

STUDYING THE NEW CATECHISMS: CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND CATECHISM FOR FILIPINO CATHOLICS¹

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INTRODUCTION

The much delayed appearance of the English translation of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* [CCC] in June 1994,² set off the publication of a plethora of new commentaries, introductions, and general expositions.³ The CCC had already become a surprise best seller in its French, Italian, and Spanish versions, and the English version has proven equally if not more popular.⁴ Special

1. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Manila: Word & Life Publications, 1994) 745 pp; and *Catechism for Filipino Catholics*, Final Draft (Manila: Word & Life Publications, January, 1994) 486 pp. This second catechism was prepared by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines [CBCP] through its Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education [ECCCE]. In the final draft sent to Rome for official approval, its original title, *The Catholic Faith Catechism*, was changed to *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* in order to correspond more closely to the Vatican's CCC while preserving the CFC acronym.

2. The delay was caused by the problem of the specific use of "inclusive language" in the proposed English version. This original version was explained by its author, Douglas Clark, "On 'Englising' the Catechism," *Living Light* 29 (1993) 13-28, but was eventually substantially revised by the Vatican in CCC's final form.

3. In addition to articles and columns in major local newspapers and the international press such as the *NY Times* (Mar. 3, 1990) and *The Washington Post* (May 28, 1994), almost every theological and religious education periodical reviewed the catechism. See, for example, *The Living Light* 30 (Fall 1993) 53-87; *Chicago Studies* 33 (April 1994) 5-56; *Origins* 19, no. 40 (Mar. 8, 1990) 645, 647-51; *ibid.*, no. 47 (Apr. 26, 1990) 773, 775-84; *Priests & People* 8 (Aug./Sept. 1994) 338-42; *Horizons* 20 (Fall 1993) 301-10; *America* 168, no. 20 (June 5-12, 1993) 6-10; *ibid.* (Oct. 22, 1994) 21-22.

4. Within a relatively short time after publication, over a million copies of the Italian edition were sold, while sales of both the French and the Spanish editions numbered over 500,000 each.

formal public "launchings" of the catechism in English-speaking countries and in various dioceses throughout the Philippines have introduced the catechism to large numbers of parish priests, catechists, religious educators, and Church pastoral workers.⁵ Most of the published commentaries are very positive, especially when compared to the world-wide critiques of the catechism's 1989 version, then entitled *The Catechism for the Universal Church*.⁶

But given the extensive comment and documentation already published on the CCC, particularly in our local Philippine periodicals,⁷ what purpose could be served by yet another presentation? The answer is that this article proposes to relate the CCC directly to our Philippine catechetical context, which in the concrete means relating it to our recently completed national catechism, *The Catechism for Filipino Catholics [CFC]*. Such a perspective is suggested by the CCC itself, and universally stressed by all its commentators: the CCC is "intended to serve 'as a point of reference for the catechisms or compendia that are composed in the various countries'."⁸ Thus the CCC by its very nature demands the indispensable complementary role of national and regional catechisms.⁹

Therefore, after a brief sketch of the historical genesis of both

5. The CCC was officially launched in the Archdiocese of Manila on Aug. 19-20, 1994, with an exposition by four Bishops and attendance of over 1,500 catechetical personnel. Similarly, the Archdiocese of Caceres launched both CCC and CFC on Nov. 4-5, 1994, with over a thousand catechists and catechetical leaders of the whole region in attendance.

6. As might be gleaned from the fact of over 24,000 suggested amendments to this already "revised" version of the "universal catechism," there were strong criticisms of the work. Perhaps the best known and most carefully worked out critique was first published in *America* 162, no. 8 (Mar. 3, 1990), and later developed into a book, *The Universal Catechism Reader*, ed. Thomas J. Reese, S.J. (San Francisco: Harper, 1990) 237 pp. The CBCP through ECCCE, headed by Archbishop Leonardo Z. Legaspi, O.P., also presented certain suggested amendments for improving the text. See my previous study, "Catechisms for the Post-Vatican II Church: Situating the *Catechism for the Universal Church* and Its Critiques," *Landas* 4 (1990) 222-41.

7. See, for example, *Docete*, no. 73 (Apr./June 1993); no. 76 (Jan./Mar. 1994); no. 77 (Apr./June 1994); and *Life Today* (Sept. 1993).

8. See CCC, no. 11; also John Paul II, "Fidei Depositum," no. 4.

9. See "Fidei Depositum," no. 4; also Archbishop Levada, "Catechism for the Universal Church: An Overview," *Origins* 19 (Mar. 8, 1990) 648. The indispensable need for mediating the CCC by local catechisms was stressed by Cardinal

catechisms, this article will compare their specific purposes and the audience to which each catechism is addressed. It will then turn to the significant differences in their general structures and chapter organization. Finally, it will offer a running critique of some of the major elements of the content of each catechism. This procedure will hopefully illuminate further the essential values and functions of each catechism for the on-going renewed catechesis in our country which has been mandated by the 2nd Plenary Council of the Philippines.¹⁰

HISTORICAL GENESIS OF THE TWO CATECHISMS

Before briefly sketching the historical genesis of each catechism, a preliminary remark must be made on the underlying ambiguity of the term "catechism." This had already come to light in the 1977 Synod's document on catechesis, and the subsequent Apostolic Exhortation of John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae*.¹¹ "Catechetics," "catechesis," and "catechism" were all used in various ways, sometimes even as synonyms.¹² Beyond that general confusion, the term "catechism" itself has very definite connotations for most older Catholics. It usually evokes an image of a small book in large print, arranged in question-and-answer form, used for teaching children the rudiments of the Christian Faith. Commentators have modified this simplistic image by sketching the historical development of catechisms through the ages,¹³ culminating in the *adult* catechisms

Ratzinger, as reported in John Pollard's "Introduction," in *Introducing the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ed. Berard Marthaler (New York: Paulist, 1994) 2. This mediation is spelled out in greater detail by Bishop Donald W. Wuerl, "The Diocesan Bishop's Perspective on Implementing the Catechism," *Living Light* 30 (Fall 1993) 73-78; Joan Curtin, "The Diocesan Catechetical Office Perspective on Implementing the Catechism," *ibid.* 79-82; and Michael L. Steele, "Mediating the Catechism of the Catholic Church," *ibid.* 84-87.

10. See *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines [PCP II]* (Manila: CBCP Secretariat, 1992) nos. 156, 183.

