, but this time the sentimental attachment is replaced with an adult understanding of their religion. This may demand personal guidance and serious study of the Scriptures and theology. The drifting happens with both young men and young women, who can fall into love affairs or become involved in business which leads them beyond their personal experience.³⁵

³⁴ Interview with Dr. Paul A. Dumol, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, the University of Asian and the Pacific, Manila, 21 September 2004.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

The control that the mother and father exercise over the children growing up can cause conflict between parents and children. The Filipino mother expects the children to remain in the home until marriage, and often, even after marriage. She wants the son to bring his wife and family home to live in the same compound. Among families, political marriages can be arranged with the understanding of allowing other friends outside the marriage bond. Today in the Philippines, interfaith marriages and inter-ethnic marriages are more common. Catholic girls' colleges, following years of silence, are imposing prohibitions on born-again students' attempts to evangelize Catholic students. Aggressive evangelization is looked upon as violating the genteelness of Filipino mores. To such an advance, a humorous Filipino response is "Why should I believe your religion which is false, when I do not believe mine which is true!"³⁶

For Filipinos desiring to go abroad, Professor Dumol observes that it is often the wife or mother who is more concerned with financial security and who decides to move the family abroad. The mother would send to the new country a family member who would best be accepted there. Although Professor Dumol can find intellectual stimulation in Toronto and other cities overseas, he is comforted by the strong sense of identity he enjoys as an Asian living at home. He believes that the presence of Filipino professionals at home can make the Philippines a better place to live. He finds the health care program provided by his university adequate, and that it provides him with a secure future. Whereas psychiatric help is not financially affordable to the average citizen, guidance counselors are available in the schools to help form spiritually mature graduates.³⁷ For his workplace and retirement, he chooses to live in the warmth of his friends in the Philippines. Personally, Professor Dumol likes living and working in the Philippines and is not interested in a permanent home abroad.

John Schumacher, S.J. has been a professor at Ateneo de Manila University since 1965. As a Filipino citizen, he has taught Philippine history and has sage observations on Filipino spirituality. He believes the heart of Filipino life is devotion to family and their religion. He admits that the family is both a strength and a weakness for Filipinos.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

The family protects its members and makes sure they have jobs. By working, eldest daughters will sacrifice marriage to send their younger siblings to school or to take care of their elders. On the other hand, family ties are strong factors in the graft and corruption, damaging the Philippine economy and making it the worst in Asia. Professor Schumacher writes that “fictive kinship, the so-called *compradazgo* by which sponsors at baptism and marriage are bound not only by strong ties both between the sponsor and godchildren but also by strong ties between the sponsors and the parents of the godchildren. Family ties likewise lead to family dynasties by which political office for the provinces or regions is occupied by members of the same family over several generations.” Religion is a great inspiration for Filipinos and keeps Filipinos in harmony with themselves and others. In the past, nationalist leaders, such as Jose Rizal, became Free Masons while fighting for Philippine independence. Yet before they died, they came back to the church and were buried in the Catholic cemetery with their family and friends.³⁸

In the postmodern period, Professor Schumacher observes, religious and cultural traditions are being rejected by the young. Yet for some young people, he continues, devotions and pilgrimages are seeping back, and religious devotions are once again considered the right thing to do. While the *cursillos* are dying out, the charismatic groups are increasing in numbers. The Spanish clergy after 1836 taught a romantic spirituality of loyalty to God and the crown. Being docile students with good memories, Filipinos continued these practices of religious loyalty to a foreign church and secular loyalty to a foreign government. Only recently through the death and return of foreign members have Filipinos taken charge of Filipino dioceses and control of religious orders. Bishops, clergy, and professors are bringing the church to embrace Filipino culture in symbol, song and language.³⁹

The young people increasingly date as they like, Professor Schumacher contends, and many imitate the American way of doing things and desire to dress according to American fashions. Parents have generally given up on the old Filipino ideal of arranged marriages,

³⁸ Interview with John Schumacher, S.J., Ateneo de Manila University, Manila, 19 September 2004.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

and the young marry when and to whom they wish. Well-educated and affluent Filipinos accept psychological help but find these services expensive.⁴⁰

Young Filipino middle class couples are currently educated to share family decisions with each other. Filipino families have a balance between the authority of the husband as the head of the family, and the power of his wife as the treasurer of the family goods. This can occasionally lead among financially hard-pressed families to wife beating in a husband's demand for more access to family funds. In the Philippines, middle class working women depend upon the service of live-in domestic workers to sustain household services. Many Filipino domestics going abroad, on the other hand, are well-educated teachers and administrators who wish to provide additional financial support for their families. The personal skills of the numerous overseas Filipino domestics are greatly appreciated in Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and North America.⁴¹

Religion is important to Asians both at home and abroad. Filipinos form prayer groups to deepen their spirituality and assuage their loneliness. In rural areas, basic ecclesial communities are popular, and in the urban areas, Marriage Encounter and Couples for Christ are useful. Christian Life Community and Bible Study groups are important. Prayer groups among Filipinos at home and abroad are more popular and growing in number and size. To overcome superficial religious practice, adult catechism is employed, and catechists are being theologically trained to undertake full time paid positions in public schools. The NAMFREL Movement monitors elections to guarantee honesty at voting time and Filipino activity in public life.⁴² Professor Schumacher concludes that Filipino spirituality is active and alive in the Philippines and wherever Filipinos are around the world.

