

A LATE 19TH-CENTURY JESUIT MORALIST IN NORTHERN MINDANAO

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Of the hundreds of 19th-century missionary reports from Mindanao, only two are signed by Fr. Domingo Viñals, a Jesuit missionary from Gerona, Spain.¹ A 37-year old Jesuit priest who had just finished his final year of Jesuit training in Spain, he was, on arrival in Manila in 1873, immediately assigned to Tamontaka, today part of Cotabato City. The next year he was sent to Dumalong (today, Ayala) in Zamboanga del Sur, whence he undertook mission trips to the Subanen. Six years later, he was transferred to Dapitan, but in 1881, we find him at El Salvador (Oriental Misamis). In 1884, religious obedience brought him to his final mission assignment in northeastern Mindanao. There he worked until he died in Manila nine years later, 3 October 1893, two months after his 57th birthday.

This is all we know for certain about Fr. Viñals. But his three extant letters give an idea of the Jesuit that he was: a man of principle, but sympathetic to human nature, straightforward and optimistic.

This appears in the two brief essays he had written, apparently for his own use, but also to help others who he felt would certainly be facing similar situations in the missions.

The first essay which we offer in an annotated translation, "Understanding the Indios: Who They Are, How to Deal with Them," must have been written after a few years of active missionary involvement. The style would perhaps disqualify it

1. We may add a third document, a certificate of marriage *in infidelitate* of a woman he had baptized in Alubijid, Oriental Misamis.

as an "essay," for it is really mere personal notes and observations. Ideas are often jotted down in incomplete sentences, and he probably had never intended them for publication. But they reveal the clear and decisive mind of a person alert and ready to praise the good, instead of condemning the bad. He also seems to have been always willing to help improve the conditions around, rather than lament but do nothing about them.

The second essay, "Hearing the Confessions of the Visayan Indios," was apparently meant for publication. But clearly the manuscript was not ready for the press when he died. Based on the "spirit of St. Alphonsus Liguori's *Praxis Confessarii*" and the Jesuit "Rules for Priests," he was careful to show he followed the moral teachings of "many saints — John Nepomuceno, Raymond Peñafort, Alphonsus Maria Liguori, Leonard of Port Mauritius, Francis Xavier, Peter Canisius, Francis di Geronimo, Francis de Sales, Charles Borromeo, Philip Neri, Vincent de Paul, and other Jesuit Saints — who in their holy zeal heard the confessions of their penitents."

But having been trained exclusively in Spain, he had his own share of prejudices which personal experience in the missions failed to mitigate. Still his style of writing shows he did not suffer from the obnoxious sense of superiority to things non-European common among many Spaniards of his time.

His frequent Latin citations indicate he had intended the work for his Jesuit brethren, but death overtook him before he had a chance to revise the work. Apparently, too, he had not shown the manuscript to anyone, and he indicates in one or two places his conclusions were the fruit of his personal observations and experience.

Like a good teacher, Fr. Viñals proceeds *a noto ad ignotum*, i.e., he bases much of his conclusions from what he perceives to be the Indio personality. Unlike other observers, however, he is careful not to impose European models familiar to him, but only what was universally acceptable.

This is why these two brief documents are important. They provide a glimpse into the indigenous ethos of northern Mindanao late in the 19th century. It is also a commentary on the success or failure of the Spanish colonial program which, as everyone knows, failed to reach every Philippine province or island. The

Muslim problem was not a paramount obstacle in northern Mindanao where Fr. Viñals worked, although it might have added a negative element against a faster growth of those missions.

From these essays, it is clear that much of Mindanao remained backward country even in the second half of the last century.² Basically, it was because the Spanish government, harassed and fighting for its own survival in the peninsula, could not pay full attention to its remaining colonies, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. Only when rival European powers began actively to cover its southern island possessions in the Philippines was Spain forced to bestir itself and assert its rights to an area over which it had never had effective jurisdiction for the last 200 years.