11. See John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae* [CT] (Vatican, 1979) 100 pp.

12. See *Maturing in Christian Faith, the National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (Pasay: St. Paul Publications, 1985) no. 70.

13. See Archbishop Leonardo Z. Legaspi, O.P., "God's Precious Gift: the CCC," *Docete* 16, no. 76 (Jan./Mar. 1994) 4.

of our post-Vatican II era.¹⁴

The CCC describes itself simply as "an organic presentation of the Catholic Faith in its entirety [which] emphasizes the exposition of doctrine [and thus] seeks to help deepen understanding of faith, [being] oriented toward the maturing of that faith, its putting down roots in personal life, and its shining forth in personal conduct."¹⁵

This general description concurs with the currently accepted understanding of the function of a catechism, while not addressing directly the three major pre-occupations within catechesis today: the questions of doctrinal pluralism, of inculturation, and of its relation to social action.¹⁶ Each of these questions will be taken up in the relevant sections below.

THE CCC'S HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The origin and historical development of the CCC has already been widely publicized. Responding to the initial request of Cardinal Law of Boston at the 1985 Synod, John Paul II appointed a Commission of Cardinals under Cardinal Ratzinger to oversee and coordinate the preparation of the catechism. After "six years of intense work," including nine drafts and world-wide consultation resulting in more than 24,000 suggested amendments, the CCC was officially published with John Paul II's Apostolic Constitution "Fidei Depositum" on Oct. 11, 1992, the thirtieth anniversary of the opening of Vatican II. The version in French,

14. Ibid. There are significant differences between catechisms such as the Baltimore Catechism (1885), and the post-Vatican II national *adult* catechisms which followed the lead of the "Dutch Catechism" of 1966 — the German, 1985, the Belgian, 1986, and the French, 1991. These latter are characterized by: (1) being addressed to adults; (2) intended as reference texts; (3) bringing the Gospel message into dialogue with the contemporary world; (4) stressing the need for unity among Christians; (5) sensitive to ecumenical issues; and (6) ordered toward fostering maturity of faith and a deeper understanding of the Christian mysteries. See Berard Marthaler, OFM Conv., "The Catechism of the Catholic Church in US Context," *Living Light* 30 (Fall 1993) 68.

15. See CCC, nos. 18, 23, quoting CT, nos. 20-22, 25.

16. See, for example, the articles collected in *World Catechism or Inculturation?*, *Concilium* v. 204, ed. J. B. Metz and E. Schillebeeckx, O.P. (New York: Seabury, 1989).

the language of the original, was launched in Paris on Dec. 8, 1992, and to the surprise of almost everyone, immediately became a best seller.

A number of points in this brief historical sketch are important for a clear grasp of the *CCC*. The *first* is that, in the mind of John Paul II, the *CCC* is the third and final major implementation of Vatican II's renewal of the whole life of the Church, following the renewal of the liturgy and the new Code of Canon Law. *Secondly*, the long process of preparation involving such wide and numerous consultations, testifies to the serious effort at a truly collegial and ecclesial work. *Finally*, the choice of adopting as model the Council of Trent's "Roman Catechism," based on the traditional "four pillars" of catechesis, and the very title, "Fidei Depositum," of the Pope's introductory Constitution, manifest the desire to ground the "new" on the solid foundation of Catholic tradition.¹⁷

THE *CFC*'S ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

The planning of the *CFC* began in October 1983, pre-dating that of the *CCC* by a good two years. Rather than envisioned as a major means for implementing Vatican II, a national catechism for the Philippines was taken up as a follow-up volume to the *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines [NCDP]* that had just been sent to Rome for final approval. This direct link with the *NCDP* was the deciding factor in planning the overall structure and chapter arrangement of the catechism. The *CFC* was prepared precisely to exemplify concretely the catechetical guidelines and principles proposed in the *NCDP*. Thus the *NCDP*'s key notion of "integration" became a major formative principle in preparing the catechism.¹⁸

Work on the first draft of the *CFC*'s individual chapters had begun in 1984, but was interrupted by the EDSA Revolution of 1986. Re-editing and further composition was resumed in 1987,

17. See "Fidei Depositum," nos. 1, 3.

18. See my original study, "The National Catholic Catechism Project," *Landas* 1 (1987) 165-82, and the historical sketch of the *CFC*'s development by Fr. Salvatore Putzu, SDB, "The Making of the *CFC*," *Docete* 16, no. 75 (Oct./Dec. 1993) 17-24.

and the first experimental volumes on doctrine and morals were published in 1989 and 1990 respectively. In the meantime, the revised draft of the "universal catechism" had appeared (1989), and was consulted in preparing the *CFC's* moral volume. The first experimental draft of *CFC's* final volume on Worship/Sacraments was completed only in January 1993, shortly before the French edition of the *CCC* became available.

Therefore, in comparing the historical dates of the preparation of both catechisms we see that our national [*CFC*] catechism's 3-volume first experimental draft was substantially completed *before* the inaugural publication of the definitive French edition of the *CCC* in December, 1992. But the revision and preparation of *CFC's* Final Draft during 1993 was dominated by two new factors: the just published *Catechisme de l'Église Catholique* [*CCC*], and the *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines*. The *CFC's* revised Final Draft had originally been planned to focus on the new content on the Blessed Virgin Mary, and a final chapter or Epilogue on the Our Father. Actually, beyond these additions, the major work of revision consisted in incorporating references to *CCC* and *PCP II* throughout the whole of *CFC*. Hence the "Final Draft" of the *CFC* relates in its entirety to the *CCC* as its "sure and authentic reference text for teaching Catholic doctrine" (FD 4), thus fulfilling the primary intended goal of the *CCC*.

AIMS AND INTENDED READERS OF THE CATECHISMS

It is obvious that the aims and intended readers of the two catechisms are not identical. The general aims of the *CCC* were already described in the "Explanatory Note" to the provisional text of the "universal catechism" edition, 1989, and repeated in no. 11 of the *CCC*:

to present an organic synthesis of the essential and fundamental contents of Catholic doctrine, as regards both faith and morals, in the light of Vatican II and the whole of the Church's Tradition. Its principal sources are the Sacred Scriptures, the Fathers of the Church, the liturgy, and the Church's Magisterium. It is intended to serve 'as the point of reference for the catechisms or compendia that are

composed in the various countries'.¹⁹

The next paragraph explains that the *CCC* is intended primarily for those responsible for catechesis: first of all the bishops, then redactors of catechisms, priests and catechists, and finally for all other Christian faithful.²⁰

In comparing the above description of the *CCC* with the *CFC*, the following factors are significant. The *CCC* is designed for the *universal* Catholic Church, while the *CFC* is a *national* catechism composed explicitly for Filipino Catholics in their Philippine context, that is, presenting the Gospel message in a truly *inculturated* manner. This represents the essential inter-relation as well as the major difference between the two catechisms.