After graduation from the University of the Philippines, Randolph David traveled to England to begin work on his doctorate in sociology at the University of Manchester. He returned to the Philippines when Martial Law was declared in 1972. He had completed all requirements for the degree except the thesis. Since returning from studies in England, he has been employed by the Department of Sociology at the University

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

of the Philippines. He is married to Karina Constantino and they have four adult children—a son and three daughters. His eldest son has a doctorate from Stanford University in Geology, and his daughters have bachelor degrees from the University of the Philippines in communications, interior design, and accounting respectively.⁴³

Exposed to various nations of the world through travel, Professor Randolph David and his family have elected to remain in the Philippines where their ethnicity is solidly rooted. Philippine ethnicity for the Davids stresses close family ties, love of country, personal freedom, and excellence in professional performance. Randolph and Karina during their college years were student activists, whereas their children at university were not. Randolph and Karina David are educated and spiritual people but do not go to church for personal reasons, whereas the children are educated and spiritual people who attend church. Dialogue and responsibility for actions have always been stressed in the family. Through discussion, the family comes to consensual decisions on schools the children should attend, which children are to travel with them on vacation, or who might live abroad for a time. The children are assertive and well-educated, and the eldest son, Carlos, earned his doctorate at an American university. The eldest daughter, Kara, works in communications, had a child before marriage, but did not marry while she raised her child because she did not feel ready for marriage. The second daughter, Nadya, designs book covers. The youngest daughter, Jovita, gave up a lucrative profession and an MBA to work as a Jesuit volunteer in the Palawan Islands teaching mathematics.⁴⁴

A family consensus takes a positive stand for inter-ethnic and inter-faith marriages. It is the family belief that openness is preferable to bigotry. Health care plans are modest for family members, and consist of medical benefits from the University of the Philippines and the national system. The family is spiritually mature and would welcome psychiatric treatment were it necessary, but it is expensive and, for reason of cost, avoided by most. For a secure future, the David family believes that the best health care system is their own family.⁴⁵

⁴³ Interview with Randolph David, University of the Philippines, Manila, 17 September 2004.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

A Filipino nationalist from a culturally mature family, Professor David has never needed a pathfinder in his immediate family, but in the family from which he sprung, a younger sister was the pathfinder. She went as a nurse to San Diego where she has worked as a senior coronary nurse and was followed by a second sister who is a medical technologist, and a third sibling who had completed law in the Philippines and migrated to the United States to manage a small printing company. His youngest brother completed his bachelor degree in economics at the University of the Philippines and moved to Los Angeles and works for an airfreight company. Randolph David's siblings are all married and active in their American parishes. The popular Filipino prayer group in the United States, Couples for Christ, is a prayer group of choice for one sibling.⁴⁶

The Davids are a responsible family committed to personal authenticity. Professor David is a private person and needs time alone to pray in his own way. He is concerned with the issues on social justice in the Philippines and the world. He is a committed Filipino nationalist and wants to stay in Asia because he belongs and wants to improve the quality of life by his presence.

Albert Alejo was born and educated in the Philippines. He entered the Society of Jesus, was ordained a Catholic priest, and completed a doctorate in anthropology from the University of London. For reasons of studies and business, he traveled to Europe, the United States, India, Thailand, and Malaysia. He teaches social science and philosophy at the Ateneo de Davao University and is involved in NGO work with labor unions and the indigenous people of Mindanao. To the students that he teaches, he conveys the importance of hard work, genuine friendships with one's neighbors, and the love of country transcending the love of family. While students do not always follow the traditions that are handed down to them, Father Alejo claims that they try to "adjust" as well as they can to the "different situations" in their lives. While accepting the inevitability of religious and ethnic mixed marriages, Father Alejo warns those who dare to take this path that they might discover "difficult days ahead!" The conflictual nature of religious and ethnic differences can cause strife in the relationship and discord within the families.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Interview with Albert E. Alejo, S.J., Ateneo de Davao University, Mindanao, 6 October 2005.

Professor Alejo has a limited national health insurance plan, carries a Filipino passport, and intends to remain a permanent resident of the Philippines. However, he also looks forward to participating in mission work in other countries. Understanding the benefits of modern psychiatry, his experience is that Filipinos with emotional difficulties are more likely to go to a priest, and maybe later, if recommended, to a psychiatrist. In regard to family decisions, his experience in Davao is that family decisions are made by either the husband or the wife, but are seldom shared by both. When families are confronted with the prospect of immigration, he contends that it is the mother or children who are the pioneers in immigration. The father and other members of the family migrate later.⁴⁸

Prayer for the Filipino, according to Professor Alejo, is founded on the spirituality of the body, the gathering of the community, celebration, and consequent negotiation. For the Filipino, prayer stems from the heart directing the posture of the body and the attitude of the mind. Prayer includes a communal act of devotion with one's family, friends, and community. Gathering in numbers, Filipinos celebrate in song, food, and spirit. Intercessory prayers are said in common and involve negotiation with the angels, saints, and the three persons of the Trinity. In prayer, requests are made, promises are given, and an agreement is reached. Filipinos delight in pilgrimages where sacred places are visited and the posture of suppliants is adopted. Sacred objects are caressingly touched and bargaining is carried out. A spirit of celebration surrounds the time of coming and the time of going, when songs are sung and food is shared. The gifts Filipinos carry with them to communities abroad, according to Professor Alejo, are their intense personalism and love of fun. The attention and care which Filipinos show for the sick and the elderly are personal warmth and loving care. Often in the midst of their loneliness and hardship, Filipinos seem able to generate a fiesta of music and conviviality.⁴⁹

Catalino G. Arevalo was born and educated in the Philippines, and entered the Society of Jesus in 1941. After theology at Woodstock

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Albert E. Alejo, S.J., "Popular Spirituality as Cultural Energy," presented at an Academic Meeting in Davao, Mindanao, ca. Spring 2004; Interview with Albert E. Alejo S.J., Ateneo de Davao University, Mindanao, 6 October 2005.