Precisely, the newly restored Jesuits in Spain were sent back to the Philippines to "resettle and Christianize the unsettled mountain tribes in Mindanao and its adjacent islands"³ in order to consolidate the recent Spanish military victories at key points in Mindanao. And only with the coming of the Jesuits did the modernization of the region begin in earnest.

Until their return in 1861, there had been no previous studies on the local idioms or the local fauna and flora. The first vocabulary list and rudimentary grammar of any Mindanao tongue was written by Fr. Jacinto Juanmarti (1833-97). Lovingly nicknamed "Father of the Tirureys," he consolidated the Tamontaka mission, the first modern Jesuit mission in the Philippines. To help himself and his fellow missionaries there, he wrote in both Moro Magindanao and Arabic.⁴

2. The Jesuits arrived in Agusan in 1875 but the region looked as though it had just been reached by the Europeans for the first time. In 1856, the district governor had relocated the Manobos in hamlets of about 20 families each along the river, but these had immediately disappeared. Reestablished in 1867, tribal wars had wiped them out. In 1868, the government relocated the inland tribes to a place closer to the sea, in the present town of Cabarbaran and formed one civil municipality called *Reunión*. The scheme failed for the people refused to leave their ancestral lands in the mountains. When the Jesuits, then, reached Agusan, *Reunión* existed only in the memory of the people. See Pablo Pastells, *Misión de la Compañía de Jesús en el Siglo XIX* (3 vols.; Barcelona, 1916-1917) passim; Philippine National Archives (Manila), "Jesuitas," Box 3, bundle 1.

3. See the royal directives assigning the Jesuits to the Philippines, copies of which are preserved in the Jesuit Archives of the Tarragona Province (Sant Cugat del Vallès, Barcelona, Spain), e-II-a-26; Pastells, *Misión*, Vol. 1, chap. 1.

4. He published *Diccionario moro-magindanao-español*, Primera Parte

Current ethnographic or anthropological research has focused, rightly, on external observable data. Obviously, studies of, in Catholic terms, the "inner forum" or conscience of indigenous society would have presented problems of documentation or quantification. Similarly, conclusions about the conquistadores' or the missionaries' reactions to the local situation overlook inner perceptions, both shocking or otherwise, to the modern observer. Furthermore, the Jesuits were too busy to sit down and put on paper — except on rare occasions — their intimate feelings and thoughts as they faced what they always called a "most promising field of the Lord's vineyard."

There is always a missing link in the effort to trace in all its necessary details the Christianization of the indigenous Mindanao tribes, or even measure its depth. Hence, we feel these two essays are important. Fr. Viñals allows us to listen to the heart-beat of the missionaries who opened Mindanao to modern life.

The following essays are also important since they caution us against generalizing about Philippine society towards the end of the last century. Just as in Europe before the Lutheran revolt, there were in the Philippines several unChristianized areas where pagan traditions persisted. This was due to the lack of communication and the perennial shortage of missionaries. Interest, therefore, centers around the strong Catholicity of the Philippines despite these obstacles.

Traditional Philippine history, especially those published in the early 20th century, have always described the Spanish missionaries as monsters. Generous perhaps and self-sacrificing in the early years of the Spanish presence, they unfortunately had allegedly degenerated and hardened into schemers driven by lust and greed for wealth by the 19th century. These brief documents, it is hoped, might help to dispel that image and give those unnumbered messengers of the Gospel their due meed.

(Manila, 1892); *Gramática de la lengua de magindanao según se habla en el centro y en la costa sur de la isla de Mindanao* (Manila, 1892). Fr. Guillermo Bannasar, S.J., another missionary in Tamontaka, published *Observaciones gramaticales sobre la lengua tiruray, por un misionero de la Compañía de Jesús* (Manila, 1892) and *Diccionario tiruray-español*, Primera Parte (Manila, 1892), Segunda Parte (Manila, 1893). The first Bagobo-Spanish dictionary, written by Fr. Mateo Gisbert, S.J., appeared off a Manila press in 1892.