Moreover the *CCC* is presented as the catechism of Vatican II, similar to the way its chosen model, the Roman Catechism, flowed from the Council of Trent. It aimed intentionally at drawing on the whole of Catholic Tradition, especially the Fathers of the Church, including the Eastern writers.²¹

For its part, the *CFC* had the much more modest goal of offering a sound, concrete model for catechizing in the Philippines according to the guidelines and principles of the *NCDP*, and, subsequently, of responding to the mandate of *PCP II*. No attempt was made to include the whole Catholic tradition. But whereas the *CCC* consciously avoided taking sides among current theological positions, citing no theologian as such after Cardinal

19. *CCC*, no. 11. This description responds directly to the request of the 1985 Synod Fathers for "a catechism or compendium of all Catholic doctrine regarding both faith and morals, [which] must be biblical and liturgical, [with] sound doctrine suited to the present life of Christians." Quoted in "Fidei Depositum," no. 1.

20. Actually the intended audience extends to about everyone, starting with the Bishops and concluding with "every individual who wants to know what the Catholic Church believes." This clearly indicates the universality of the *CCC's* intended audience. Cf. "Fidei Depositum," no. 4. However one recommendation offered to improve the earlier "universal catechism" version had been to sharpen its focus regarding its intended readers.

21. Besides the subject index (45 pp.) and the index to Sacred Scripture (32 pp.) and to Ecumenical Councils of the Church (7 pp.), the *CCC* includes specific indices to "Particular Councils and Synods," "Pontifical Documents," "Ecclesiastical Documents," "Canon Law," "Liturgy," and "Ecclesiastical Writers" — a total of 105 pp. of Indices.

Newman of the 19th century, the *CFC* aimed at presenting a sound current doctrinal approach that draws on contemporary theologians as well. Some practical differences in the content resulting from these two approaches are pointed out below.

A third comparative difference between the two catechisms consists in their intended readers. As noted above, the *CCC* was from the start intended primarily for the Bishops and those preparing national and regional catechisms. It is not supposed to be used as a direct text in any and all catechetical situations. The *CFC* is obviously not intended for Bishops, but rather was prepared by the Bishops' Commission on Catechesis [ECCCE], especially for "Filipino Catholics engaged in communicating the Faith, and all who wish to know more about the Catholic Faith today" (*CFC* no. 27). But neither is the *CFC*, precisely as a *national* catechism, intended for direct catechetical use in particular situations. Rather it is meant to serve as the more proximate source for Filipino catechetical materials prepared for catechesis on specific levels of school and parish, or for particular types of catechesis, or special catechetical situations and occasions in the Philippines.²²

Together, these three differences coalesce in marking the *CFC* as basically *closer* to actual Filipino catechesis, rooted, as it were, in the very soil of on-going catechetical activity in the Philippines today.

RESPONSE TO EXPERIENCED DIFFICULTIES

Nevertheless, two common criticisms of the *CFC* have already been voiced. The most common critique is that the text is too difficult for the ordinary catechist. Secondly, some find its English more difficult than the *CCC*. Both criticisms represent legitimate reactions to the *CFC*, but they had already been anticipated in principle in its preparation. Responding to the first, the *CFC* project had determined early on to prepare a basic English

22. See my earlier articles, "The Study and Use of the *CFC*," *Docete* 15, no. 71 (Oct./Dec. 1992) 33-38; and "Toward the Proper Use of the *CFC*," *ibid.* 16, no. 74 (July/Sept. 1993) 3-8. Fr. Salvatore Putzu, SDB, developed this indispensable mediation in a 3-part article entitled "From the *CFC* to Religion Textbooks," *Docete* 16, nos. 72-74 (1993).

version aimed especially at catechetical coordinators, catechist formation programs, and college-educated Filipino Catholics, — *not* the many, unformed, volunteer catechists. No text teaches itself, and the *CFC* accepts the need for a competent facilitator/teacher to explain its English text to the individual Filipino catechist. This problem will hopefully be alleviated to some degree with the translation of the *CFC* into the major Philippine languages.²³

Secondly, the English of the *CCC* may seem simpler by reason of its wide use of standard formulas of the Catholic tradition. The *CFC* consciously tried to relate many such traditional magisterial formulas to actual living out of the faith by Filipino Catholics today, in order to avoid the common catechetical trap of stressing memorization without any real understanding. The “difficult” language of *CFC* may often be necessary to uncover the misunderstandings and ignorance of such essentials of the Christian Faith as creation, sin, baptism, freedom, conscience, and sacrament, that remain hidden under the “proper memorized formulas.”²⁴

GENERAL STRUCTURES OF THE CATECHISMS

We move on now to a comparison of the general structures of the two catechisms. The choice to model the *CCC* on the catechism of St. Pius V, the “Roman catechism” following the Council of Trent, determined its basic structure of building its “catechesis on 4 pillars: the baptismal profession of faith (the Creed), the sacraments of faith, the life of faith (the Commandments), and the prayer of the believer (the Lord’s Prayer)” (*CCC* no. 13). John Paul II in “*Fidei Depositum*” stresses how “the four parts are related one to the other,” fostering the perception of

23. A detailed topical Index for the *CFC* is presently being prepared, and the beginnings of an initial translation into Filipino as well.

24. This effort of the *CFC* was inspired in part by the surprising discovery that the majority of the catechists surveyed did not understand that God is creating everything every moment of its existence. (Some thought that Genesis taught that God was “resting” ever since his work of 6 days!) They all had the correct memorized formula, “God created everything,” but were embarrassed when asked to identify anything God created in their immediate environment.

"the wondrous unity of the mystery of God" (FD no. 3).