College, Maryland, he was ordained as a Catholic priest in 1954. Initiating graduate studies in theology at the Gregorian University in Rome, Professor Arevalo completed a seminal study on the local church for a doctorate degree in 1959.⁵⁰ He was subsequently professor of theology, dean, and president of the Loyola School of Theology, an autonomous ecclesiastical school affiliated with Ateneo de Manila University. During the Second Vatican Council, he became a consultor of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity and in the post-Vatican II period a *peritus* for the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC). He has published books and articles on the creation of the local church and the rise of Filipino theology.⁵¹

Professor Arevalo believes that the three principal values that Filipinos wish to pass on to their future generations are the Catholic religion, family cohesion, and a competitive education. Filipinos turn out in force for religious events and will fill their parish churches, flood pilgrimage grounds, and turn out two hundred thousand strong for a Saturday evening charismatic meeting conducted by Brother Mike Velarde. Yet this overwhelming religious devotion does not always translate into the practice of honesty and social justice. Religious education in fact is very inadequate in this Catholic nation. The private Catholic schools are very good, but the majority of Filipino children go to the public schools that do not offer religious instruction. Only eight percent of school children receive religious instructions, and thus most Filipinos grow up with little understanding of their faith. Despite the many Sunday Masses and the filled churches, only 10 to 15 percent of Filipinos attend weekend Mass. Currently with only one in four youths believing in eternal life, Professor Arevalo contends that the erosion of the solid block of Filipino Catholicism has begun.⁵²

Family cohesion is a dominant force in the Philippines. Anything will be done or sacrificed for the family, which sometimes can include evil. Love of country pales by comparison with the dominant love of family. The rural young and some in the cities remain in submission to their

⁵⁰ Catalino G. Arevalo, S.J. has provided a summary of his thoughts on the creation of the local church in "The Rebirth of the Local Church," *Teaching All Nations* (East Asian Pastoral Institute) 16 (1976), 249-52.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Interview with Father Catalino G. Arevalo, S.J., Loyola School of Theology, Manila, Luzon, 10 November 2004.

parents and give the impression of not being involved in generational conflict. Sixty percent of young women consider their mother a role model, and ten percent of young men their father a role model. Wealthy young people in the cities go through a period of teenage conflict with their parents. Among the middle and upper class, generational tensions are often eased by family discussion groups. In traditional rural families, the father makes the major decisions, and the mother holds the purse strings. Among the poor, the father as the leader of the family can be tyrannical in playing his role. Rural youths moving to the urban centers, or youths going abroad, retain the traditional family attitudes toward religion but often do not practice their faith.⁵³

Education for the Filipino is a practical venture, says Professor Arevalo. The aspiration is seldom toward higher studies but rather for the social and economic improvement of the family. Places are sought at high schools and universities whose reputation will assure the success of individuals and their families.⁵⁴

Among Filipinos, according to Professor Arevalo, the issue on mixed marriages is not whether the future spouse will be a Filipino or Catholic, but whether he or she is gentle, kind, and compassionate. A hardhearted or violent spouse will be ejected as would a hard-hearted priest. A kind person will be forgiven almost anything if they are graciously cooperative. For emotional help in crisis, seeing a psychiatrist for lower or middle class persons is financially out of the question.⁵⁵

Apart from Mass attendance, the rosary is the prime method of private and shared prayer. It is used in celebration and in sorrow, in need and in thanksgiving. More Filipinos are going to Mass than ever before, and it has become customary to have Mass at all events, rallies, celebrations, and shopping centers. Professor Arevalo believes that the proliferation of sacred liturgy without suitable reason should be questioned. Among the middle and the upper class, the number of persons making retreats and the number of retreat houses increases yearly. Professor Arevalo defines the middle class as anybody with a steady job who is earning the minimum daily wage of 300 pesos or more.⁵⁶

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

The prayer groups began among the middle and upper class, according to Professor Arevalo, as a way of gaining salvation and avoiding damnation. Marriage Encounter and Couples for Christ emphasize deepening the marriage bond and strengthening the family ties. El Shaddai led by Brother Mike Velarde stresses Christian fellowship and material prosperity. But since the time of the Marcos oppression, prayer groups have become socially awakened to the needs of the poor. Church people during the Marcos years were touched by the Marxist concern for needy Filipinos. At this time, numbers of Catholics, including priests and religious sisters, joined the Communist Party. Thus it was that prayer groups became more egalitarian and inclusive in their membership and established outreach to the poor through affordable housing, food banks, and financial aid to impoverished students.⁵⁷ Brother Mike Velarde in November 2004 was loaned by the national government 370 million pesos to build 22 medium-rise fourteen story towers, each tower containing 353 units of 44.8 to 95.75 square meters in size. These 8000 condos will sell for between 1,500,000 to 3,800,000 pesos.⁵⁸ Praising the vitality of Filipino prayer groups in Canada, Archbishop Carney of Vancouver pointed out to Father Arevalo that the newcomers bring great gifts of faith to the British Columbia churches by their regular Mass attendance, renewed devotion to the Blessed Mother, and a sense of celebration and socializing.⁵⁹

Father Arevalo concluded by saying that he believes the Filipino church has never gone through the European Enlightenment. In the rural Philippines especially, the church remains clothed in seventeenth and eighteenth century Spanish structures that were never penetrated by the ideals of the European Enlightenment and the French Revolution.⁶⁰ In the rural areas and among the poor in the urban areas, there is deep and simple religiosity but with little intellectual understanding. As urbanization in the Philippines is intensifying, the urban population is rapidly increasing and the many believers cannot possibly be catechized. Over the next thirty years, the secular media of videos, CDs, and live

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 11 November 2004.

⁵⁹ Interview with Father Catalino G. Arevalo, S.J., Loyola School of Theology, Manila, Luzon, 10 November 2004.

⁶⁰ Catalino G. Arevalo, S.J., "Filipino Theology," *Dictionary of Mission: Theology, History, Perspectives*, eds. Karl Müüller et al. (Maryknoll NY: Orbis, 1997), 161-7.

programming will penetrate the people in the cities and rural areas, and will introduce eighteenth century believers to twentieth century consumerism, cynicism, and violence. By 2035, many of the young in Manila will be left with much secularism and materialism but little faith.⁶¹

Elena Samson was able to accept the adolescent challenge to her authority from her daughter working out her identity. Paul Dumol encouraged his students to keep the balance between engaging their professors in searching and meaningful dialogue and yet retaining respect for them. Students, for Professor Dumol, reveal their intuitive and practical religious piety but with their devotional life not being based in sound theological understanding. Filipino parents hope to have a strong say in the marriages of their children even if their children find these expectations quaint. The family expectations of its children can be pathological, yet young Filipinos try to fulfill family expectations. The Filipina dominatrix can mistakenly demand that her children remain under her wings for her lifetime. The many shrines of Our Lady and Santo Niño throughout the Philippines support a strong female image as the main pillar of the family.