Nevertheless, the separation (by 170 pp.) of Pt. IV on "Christian Prayer" from Pt. II, "Celebration of the Christian Mystery" which opens with an extended exposition of the Liturgy, the official prayer of the Church, is an obvious weakness. Once the apparently original idea of using the Lord's Prayer as a summary of the whole catechism was dropped, it is hard to understand why the section on prayer should be tacked on at the end of the catechism.²⁵

The initial planning of the *CFC* in 1983-84 wrestled with this very problem. Moreover since the *CFC* was intentionally following the *NCDP's* stress on *integration*, it sought a viable way of strongly unifying the basic parts of the work. Two means were adopted: one focused on unity in *Christ* as the *Truth* (Pt. 1 Doctrine), the *Way* (Pt. 2 Morals), and the *Life* (Pt. 3 Worship/Sacraments). The second means was to use the Creed as the structure for the *WHOLE* catechism, and integrate Christian Morality with the Creedal truths on Christ, and the Worship/Sacraments with the Creedal truths on the Holy Spirit. The exposition Lord's Prayer would then constitute the Epilogue used to integrate the whole work.

This arrangement had the added advantage of allowing the *CFC* to follow more closely the *NCDP's* order of putting Christian morality between doctrine and worship. The *NCDP* clearly states that the order of parts should be flexible, dependent upon the actual specific catechetical situation (nos. 160-61). But it chose to place the chapter on Catholic Morality between Catholic Doctrine and Catholic Worship precisely in view of the common weakness in Philippine catechesis regarding morality. In sharp contrast to their readiness to enter into Sacramental and Creedal catechesis, Filipino catechists often feel unprepared to give an adequate catechesis in Christian morality.

Thus the comparison of the basic structures of the two catechisms, both based on the "4 pillars" of catechesis, can be illustrated as follows:

25. The reason for separating Pt. IV on Christian Prayer from Pt. II on the Liturgy/Sacraments cannot be because of the length of Pt. IV, since the latter is only 68 pp. This compares very modestly with the 105 pp. of Indices.

CCC

- I. Profession of Faith
Profession of Christian Faith (The Creed)
- II. *Celebration of the Christian Mystery*
Liturgy; 7 Sacraments
- III. *Life in Christ (Morals)*
Man's Vocation;

10 Commandments
- IV. *Christian Prayer*
Prayer in Christian Life; Lord's Prayer

CFC

- Introduction
- I. *Christ our Truth*
Creed: Art. 1 & 2
- II. *Christ our Way (Morals)*
Following Christ
Love Comm.; 10 Comm.
- III. *Christ our Life (Worship)*
Creed: Art. 3:
Holy Spirit: Church;
Prayer/Worship/Sacraments
Resurrection & Life Everlast.
- Epilogue: The Lord's Prayer*
Synthesis of whole book

Thus the two major differences between the general structures of the two catechisms are dictated by the *CFC's* effort at *greater integration*. The whole *CFC* is structured on the Creed, (not just Part I as in *CCC*). In the *CFC* Catholic Morals (Commandments) and Worship (Prayer/Liturgy/Sacraments) are integrated within the Creed. Secondly, the moral life is sandwiched between the doctrine and worship for better integration of Christian morality within Christian Truth and celebration. Some have complained that this separates the doctrine on the Holy Spirit from those on the Father and Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son. But the advantages in relating Christian morality closely to Christ, and the Sacraments directly to the Holy Spirit and the Church, were (and are) deemed to outweigh the disadvantages of such separation.²⁶

26. Since the *CFC*, originally published in 3 separate volumes, has now been united into one "Final Draft," there is less reason for complaining about such separation.

CHAPTER STRUCTURE

Integration as an operative principle structuring the *CFC* is carried over to the individual chapters. Whereas the *CCC* chapter structure is limited to marginal cross references, the use of small print, and the "In Brief" sections, each chapter in the *CFC* is structured on the same five-fold pattern:

Introductory Scripture texts and *Opening* identifying the chapter's topic;

Context focusing the topic within our specific Filipino situation;

Exposition presenting the essential content drawn from Scripture and Church teaching, and related directly to the concrete human experience of today's Filipino Catholic;

Integration offering one explicit example of inter-relating the doctrinal, moral, and worship dimensions of the chapter's topic; and

Questions/Answers summarizing the basic content of the chapter.²⁷

The lack of an equivalent chapter structure in the *CCC* is explained by its emphasis on "the exposition of doctrine." The *CCC* goes on to state explicitly that it

does not set out to provide the adaptation of doctrinal presentations and catechetical methods required by differences of culture, age, spiritual maturity, and social and ecclesial condition. . . . Such indispensable adaptations are the responsibility of particular catechisms, and even more, of those who instruct the faithful (*CCC* no. 24).

On the other hand, the *CFC*, as a particular national catechism, is able through its consistent chapter structure to exemplify basic aspects of the sound catechetical methodology proposed in the *NCDP*, while presenting the essentials of the Catholic Faith.

NOTABLE QUALITIES OF THE CATECHISMS' CONTENT

A survey article such as this can highlight only a few of the

27. See *CFC*, nos. 23-26.

more important aspects and dimensions of the content of the two catechisms. Three basic norms were used for selecting the particular content taken up here: examples that first are particularly relevant to the actual catechetical work in the Philippines today; that secondly, illustrate topical development from *CCC* to *CFC*; and thirdly, that are drawn from each of the major 4 parts. Moreover, in surveying specific content of the two catechisms, a critique, hopefully "clarifying," is offered of some commonly voiced critical opinions.

NEED FOR CRITIQUE OF THE CRITIQUES

Since the published reviews of the *CCC*, not unlike those evaluating its preceding draft, *The Catechism of the Universal Church*, range from the ecstatic to near rejection, and often contradict one another,²⁸ a preliminary caution is needed. Critics naturally judge a work in terms of their own experience, field(s) of interest, and attractive current "trends." This must be kept in mind when trying to objectively evaluate their evaluations. Realizing the basic stance and point of view of the critics themselves is a great help toward a more balanced grasp of the values and limitations of the two catechisms being reviewed.²⁹

ON CCC PT. I: THE PROFESSION OF FAITH

The *CCC* begins with a brief but admirable exposition of "Man's Capacity for God," quoting no. 19 of Vatican II's "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World" (*CCC* no. 27).³⁰

28. Concerning criticism of *CCC* Avery Dulles writes: "Many of the objections raised by one author are offset by words of defense or praise by other contributors." *America* (Oct. 22, 1994) 22. This does not necessarily reject the value of the objections, but indicates the need for critical reading of the critics.

29. Somewhat similar to the reviews of John Paul II's "Veritatis Splendor," the more critical reviews of the *CCC* are often from the professional catechetical and religious educators.

30. The title of this very first chapter exemplifies the problem of "inclusive language." Feminists today object to the use of "man" in a generic sense to include both men and women. It is unfortunate that a moderate balanced solution could not have been worked out for the approved English version of the *CCC*, avoiding the extreme positions of both sides in this on-going polemic.

Also following closely Vatican II's "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation" nos. 11-12, the *CCC* brings out the principles of interpreting Scripture (nos. 109-19). Later sections in the catechism, however, indicate how these principles are much more difficult to follow than appears. Although some of the earlier criticism of the catechism regarding Scripture used as "proof texts" were hyper-critical and lacking in sensitivity to what can reasonably be expected of a "catechism," nevertheless individual sections of the *CCC* (e.g., on Original Sin) may lead the unsuspecting reader toward fundamentalist interpretations that stand counter to the Vatican II position on Scriptural interpretation quoted earlier.³¹

Like the *CCC*, the *CFC* follows Vatican II's explanation of Scriptural revelation (nos. 75-91), and by drawing on sound, current catechetical and religious educational publications, exemplifies how Scripture is actually being used as the basic source in communicating the doctrine, morals, and worship of the Catholic Faith.

ON FAITH ITSELF

Comparing the *CCC*'s chapter on Faith with the *CFC*'s offers an excellent example of their positive inter-relations and differences. The *CCC* develops Faith in two unequal "Articles": the first, "I Believe," starting from the individual's "obedience of Faith," exemplified in Abraham and Mary, and proceeding to the basic "Characteristics of Faith"; the second, "We Believe," relating to Faith of the Church and its language. The chapter is outstanding for its clarity, and for its Scriptural, Liturgical and Vatican II references.

The *CFC*, as befits a national catechism, adapts this content to our present Filipino cultural and intellectual situation. Instead of starting with the "obedience of faith" — not the most appealing way of presenting Faith to youth today — the *CFC* begins its Exposition with "Faith in Human Relations," illustrated

31. For a vigorous, sometimes exaggerated critique of the *CCC* in this area, see Gerard S. Sloyan, "The Role of the Bible in Catechesis According to the Catechism," in *Introducing the CCC*, ed. B. Marthaler, 32-42.

by *NCDP's* example of our ordinary friendships (nos.100-102). It then proceeds to "Faith in God" by briefly summarizing both the *CCC's* and *PCP II's* "Characteristics of Faith" (nos. 104-108). Actual living Faith is described in terms of the *NCDP's* analysis of faith as tri-dimensional: *Believing/Doing/Worshipping*, or *Doctrine/Morals/Worship* (nos.109-14).

But the most notable development is the way the *CFC* takes the *CCC's* major "Characteristics of Faith" and integrates them into "Paradoxes" of faith as actually lived. Thus Faith is not just [separately] a grace and a human act (*CCC* nos. 153-54), but at once "a Gift yet Our Doing" (*CFC* nos. 130-31). It is not just "certain" and "seeks understanding" (*CCC* nos. 157-58), but "Certain, Yet Obscure," "Reasonable, Yet Beyond Natural Reason" (*CFC* nos. 123-26, 128). *CCC's* "Freedom of Faith" and "Necessity of Faith" (nos. 160-61) are actually exercised in living faith that is "Free but Morally Obliging" (*CFC* no. 127). *CFC* concludes with a substantial exposition of "Mary: Model of Faith" as befits the specific "Marian" quality of Filipino Catholicism (nos. 136-42).³² Clearly, then, the *CFC* puts *CCC's* more theoretical exposition of Faith in an experiential and inculturated manner, as would be expected.

TWO DIFFICULTIES WITH THE CCC ON FAITH

No work can be expected to be perfect despite all efforts to remove obscurities and the like. Nevertheless, comment must be made on two unexpected and surprising positions appearing in *CCC's* exposition on Faith. The *first* is a well-meaning but exaggerated separation of faith in God from faith in any creature, which equivalently rejects the time-honored principle of analogy. Catechetically, this seems counter-productive.³³

The *second* is the startling statement under "The Language

32. See Herbert Scholz, SVD, "Mary in the 'Catechism of the Catholic Church'," *Docete* 16, no. 76 (Jan./Mar. 1994) 15-19, and his comparative study, "Mary in Two Recent Official Catechisms," *Diwa* 19 (May 1994) 43-50.

33. See *CCC*, nos. 150, 154, and "In Brief," no. 178 which states bluntly: "We must believe in no one but God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." Such an extraordinary proposition denies all authentic human inter-relationships, while rejecting the *CCC's* own credibility.

of Faith" section that "we do not believe in formulas, but in those realities they express" (CCC no. 170). There follows a quote from St. Thomas, *STh* II-II, 1, 2 ad 2m, an article devoted to proposing the opposite view!³⁴ St. Thomas' "non terminatur" does NOT mean we do not believe in the formula, but merely that our belief does NOT STOP there. CCC's following sentence admits "All the same, we do approach these realities with the help of formulations of faith." Greater accuracy would demand not "help of" but "through the indispensable means of." Propositions are the NECESSARY MEANS for touching the realities of faith.

What makes this slip rather extraordinary is that some major authors have selected it as exemplifying "the heights of felicitous expression."³⁵ Catechetically, it represents an anti-intellectualist disaster that theoretically destroys the value of all Creeds and catechisms! The absolute necessity of concepts and propositions for us to touch rationally and reasonably the realities of Faith must be clearly affirmed, without the slightest confusion or obscurity.³⁶

This is particularly important because the catechetical/religious education field has already been plagued far too long by a pseudo-opposition between "doctrinal, systematic catechesis" and "life experience," which "uselessly plays off orthopraxis against orthodoxy."³⁷ By following the guidelines of the *NCDP* and sound, current expositions on Faith,³⁸ the *CFC* avoids this

34. In the article of the *Summa* referred to, St. Thomas explains how we grasp the objects of faith through our human way of reasoning. We formulate propositions precisely to touch the realities of faith.

35. See Msgr. William H. Shannon, "The Catechism of the Catholic Church," *America* 168 (June 5-12, 1993) 10.

36. Bishop Christophe Schönborn, the major editor of the *CCC*, repeats that "Faith has first of all to do with realities, with facts, not with notions or concepts," but then adds immediately, "Faith without propositions is faith without facts." He goes on to state that "the propositions of faith form a body of doctrines called the *depositum fidei*," citing 1 Tim 6:20 and 2 Tim 1:14 to confirm the importance of the deposit. See his "Major Themes and Underlying Principles of the *CCC*," *Living Light* 30 (Fall 1993) 63-64.