Filipinos both at home and abroad are active in prayer groups and are loyal to their church. At the university, Randolph David and his family labor to arrive at personal authenticity in their lives. Albert Alejo outlines the Filipino need for shared prayer in terms of the bodily awareness of communal celebration. The unraveling of the centuries-old solidity of Filipino spirituality is seen by Catalino Arevalo in the absence of public religious education, the exploitive attitude toward university education, and media penetration of the eighteenth century religion in the Filipino countryside. The strength of Filipino religion, he finds, in the regularity of prayer at Mass and the rosary, the deepening of religious understanding by retreats, and the pursuit by middle class prayer groups of religion in a socially conscious way.

Volunteer Organizations

Let me now share with you some of the stories I have received from Filipino volunteers. Born in the Philippines, Jose Tale received

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

his law degree from Ateneo de Manila University in 1979. Felipa Lourdes Gonzalez was born in the Philippines and earned her college degree in 1972 in business administration from Silliman University in Dumaguete City. Jose and Felipa married in 1974 and since that time have traveled to Europe, the United States, New Zealand, and to various Asian countries. They raised a family and have two adult daughters, Vida and Rica. Vida graduated from Ateneo de Manila University in management information systems, and Rica finished her degrees at the University of the Philippines and is a dentist.⁶²

As a family they gather for prayerful discussion to discern the will of God for their family and their individual careers. In matters concerning the whole family, Jose Tale, after discussion reserves the final decision to himself, but in regard to individual careers, family members follow their own insights. The Tale children with the support of the Couples for Christ Youth Group, which includes discussion and retreats, have embraced their parents' values of strong faith in God, the Christian commandments, hard work, and respect for others. They encourage their children to marry peers who have strong faith like their own. While Jose and Felipa Tale are content with life in the Philippines, their daughters may migrate elsewhere for the economic benefits, and the parents might then follow.⁶³

The Tales pray privately and as a family. They say the rosary together, attend Sunday Mass together, and afterwards share the Sunday repast. They have been members of Couples of Christ (CFC) since 1986 and thus have matured in their prayer life. CFC ask members and their families to pray fifteen minutes a day, read the Scriptures for fifteen minutes, and keep a prayer journal of what happens. The Tales have become involved in a ministry that CFC has recently embraced, building homes for the poor. Having had success with building 2000 small homes for the needy, CFC has launched a massive project of building homes in throughout the Philippines in seven years. The Tales are part of this undertaking.⁶⁴

⁶² Interview with Jose T. Tale and Felipa Lourdes Gonzalez-Tale, San Felipe Neri, Manila, 11 November 2004.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

According to the project brochure of caring, *Gawad Kalinga 777* (GK 777), CFC envisions “a new Philippines with no more slums” and is engaged in “building International Villages showing that poverty can be addressed if rich and poor nations learn to share resources to create a better world for all.” The GK 777 members desire to build “colorful, durable and secure homes for the poorest of the poor families in the Philippines.” The ideal of *Gawad Kalinga* is also to provide “other physical structures such as pathwalks and drainage systems, water and toilet facilities, a school, a livelihood center, a multi-purpose hall, and a clinic. The new owners can help to finish the house by painting and landscaping the houses together with the CFC members who are helping to complete the project. Their slogan encapsulates the ideal: “less for self, more for others, enough for all.”⁶⁵

The origin of the CFC home building project unfolded itself gradually to the members through prayer and spiritual discernment. The Plenary Conference of Philippine Bishops in 1995 asked that the Catholic Church be a church of the home and a church of the poor. CFC members resolved to embrace these ideals by beginning a process of discernment to decide what should be done. They followed the lead of Tony Meloto working with street kids, that is, youngsters in gangs who steal cars, burglarize homes, and deal in drugs. CFC opened a youth camp on weekends for these youths and saw amazing results. Chatting with the youth and building bridges with them helped, and some of the youth handed in their weapons and tried to find another way of life. As a follow-up to affirm this positive response, a musical stage production was mounted about street life that parodied life on the street in a way in which the young could recognize themselves. It turned out to be a great success and gave over two hundred performances in Manila and elsewhere in the Philippines!⁶⁶

Visiting the homes of the young people, the CFC members discovered how desperate housing was and became involved in home repair. They put in running water, toilets, and concrete floors in the homes. The repairs made a big difference in the lives of these families and spurred the occupants to do more for themselves. CFC members also worked

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

with the siblings to help them return to school where some of them did well. The members sought work for the unemployed parents.⁶⁷

At a CFC conference in November 2001, a member popped the question: "How many houses do we build next year? Somebody offered the number, 'One thousand!'" In February of the next year at an International Leaders' Conference at Dumaguete, a member offered 1000 square meters of land for home construction and the other members resolved during the weekend conference to build 16 houses for the homeless. During the conference the sixteen homes were completed and handed over to needy residents. The houses were 20 square meters including a toilet, parents' bedroom, and family living space, and they were painted and landscaped. The homes cost 50,500 pesos as most of the labor and material were donated. President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was present for the opening and offered 30 million pesos to CFC from the government to build 1000 homes. CFC decided to match the 30 million peso contribution with donations from its members and benefactors. In June 2002 sixty sites were chosen and 1000 homes were built on the chosen weekend. TV coverage followed the home construction event giving excitement and raising funds. On a November weekend of the same year, a second set of the 1000 homes was built. Not only were homes built, but a new community was formed which looked after health, education, employment, and the environment.⁶⁸