37. Quoted from John Paul II's Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae*, no. 22, published in 1979.

38. *CCC* intentionally chose not to draw on any living theologian. Hence its exposition of Faith could be enhanced by such sources as the all-but-classic article of Juan Alfaro, S.J., dating from the immediate post-Vatican II era, "The Dual

slip through its authentically "experiential" approach. But aside from this unfortunate "slip," the CCC offers much to deepen our grasp of Faith, especially as one of the theological virtues.³⁹

TRINITARIAN DIMENSION

We cannot move on without admiring the clear *Trinitarian dimension* of the CCC, starting from the very first number of its Prologue and continued throughout the whole catechism. Specifically, it not only presents the Trinity from the start, in the first Article of the Creed (nos. 232-67). It also brings out a most-needed stress on the Trinity as *Creator* (nos. 235, 257-60, 290, 316), as *Source* of the Resurrection (nos. 648-50), of the *Church* (nos. 781-801), and an extraordinarily moving account of the *Liturgy* as "Work of the Holy Trinity" (nos.1077-1109).

Following the Creed, the CFC chose to build up to its formal exposition of the Trinity by focusing first on the Father, then on the Incarnate Son, and thirdly on the Holy Spirit. It then explicitly presents the Trinity as a divine Community of Love (nos.1055-60). This relatively late and brief explicitation of the Blessed Trinity was intentionally chosen to avoid the common unfortunate catechetical tendency to reduce the Trinity to memorized formulas. To obviate this perennial difficulty, the CFC stresses the positive meaning of "mystery" rather than the usual formula of "something we cannot understand," and concentrates on constantly bringing out our multiple Trinitarian contacts.⁴⁰

Aspect of Faith: Entrusting Oneself to God and Acceptance of the Christian Message," in *Man as Man & Believer, Concilium* v. 21 (1967) 53-66.

39. For Faith as a theological virtue, see CCC, Pt. III on Life in Christ, the seventh Article of the first chapter on the Dignity of the Human Person (nos. 1814-16); again, the Article on the First Commandment (nos. 2087-89); and finally in Pt. IV on Christian Prayer, Article one on the Wellsprings of Prayer, under the Liturgy of the Church (nos. 2656-57). The latter unintentionally indicates how natural it would have been to integrate Prayer with Liturgy in Pt. II.

40. The CFC explicitly brings out the TRINITARIAN dimension in *Prayer/Worship* (nos. 168-71); with the image of *God as Father* (nos. 206, 217-18); as *Creator* (nos. 257-59); in *Redemption* (no. 466); in our *families* (nos. 805-807); in the *Church as Mystery* (nos. 1071-75, 1077-79); in *Prayer and the Liturgy* (nos.1165, 1196, 1203); in *Baptism* (nos. 1275-76), the *Eucharist* (nos. 1319-20, 1324, 1372), *Reconciliation* (nos.1387-89), and *Life Everlasting* (no.1580). Most of

ON CCC PT. II: CELEBRATION OF THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

CCC Pt. II's opening articles on the Liturgy (nos. 1077-1112) and the Paschal Mystery (nos. 1113-34), inspired by Vatican II's "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," are an especially rich and truly inspiring source for catechesis. Outstanding is its exposition of the Church's Sacraments as Sacraments of *Christ*, of the *Church*, of *Faith*, of *Salvation*, and of *Eternal Life* (nos. 1114-30).

For its part, the *CFC* locates its exposition of the Sacraments immediately following its chapters on the *Holy Spirit* (c. 22), the *Church* (c. 23), and an introductory chapter on "*Catholic Prayer and Worship*" (c. 24). This order has the advantage of bringing out the basic threefold action of the Holy Spirit: (1) incorporating us into the Church, (2) vivifying our Sacramental life, and (3) preparing us now for life everlasting.⁴¹ Moreover it allows integration of our Catholic Prayer with the Liturgy, the public prayer of the Church.

More importantly, perhaps, the *CFC* proposes a new descriptive definition of "*Sacrament*" that represents a substantial modification of the traditional memorized definition: "sensible sign, instituted by Christ, to give grace." It spells out in detail how the new description of Sacrament clarifies the old, bringing out the intrinsic relation of each of the seven ritual sacraments with Christ, the Primordial Sacrament, and the Church, the Foundational Sacrament (nos. 1207-20). In so doing, the *CFC* relates *CCC's* descriptions of a sacrament (nos. 1084, 1131) to the concrete Philippine catechetical situation.

PATTERN OF EXPOSITION OF THE SACRAMENTS

Following the *CCC's* chapter on the Paschal Mystery is a general chapter on "Sacramental Celebration," with the distinctive pattern observed as far as possible in the following chapters

all, the Epilogue, based on the *Our Father* and integrating the whole work, explicitly focuses on the Trinitarian dimension (nos. 1647, 1656, 1662-63, 1667-68, 1670, 1678, 1696, 1708, 1719, and the final par. 1730).

41. See *CFC*, Introduction to Pt. III, Christ our Life, and nos. 994, 1063, 1156, and 1578-80.

on the individual Sacraments. The pattern consists of basic questions: *What* is celebrated? *Who* celebrates/who receives? *How*? *When*? *Where*? Thus exposition of individual sacraments frequently begins with "What is this Sacrament called?"⁴² — which tends toward a certain nominalism, relative to people's mindset today. Nevertheless, this procedure has the great advantage of *clarity*, setting forth much information needed to respond to typical questions about each sacrament.

The *CFC's* approach is influenced again by the common criticism of religion courses in Catholic and public schools as teaching children/youth all the facts about the sacraments, but failing to inspire them to receive them. Thus the *CFC*, while presenting the essential information about the sacraments, is ordered more toward inspiring a personal grasp of the importance of the sacraments for living out the Christian Faith. Less stress is put on the how, when, where, and much more on the basic WHY. In brief, the *CFC* aims at relating the *CCC's* basic information on the sacraments to their role in the actual Faith life of Filipino Catholics, centering on the theme of encountering the Risen Christ.⁴³

The *CCC's* order of presenting the sacraments has been the object of some criticism by professional liturgists and sacramental theologians. They insist on the primacy of the Eucharist, and criticize the *CCC* for sticking to the traditional approach represented by St. Thomas which relates the sacraments to the natural maturing process of human life.⁴⁴ The *CFC* follows the *CCC* in this matter, and briefly refutes the argument for treating the Eucharist first as proposed by some contemporary authors (*CFC* no. 1246).

42. See *CCC* on Baptism, nos. 1214-16; on Eucharist, nos. 1328-32; and on Reconciliation, nos. 1423-24.

43. This is clearly manifested in the *CFC's* chapter on *Baptism* (c. 25), wherein the "popular" Filipino understanding is contrasted with the Church's post-Vatican II renewed teaching. See *CFC* no. 1257. It also shows in the *CFC's* care to relate liturgy and social justice (cf. nos. 1200-1202). See the article of Nicholas Wolterstorff, "Justice As a Condition of Authentic Liturgy," *Theology Today* 48 (April 1991) 6-21.

44. See Catherine Dooley, "Liturgical Catechesis According to the Catechism," in *Introducing the CCC*, ed. B. Marthaler, 88-89; and A. Kavanagh, "Theological Principles for Sacramental Catechesis," *Living Light* 23 (1987) 317.

Similar to the current trend of some moralists in rejecting the Commandments as a pattern for ordering treatises on Christian morality, this insistence of the liturgists on reorganizing the presentation of the sacraments seems to be a case of carrying theory too far, without taking into consideration the actual manner in which most Catholics grasp and live out their Catholic Faith. Today's context, more than ever, calls for a sacramental catechesis that relates closely to human growth and personal deepening. Current criticism of both the *CCC* and *CFC* on this point must therefore be balanced with a practical appreciation of the relevant data presented by a number of social science studies on the local Church faithful's actual Christian living.

A final comment here should be made regarding the on-going animated discussion regarding catechesis and the lectionary. Most professional catechetical leaders today take a dim view of a lectionary-based catechesis, or homilies systematically working through the *CCC*. "Any proposal to divide up the Catechism as the subject of pulpit instruction during the Eucharistic celebration is to be deplored utterly."⁴⁵ The lively debate between catechetical and liturgical "experts" will undoubtedly continue, while local parish priests and assistants will decide on their own.

BRIEF COMMENT ON *CCC* PT. IV: CHRISTIAN PRAYER

This Pt. IV of *CCC* on prayer has been highly praised: its introductory description of prayer as God's *Gift*, as *Covenant* and as *Comunion* (nos. 2559-65); its exposition of prayer in OT, in Jesus, and in the Age of the Church. The Wellsprings, Ways, Guides, and Expressions of Prayer, together with the Battles indicative of a Life of Prayer, are presented clearly in 42 densely packed pages (nos. 2559-2758). The second shorter section on the "Lord's Prayer" (22 pp.), introduced as "The Summary of

45. Gerard S. Sloyan, "The Homily and Catechesis: The Catechism And/Or the Lectionary?," in *Introducing the CCC*, ed. B. Marthaler, 141. For some representative studies in this discussion, see Thomas Groome, "Lectionary-Based Catechesis: Conflicting Views," *Church* 8 (Spring 1992) 14-20; T. Groome, "Catechesis: Practice and Theory," *Modern Liturgy* 18 (Nov. 1991) 7-9; G. Ostdiek, "Examining Liturgical Catechesis," *ibid.* 11-12; L. L. Mitchell, "Why Lectionary-Based Catechesis?," *ibid.* 13-14.

the Whole Gospel," "At the Center of the Scriptures," and "The Prayer of the Church" (nos. 2759-76), provides an excellent commentary on the Our Father's petitions, drawn mostly from Scriptural and Patristic sources, but including some Liturgical and theological sources as well.

The *CFC's* Epilogue focuses on the Lord's Prayer precisely as the means for "pulling things together" and synthesizing the whole catechism. Therefore, instead of the usual single section of "Integration" as in the other chapters, the Epilogue contains seven Integration sections. Moreover, drawing on the *CCC* and Patristic usage in this case, it develops how the "Our Father" is a "Summary of the Whole Gospel" by relating its Petitions with the Beatitudes, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, the Ten Commandments, and *CFC's* 29 chapters (no. 1649). Finally, in order to "inculturate" the exposition of the Lord's Prayer into present Philippine culture and society, especially as analyzed and interpreted by PCP II, contemporary commentaries on the Our Father were also brought into play.⁴⁶

ON CCC PT. III: LIFE IN CHRIST

We come finally to *CCC's* exposition of Catholic Morality, the part of the catechism most radically revised after the world-wide consultation on the "universal catechism." *CCC's* treatment is divided into two sections: the first covering the basic content of General Morals (62 pp.), while the second takes up the Ten Commandments (99 pp.). The greatest change appears in its "Section I: Man's Vocation: Life in the Spirit" which is developed in three chapters. The first, "The Dignity of the Human Person" (29 pp.) presents a Vatican II grounded view of "Man: The Image

46. See, for example, Nicholas Ayo, CSC, *The Lord's Prayer: A Survey Theological and Literary* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992); Leonardo Boff, *The Lord's Prayer: The Prayer of Integral Liberation* (New York: Orbis, 1983); Michael H. Crosby, OFM Cap., *Thy Will Be Done: Praying the Our Father as Subversive Activity* (New York: Orbis, 1977); Romano Guardini, *The Lord's Prayer* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1957); Philip Harned, *Understanding the Lord's Prayer* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975); Eugene LaVerdiere, SSS, *When We Pray . . . Meditation on the Lord's Prayer* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1983); and Jan Milic Lochman, *The Lord's Prayer* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990).

of God," "Our Vocation to Beatitude," "Man's Freedom," "The Morality of Human Acts and Passions," "Moral Conscience," "The Virtues," and "Sin." A second much shorter chapter (12 pp.) treats of "The Human Community," followed by a third chapter on "God's Salvation: Law and Grace" (20 pp.).

Highest praise is due CCC's very positive, Biblical introduction to man [the human person] and his [her] vocation (nos. 1700-1729). The CFC follows the CCC's positive approach by introducing Catholic Morality (Christ Our Way) with "Living as Disciples of Christ" (chap.13), developing the basic characteristics of the "human person" (nos. 533-43).

Regarding the central reality of Man's [Human] Freedom, the CCC chose to limit its exposition to freedom of choice, or the power to act (no. 1731), without any mention of the self (fundamental option). This in turn influences how human freedom is related to salvation and grace (nos. 1741-42). CCC's presentation is more traditional, differing from how Grace, Justification and Merit (nos. 1987-2011) are usually taken up today in systematic/doctrinal theology, namely, in stressing human person rather than only human acts. In particular, grace is understood primarily in terms of God's SELF-GIVING, rather than as a "help" toward our good moral acts.