The immediate success of building 2000 homes generated enthusiasm and funds to expand the project. For the year 2003, a seven-year master plan evolved from the membership to build 700,000 homes, in 7000 regions, and in 7 years. Through these experiences of home building, CFC members fabricated a method to construct new houses and hand the ownership over to the homeless. The new owners agreed to pay the inexpensive cost for their homes by working on the construction of other houses for other people. The success and enthusiasm for the project generated enough money for the large number low cost homes. The spirit of CFC and their supporters is summed up in the formula: "Bleed for the cause!" Give surplus income and goods to provide homes and decent environment to others. Business corporations, such as Procter and Gamble, have jumped

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

into low cost home construction for their employees. MacDonald's is helping to construct homes. A wealthy individual sold his BMW to travel less expensively and donate their surplus to build homes. The homes are constructed for all Filipinos, including Protestants and Catholics, Muslims and Buddhists. The message of *Gawad Kalinga 777* is that all people can live in peace together. CFC's purpose in building homes is to strengthen families and draw the young out of drugs that all can live a better life. *Gawad Kalinga* has spread to Indonesia, India, and South Africa.⁶⁹

Colleagues of the Tales in Couples for Christ are the Jongkos. Joventito Jongko finished his Bachelor in Science in Chemical Engineering at the University of Santo Tomas in 1965 and, first in his class and *summa cum laude*, graduated with self-confidence. He was hired by Procter and Gamble, and also taught in the evening for two years at his *alma mater*. Among his students, was his future wife, Jeddy Joaquin. She was born in the Philippines and completed her bachelor in science in chemical engineering at the University of Santo Tomas in 1969. She, too, was hired by Procter and Gamble. Jeddy and Tito were married in 1970 and, at the prodding of his wife, Tito Jongko left the university to work full time for Procter and Gamble. As a result of the training programs and broadening assignments during his 30-year stay at Procter and Gamble, Tito and Jeddy with their three children traveled to the United States, Europe, and the Far East. Their son Jeffrey is completing his master's in computer science and is teaching at Ateneo de Manila University. Jennifer finished her bachelor degree at Miriam College and is an American citizen working in Las Vegas. Janice, having earned her bachelor's degree in mass communications at Miriam College, teaches at the Ateneo Grade School while completing her master's degree in education. On account of their international education, the languages their children know include English, Tagalog, Japanese, and French.⁷⁰

In their early adolescent life in Europe and Japan, the Jongko children attended international schools which exposed them to western life and limited religious education. The children learned independence, self-

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Interview with Joventito B. Jongko and Jeddy Joaquin Jongko, St Peter's Parish, Manila, 13 November 2004.

sufficiency, and as their mother would say “selfishness.” This youthful self-sufficiency contributed to generational conflict with their parents. Jeddy believed that through her “look” of approval or disapproval she could control her children and could impose the practice of Filipino traditions. The children quickly retorted labeling her “the villain.”

Now as adults living in the family home, the children accept parental care but without feeling the obligation to make the necessary contributions to the household. In recent years, the family arrived at a consensus which the parents hope will motivate their children to remain close to the family for love and support, continue the practice of the Catholic faith, and live a religious morality. The parents desire that their children marry within the Catholic faith as it would personally strengthen them to share a common spiritual heritage with their spouse, yet they are prepared to accept other arrangements.⁷¹

In married life according Filipino culture, Tito Jongko as the husband made the family decisions. After Tito and Jeddy joined Couples for Christ in 1995, they replaced the male model of governance by family discussions to arrive at a shared consensus.⁷² Even after this family conversion in decision making, the remnants of hierarchical obedience hang over the decisions of family members. For instance, the mother, Jeddy Jongko, mourns the loss of her dominance over her children. It is one thing for a family to share in discussion and come to an apparent meeting of minds, but it is quite another thing for all members to be internally freed from the traditional expectations of Filipino family life.

When Tito Jongko retired from Procter and Gamble in 1995, his health program was transferred from one company to another as he became a consultant to Johnson and Johnson, UFC/SAFI, and Handyware Philippines Inc. Now fully retired, the family is covered by private health care insurers. The Jongkos have no intention of moving from the Philippines, yet if their remaining children were to migrate to the United States or elsewhere they might also follow them. Jennifer in Las Vegas has initiated immigration papers for them.⁷³ Their service in Couples for Christ will also influence their final decision, and they put themselves in God’s hands for the future.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

Both Tito and Jeddy Jongko have encountered God in prayer. Jeddy in 1998 was overwhelmed by the experience of God in her physical and psychic life. It made her “more conscious of her relationships,” more persevering in prayer, and increased her ability to meditate on the Word of God. During a Life in the Spirit Seminar, she had a “vision” of God telling her to “humble yourself, humble yourself, humble yourself.” The power of this experience freed her from the addictions of bowling, smoking, mahjong, and other entertainments which fascinated her.⁷⁴

Tito encountered a bleeding nose caused by the soft tissue inside the nose for which the doctor advised mini surgery. Tito delayed the surgery as the situation was not life threatening. This encounter with the medical profession made him look to the Lord, and he received several messages “to focus on Christ,” “live a simple life,” “spend more time for others rather than self.” He responded positively and took leave from his public involvements, such as the Rotary Club, Christian Family Movement, Club Filipino, and Gift Association. Tito and Jeddy then gave their attention to the formation of newly recruited couples for CFC. During this time, the Lord healed Tito from his bleeding nose, and the soft tissue disappeared without the necessary surgery.⁷⁵

Tito and Jeddy Jongko are totally committed to CFC and its goals for family renewal, evangelization of society, and liberation of the poor. As chapter leaders, they recruit new members by inviting them to the 12-week Christian Life Program of instruction offered twice yearly. They are active in the various family ministries and recently became involved in the expansion of Social Ministries. CFC exists in 120 countries around the world with over a million members.⁷⁶

In 1996 CFC launched the massive *Gawad Kalinga 777* as a Christian response to the needs of the poor. Specifically, it aims to transform slum dwellings into peaceful, productive, and beautiful communities. This is a nation building effort to unite the various sectors of Philippine society by providing holistic and sustainable communities for the homeless. The sectors contributing to GK 777 are the national government, the universities (Ateneo de Manila and the University of Santo Tomas), NGOs, the schools, multinational

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

corporations (Procter and Gamble, Pfizer), Filipino corporations (ABS-CBN, Smart, Unilab), banks (Metrobank, RCBC) and various individuals who want to share in this altruism. Business corporations show much interest in improving housing for their workers, such as when Procter and Gamble built 48 homes for their workers.⁷⁷

The Jongkos feel that Filipino workers traveling overseas bring many gifts to their host country. Their ability to share their “resources and talent,” their “hospitality and sincerity,” their organizational skills, and their religious commitment contributes to their new host country. Tito and Jeddy are very enthusiastic about the efficaciousness of CFC as a method of lay evangelization. Pastors with their own apostolic priorities can resent this autonomous and lay run Catholic organization. The Filipino hierarchy, however, has approved the CFC, and thus, Filipino clergy are dropping their opposition to the CFC activities in their parish. Tito and Jeddy would like to spread CFC to Mindanao, particularly at Tito’s hometown in Agusan del Norte. They will build homes on his family property there.⁷⁸

A friend of the Tales and the Jongkos is Antonio P. Meloto, the executive director of Couples for Christ and *Gawad Kalinga* 777. He was born in the southern Philippines and received a scholarship to attend Ateneo de Manila University and complete his AB in Economics in 1971. He had the opportunity to travel to Europe, Asia, Australia, North America, and the Middle East for the purpose of business. Tony Meloto and Amalia Dizon were married at Manila in 1978 and have raised five children. The children grew up speaking both Tagalog and English.⁷⁹

The Gloria Arroyo government in December 2004 asked Tony Meloto, in addition to being the director of *Gawad Kalinga* program, to “lead the rehabilitation effort” of the “typhoon affected areas in Quezon, Nueva Ecija, Aurora, and Mindoro provinces.” He is to harmonize the relief efforts of private resources and government agencies.⁸⁰ As a consultant to rice and the sugar cane workers, Tony

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Interview with Antony P. Meloto, Gawad Kalinga, Couples for Christ, Manila, 25 November 2004.

⁸⁰ *The Philippine Star* Metro, “Gawad Kalinga Leads Typhoon Rehab Effort,” by Perseus Echeminada, 12 December 2004.

Meloto strives to avoid labor discord and bring the warring sides toward a peaceful resolution of their problems. His service of peaceful reconciliation is not always appreciated, and he admits he have been called the “deodorizer.” He well recognizes that the farm laborers for whom he negotiates barely receive enough pay for their family, whereas by contrast the large farm owners can afford to send their sons and daughters to quality universities such as Ateneo de Manila and De La Salle.⁸¹

With great assurance, Tony Meloto states that building houses for the poor is not about houses so much as it is about building community. It is a question of regaining the economic productivity needed for the maintenance of Filipino families. Work is difficult to find in the Philippines, and many men do not have jobs to support their family. Without work, the male loses his dignity as the father of his family and the sense of being a son of God. Lacking work for their hands and money for their pockets, many of the male population are humiliated and find themselves irrelevant to their family. They become isolated, losing the sense of family and community, and are reduced to the animal level of survival. Their animal instincts dominate them and turn them into predators of survival. Building homes is a way to lead Filipino men to productive work that they may regain their purpose in life. They learn to transform a slum shanty into a family home, and their family becomes a warm and human resource for them.⁸²

Tony Meloto has been a member of CFC since 1985. From 1995 to 2000, he worked in the biggest slum in the Philippines at Bagong Silang, to the east of Quezon City. He worked with about 2000 youths and their families. He tried to understand the relationship of poverty and criminality. From his experience and observations, he learned that husbands, lacking work, are surplussed in Filipino society. They are deprived of their rightful role as provider, protector, and pastor of their home community. The restoration of Filipino manhood became a priority for CFC to find ways to assist them to be responsible before God and their family.⁸³

⁸¹ Interview with Antonio P. Meloto, Executive Director of Gawad Kalinga, Couples for Christ Office, Manila, 25 November 2004.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*

GK 777 communities organize men into neighborhood associations to take ownership in their communities. Many were socially alienated, violent abusers, former prisoners. Members hope to restore them to their families by using the threefold CFC ideal of productive work, family dialogue, and giving to others before oneself. By drawing these men toward this model, CFC believes it can restore their dignity as providers of their family and sons of God. Builders, plumbers, and carpenters work with the GK men giving them on-the-job training. Professional workers give up their Saturday golf to help the renewal of their new brothers by making them productive. Men work to restore men. The affluent and the poor join together in genuine communication in building homes for the needy. The spirit of CFC is to create harmony among the needy and to assuage their anger. To do this, CFC forms partnerships with schools, corporations, and the needy to regain productivity for the good of all.⁸⁴

According to Tony Meloto, the poor pray well because they are often in pain and need God's help to make it through the day. They pray because they believe in the after life and want to be part of it. They go to Mass to get help to keep their marriage together and learn to be self-sacrificing for their spouse and family. In adversity, they pray for strength to hold onto their family. CFC forms the new homeowners into household groups of 5-7 families who gather periodically to talk of their faith and support their neighbors. As a matter of fact, when the poor have food, they will not eat it all because they will take some to those who have less. GK 777 is designed to rehabilitate the husband's dignity and to renew the family by his real presence in that family.⁸⁵ For Tony Meloto, caring for the poor is the number one priority of any society, especially when it is a Christian society.