The CFC's exposition of human freedom complements CCC by including freedom of the self (fundamental option/stance), or the self formed by free acts. Thus it focuses more on human freedom's experiential dimensions: the experience of authentic freedom, shared with others, and based on truth; freedom *from* and freedom *for*; the freedom of *choice* (acts) and the *fundamental* freedom of the *self*; and the freedom of the sons of God (nos. 545-51). In so doing it develops the NCDP's summary presentation (cf. NCDP nos. 264-66).

STRUCTURED ON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

What perhaps has raised the most comment is CCC's use of the Ten Commandments as the structure for treating all the questions of Special Morals. It has become very fashionable among moral theologians to decry proposing Christian Morality

in terms of the Commandments.⁴⁷ In many recent adult catechisms, the Commandments are relegated to various footnotes, if included at all.⁴⁸ Contemporary moralists seem to find it very difficult to reconcile commandments, law, and precepts, with love. They thus depict the CCC as "calling us toward life in Christ marked by the *dual command* to obey the ten commandments and 'to love as Christ loves'."⁴⁹ One wonders whatever became of: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (Jn 14:15; cf. 15:10; 1 Jn 2:3-6).

Reducing esteem of the Ten Commandments to a legalistic mind-set, and concentrating uniquely on values, virtues and character, is hardly the escape from our moral impasse that many contemporary moral theologians have imagined.⁵⁰ Pursuing a literally "law-less morality" is the opposite of what is needed today. Our youth need to be educated toward a positive appreciation of law — free prescriptions of communities, freely enacted, about human free acts, for the greater freedom and common good of the community members. Both *Veritatis Splendor* and the CCC have attracted far more positive response from ordinary people and ethicists than the teaching of some of our leading contemporary moralists.⁵¹

47. This trend of playing down the 10 Commandments is strikingly exemplified by the Dean of Moral Theology, Louvain University, in his critique of John Paul II's "Veritatis Splendor" in which he states: "the role of the commandments in the process of salvation become(s) problematic," "a secondary consideration in Christian ethics," "mere prescriptive morality," etc. See Joseph A. Selling, "Veritatis Splendor and the Sources of Morality," *Louvain Studies* 19 (1994) 3-17.

48. See *Credo: A Catholic Catechism* (London: Chapman, 1983), the English translation of the catechism produced by the German Catechetical Association. *The Teaching of Christ: A Catholic Catechism for Adults*, by Lawler, Wuerl, and Lawler (2nd ed.; Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, 1983) 644 pp., devotes 1 1/2 pp. to the Ten Commandments.

49. See Robert M. Friday, "The Formation of Conscience According to the Catechism," in *Introducing the CCC*, ed. B. Marthaler, 106.

50. For a positive exposition of this stress on virtue and character, see James F. Keenan, "Virtue Ethics: Making a Case As It Comes of Age," *Thought* 67 (June 1992) 115-27; D. Rogers, "Character Formation: The Neglected Mandate," *Religious Education* 86 (Summer 1991) 427-40.

51. Support for the Ten Commandments has not been lacking. See, for example, P. Lee, "Permanence of the 10 Commandments: St. Thomas and His Modern Commentators," *Theological Studies* 42 (1981) 422-43; M. Sales, "The 10 Commandments of God and the First Above All," *Communio* 19 (Spring 1992)

Rather than contrast love, virtue, character with Commandments, both the *CCC* (no. 2083) and *CFC* (c. 15: "The Christian Law of Life-Giving Love") take great pains to bring out the PRIMACY OF LOVE as the basis of all the commandments.⁵² Both catechisms explain the Ten Commandments precisely as flowing from the Two Great Love Commandments, Love of God and Love of neighbor, and Christ's own "new" love commandment (Jn 13: 34; 15:12). *CFC* delineates the following of Christ in terms of the Kingdom of God: the condition for entrance: repentance; nature of membership: discipleship; its life characteristic: love; its norm: the Law of Love; and its charter: the Beatitudes (nos. 576-82). It explains in great detail the nature and function of Moral Norms, especially as manifested in Sacred Scripture (*CFC* nos. 626-49), and the Commandments in particular (nos. 677-85). It is in such a context that virtues, values and character formation can best be explained and fostered (e.g., cf. *CFC* nos. 594, 660, 685).

As a recent author proposed, instead of attacking the Ten Commandments as legalistic, it would be far more profitable to "write a positive version in the language of the two-fold commandment of love, bringing out the human values highlighted in each commandment."⁵³ Additional, more sharply focused studies are needed to relate *CCC* and the Church's thrust for justice and peace.⁵⁴ *CFC* makes good use of PCP II in bringing out this dimension in Philippine catechesis (cf. *CFC* nos. 920-55).

CONCLUSION

The aim of this article has been to show how the two catechisms complement each other, and particularly, how the *CFC* constitutes an authentic model of "inculturating" and "adapting" the universal catechism, the *CCC*, to our Philippine catechetical scene. Such a step is absolutely essential for effective

11-35; and C. Dohmen, "Origin and Goals of Biblical Ethics as Illustrated by the First Commandment of the Decalogue," *ibid.* 36-57.

52. See Kevin Kelly, "The Catechism and Moral Teaching: Ten Tentative Tips for Readers," *The Month* 27 (July 1994) 266-69.

53. *Ibid.* 267, 269.

54. See, for example, James L. Nash, "Catechesis for Justice and Peace in the Catechism," in *Introducing the CCC*, ed. B. Marthaler, 112-32.

catechesis, on the authority of the CCC itself. As B. Marthaler explains:

In Cardinal Ratzinger's framework, the catechism [CCC] presents the "what," and leaves the who, with whom, for whom, where, when and how to catechetical works produced in the local level.⁵⁵

This principle of mediation is extremely important because there is a great temptation to be led astray by extravagant expectations of the CCC, making it the Church's final word on every imaginable topic. A leading catechetical expert warns:

To offer it [the CCC] cold, out of context, could be misleading; it would encourage fundamentalism or something worse, that tendency to rest in an arbitrary interpretation of the Gospel. It needs to be interpreted properly as all texts do. It is addressed to the heart as well as to the mind.⁵⁶

We thus conclude this overview with the wish that both catechisms may prove fruitful in helping our Filipino faithful to enter more deeply into the mystery of God's love for them in Christ Jesus our Lord.

55. See Marthaler, "The CCC in US Context," 69, referring to Cardinal Ratzinger's article, "Catechismo e inculturazione," *Il Regno-documenti* 19 (1992) 585-89.

56. See Roderick Strange, "The Catechism and the Mystery of Christ," *Priests & People* 8 (Aug./Sept. 1994) 338.