John Carroll was born at Jersey City and graduated from St Peter's College. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1943, completed his Jesuit education in New York and the Philippines and was ordained a priest in 1955. Father Carroll began a doctorate in sociology at Cornell University and finished his degree in 1962. Since then, he has been researching and teaching sociology at the Gregorian University in Rome where he also served as Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and at Ateneo de Manila University's Institute of Social Order. He was a founding director of the

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Institute on Church and Social Issues together with Bishop Francisco Claver SJ, and is now a Senior Research Associate at that institute.⁸⁶

One of the constant interests of Professor Carroll has been the 300,000 people living at Payatas, the garbage dump in Quezon City. Many of the people came from the countryside to Manila looking for work, and unable to find it, went to the dump to become squatters and work at sorting garbage. They sort the rubbish to make money selling glass, paper, metal and plastics for recycling. While the minimum wage in the Philippines is about 300 pesos a day, they can make perhaps 200 pesos as scavengers. Others can make one hundred pesos daily weaving plastic doormats. Some of the people are construction workers, security guards, and drivers of taxis, jeepneys, and tricycles. Many are people without skills, or people over 50 years of age who are too old to do heavy work. Having no other place to go, the poor at Payatas marry and settle down in squatters' shanties and raise their family.⁸⁷

Initiating a feeding program of supplying milk for over 500 "third-degree malnourished infants," Professor Carroll's aim is to give them adequate weight to avoid mental deficiencies later in life. The Jesuit Order and American friends supply the funding. "The weighing of children and distribution of the milk-powder is handled by Celina, a local volunteer and mother of four." Smart and capable, Celina proved to be "a paramedic and an all-purpose social worker in the community, assisting in the clinics, getting people into hospitals and watching by them at night, bringing in doctors from the Department of Health when there is an outbreak of cholera, being called to intervene in cases of child abuse, rape and incest in the community." Her own children, inspired by her service to others, became respectively a nutritionist, social worker, and instructor in the Billings Method of Fertility Care. With the Don Bosco Brothers and Sisters, Professor Carroll initiated a scholarship program to enable 50 students from Payatas to take vocational courses and others go to community college. Some children from Payatas have become professional workers, such as Juliet who became chief of operations of a fast-food firm, and others who got into plumbing, electro-mechanics, and electronics. Transportation to

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Interview with John J. Carroll S.J., Institute of Church and the Society of Jesus, Ateneo de Manila University, 25 November 2004.

and from the city schools costs about 100,000 pesos monthly and is the major cost of this apostolate.⁸⁸

The religion of the people of Payatas, according to Professor Carroll, is folk religion. It consists mainly in baptism of infants and the family rosary. On major holidays, the new babies are lined up, baptized, and celebrated. Willing parents are offered instruction on the meaning of baptism for the life of their child. The values that the children are taught are respect and support of parents, and beyond their face-to-face family, they have "little sense" of the larger community or nation. When Filipinos go abroad, observes Professor Carroll, they settle, interestingly, more in language and regional groups than among Filipinos as one unified people.⁸⁹

The parents of Payatas do not find they are able to keep their teens at home any longer. The young people want to go out at night and mix with their peers, and only recently have they experienced adolescent pregnancies. Some times there is a marriage following the pregnancy, but the couple usually wait until the following year. The Billings Method of Fertility Care seems to be popular as the over one hundred couples that are practicing it are having good success. The cost of "the pill" is prohibitive to the people of Payatas. They are not shocked by interracial or interfaith marriages among them, but they would avoid marrying a *bumbay*, that is, an East Indian moneylender, many of whom are looked upon as being aggressive and rough. Some of the brighter young women in Payatas hope to be health workers or teachers, and go abroad, but their language skills are limited. Some of the men hire onto vessels as seamen. Health care is fragile for most of the inhabitants. A German Doctors' Foundation sponsors a clinic at Payatas. Two Jesuit doctors visit another clinic built by the German Augustinian Sisters. Psychiatric services are not usually available except for extreme cases when a resident is taken to the National Mental Hospital.⁹⁰

Carroll has mentioned that religious practices at Payatas are mainly folk religion. For some, the church is "a place where one can

⁸⁸ John J. Carroll S.J., *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 20 October 2004.

⁸⁹ Interview with John J. Carroll S.J., Institute of Church and the Society of Jesus, Ateneo de Manila University, 25 November 2004.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

cry, ask for help in trouble, tell God our sins, ask forgiveness, and come away feeling better.” The churchgoers believe that “Jesus is my friend who understands me and keeps me from committing suicide.” Only a small percent of the inhabitants of Payatas attend Sunday Mass or know the responses and songs at Mass. The prayer groups which Professor Carroll’s associates help to animate include born-again Christians and members of indigenous sects. They appreciate the Bible study and mutual support which they receive in the group. The Catholics know the basic prayers like the Our Father and the Hail Mary. Religious appreciation can be demonstrated in the novena of pre-dawn Masses before Christmas which draw more people than any other religious occasion. These Christmas Masses are celebrated with candles and bells, a sung Gloria, white vestments, Christmas carols, and often a *noche buena* of ginger tea and hot pastries afterwards. As a long-term chaplain at Payatas, Professor Carroll feels that the charism Filipinos offer to the world, even in economic distress, is their joy of celebration.⁹¹

Dennis Murphy was born in New York City, entered the Jesuits, and completed his early studies at Cebu in the Philippines, and afterward, a master’s degree in social work at Fordham University. As part of his university education, he traveled in Europe, North America, and Asia. As a Jesuit, he worked with the urban poor. When he decided to leave religious life, he continued his work among the urban poor and in 1976 married a fellow worker, Alicia Gentolia, who had graduated from Far Eastern University in the Philippines. They currently work in an NGO and have one daughter, Marifel, who was educated in the Philippines and at Fordham University in New York City.⁹²

Dennis and Alicia Murphy work together in a small office for the Urban Poor Associates. Denis writes articles for the newspaper and fiction for publication. The decisions Dennis and Alicia make at home and work are shared decisions which are discussed until they arrive at a consensus. They shared with their daughter their active concern for the poor, an interest in world affairs, and the importance of respect for other people, including an elderly housemaid. As a teenager, Marifel

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Interview with Dennis Murphy, Ateneo de Manila University, 31 December 2004.

had to be encouraged to turn off the radio, do homework, go to bed and get up on time. For a while, she preferred fashionable fast food to Filipino home cooking, but on her own, Merifel learned to look after troubled children. Dennis and Alicia Murphy welcome mixed marriages whether they be interfaith or inter-ethnic marriages.⁹³

Given the fact that one American dollar translates into 56 pesos, Dennis Murphy says that they could not afford to transfer their residence to the United States. They have a network of health plans both American and Filipino that will work for them. They enjoy a happy personal and working relationship and intend to remain in the Philippines working with the urban poor. Spiritually balanced and mature, they found psychiatric guidance helpful for their family.⁹⁴

Dennis Murphy believes that most Filipinos enjoy personal and communal prayer. He believes that Filipinos rely mostly on the oral prayers of novenas and rosary. Yet he also contends that oral prayer leads a person to deeper reflection as one thinks through problems in God's presence. By trading off their promises of faithfulness, regular observance, and heroic sacrifice, Filipinos, like Moses, bargain with God to grant their petitions.⁹⁵

The Urban Poor Association, which Dennis and Alicia Murphy direct, is funded by the international cooperation of the Dutch, German, and Canadian churches. Dennis and Alicia inspire and mobilize the urban poor, who live in shantytowns, to put political pressure on the government to recognize their needs. They strive to come to agreeable solutions to such problems as potable water, proper sanitation, surface drainage, and adequate electricity. Security is a major problem for squatters who live on public or private land from which they can be evicted at any time. The Urban Poor Association uses legal procedures to gain squatters time for relocation and provide them with adequate security. They also act to keep drugs away from the communities and show concern for the deterioration of education in the public schools. Classrooms in the schools can be filled with 40 to 80 children who have to share textbooks that they cannot take home at night. As a result, much time is spent in writing things out, and the quality of education is

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

poor. Good teachers give up teaching in the Philippines because of the low salaries and arduous workload and go abroad as domestic workers to earn adequate income to feed their family. Filipino overseas workers by giving personal care to others have a considerable reputation as nurses and domestics.⁹⁶

In general, Dennis Murphy observes that the public health care system does not work well. At government health clinics, there are few nurses, less doctors, and no medicines. In the Philippines, the minimum wage is 300 pesos, which effectively comes below the poverty line, placed at 8000-9000 pesos monthly. Working a 6-day week, the average daily income of 300 pesos adds up to 7200 pesos monthly. The average family income in squatter areas is 6000 pesos. Three thousand pesos go for rice, and the rest for transportation and rent. This means that the average person has a lean diet, and no money for vitamins, medicine, or health care.⁹⁷

By becoming personally committed during retreats, volunteers have become all but religious men and women in their commitment to living a modest life and committing themselves to the service of the poor. Volunteers have proven to be effective among the abandoned and the hurting of the Philippines. They work with street kids and their families, feed the hungry, build homes, construct communities, educate the poor, and look after their welfare. They work with the homeless throughout the cities to protect squatters from being dispossessed of their homes and possessions. They work at the city dump providing both material and spiritual services to the forsaken. Committed women can have a strong influence on their family, community, and church.

Conclusion

In the Philippines since the EDSA Revolution, committed business people, academics, and volunteers have gone through personal conversion to devote themselves with new seriousness to the care of the poor and the attack on poverty. These are healthy signs indicating that a postmodern Filipino spirituality is in the making. Filipinos take responsibility for their own lives and ownership of their own spirituality.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

The Colaycos pursue their careers, raise their family, and seek out overseas workers for financial guidance and support for challenged youth in need of education. The Quimsons came to Toronto to evangelize and extend a worldwide prayer group. The Keyes built low cost housing for small profits to provide affordable housing for workers receiving the minimum wage. Segments of the Filipino business community show themselves able to slough off the pitfalls of societal corruption, to do business, and show compassion for the needy at their gates.

Among Filipino academics, women such as Elena Samson become autonomous by seeking out a university career to educate the youth and to raise her family. Paul Dumol points to the secularization of university life and Catholic piety, and at the same time, the superficiality of student devotion causing a drift when adult life gets rough. John Schumacher reveals the loyalties deeply ingrained in Filipino history, and the generational tremors that result from the young seeking independence while the parents continue to dominate. The shrines offer numerous religious models of female strength and resourcefulness, but little is offered to boost male spirituality. A self-styled spirituality is fashioned by Randolph David and Francisco Colayco and found to be nourishing. Albert Alejo sums up the intuitive nature of Filipino religiosity as being based on the bodily expression of communal celebration, coming to its apex in its negotiation with God, the angels, and the saints. Catalino Arevalo sees the beginning of the breakup of the classical Spanish/Filipino piety in the absence of public religious education, the youth no longer believing in the afterlife, and the modern media confronting eighteenth century religious piety in rural areas. University academics recognize the change occurring in Filipino spirituality and prepare themselves as postmodern Catholics striving for authenticity.

Couples for Christ, such as the Tales, Jongkos, and Tony Meloto, direct their own ministries in the building homes and communities. Among volunteers, women dominate the popular church in the home and the nave of the church building, but an entrenched clergy dominate the structural church of the sanctuary and the sacraments. Other volunteers, like John Carroll, visit the inhabitants of Payatas to provide food, education, homes, prayer groups, and Sunday Mass. The Murphys guide the Urban Poor Association to motivate the squatters to look after their own needs and mobilize public pressure to protect them from capricious land developers. Volunteers in the Philippines

put much drive into the numerous endeavours to forge a better world for all. These self-directed lay people and involved clergy have learned to discern the will of God for themselves and their communities and reveal an incipient, self-motivated, dynamic, and involved postmodern spirituality emerging for the twenty-first century. ☞