UNDERSTANDING THE INDIOS: WHO THEY ARE, HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM

1. SOME SOCIAL CUSTOMS OF THE INDIOS

Meals: rice, unsalted, boiled in water, like our ordinary bread, and some vegetables to go with it, or fish, or wild venison, carabao meat, but only a few times. Instead of rice, little of which many have during the year, and for some months almost none, they live on edible roots, camote, something like the potato. This meal they usually take late, at midday, at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon, at 4:00, or much later. Meantime they chew *buyo*, tobacco, or something else. They have no wine from grapes, or bread from wheat. The spirit most used is a distillation from the coconut which they call *tubâ*.⁵

This nourishment, not the European, then, is what should be provided them, regularize and increase, if possible.

The Indio Clothing: A shirt over short drawers, unshod feet, uncovered head. The women wear not much more than the men. To tell the truth, the climate requires nothing more, or their poverty; much less their complexion, of the shade of textiles. And apparently, the less clothing, the more it is to their liking. For so are they in their houses,

5. See Pigafetta's eulogy of the virtues of the Philippine coconut: "Cocoanuts are the fruit of the palmtree. Just as we have bread, wine, oil, and milk, so those people get everything from that tree. They get wine in the following manner. They bore a hole into the heart of the said palm at the top called *palmito*, from which distils a liquor which resembles white must. That liquor is sweet, but somewhat tart, and [is gathered] in [bamboo] canes as thick as the leg and thicker. They fasten the bamboo to the tree at evening for the morning, and in the morning for the evening. That palm bears a fruit, namely the cocoanut, which is as large as the head or thereabouts. Its outside husk is green and thicker than two fingers. Certain filaments are found in that husk, whence is made cord for binding together their boats. Under that husk there is a hard shell, much thicker than the shell of the walnut, which they burn and make therefrom a powder that is useful to them. Under that shell there is a white marrowy substance one finger in thickness, which they eat fresh with meat and fish as we do bread; and it has a taste resembling the almond. It could be dried and made into bread. There is a clear, sweet water in the middle of that marrowy substance which is very refreshing. When that water stands for a while after having been collected, it congeals and becomes like an apple. When the natives wish to make oil, they take that cocoanut, and allow the marrowy substance and the water to putrefy. Then they boil it and it becomes oil like butter. When they wish to make vinegar, they allow only the water to putrefy, and then place it in the sun, and a vinegar results like [that made from] white wine." Antonio Pigafetta, *Magellan's Voyage Around the World*, Charles E. Nowell, ed. (Evanston, Ill., 1962) 132-33.

alone, and even when working with others. They cover the most indispensable with a piece of cloth they call *bahag*.⁶

If possible, then, it seems good to clothe them more; or else, we just have to bear with their simplicity. They are not bothered by their own nakedness, as we are.⁷

The Indio Bed: In their houses, the wooden floor, most of the time, loosely tied laths. Outside of the house, the hard ground, at times dry lumber. A small mat as a pillow, a piece of cloth for a blanket. Most often, without these, and in the clothes they have worn during the day. It is the bed of the ascetics of the desert. Nonetheless, like the dormouse, the Indios sleep full hours of the day and the night. It is a miracle they wake up the next day.

We have to impress this on them, namely, that home owners put up at least three rooms: for the husband and wife, for their sons, and for their daughters; that they do not sleep living close together, much less both sexes; that they do not leave the doors and windows habitually open.⁸

The Indio House: More than five *varas*⁹ in height and width, a little more in length, a corner extended as a kitchen. With only one room, the sala and dining room at once. At times, one or two. The whole thing of bamboo and palm leaves tied together. Without locks, the doors and windows open to the wind and the rain. These certainly are the best against the heat of the sun and the frequent earthquakes in the country, and the availability of the materials. The stable on the ground underneath, the family on the only floor, and the rooster and the hens, which are their night clock, on the rooftop, the highest spot.

Their entire furniture usually consists of an earthen jar, an *agung*, drum, or bamboo flute;¹⁰ one or more closed chests containing their

6. Compare this with Pigafetta's description of the clothes the Leyteños and Cebuanos wore in 1521: "Those people are heathen, and go naked and painted. They wear a piece of cloth woven from a tree about their privies." Pigafetta, 146, 166. The same thing was observed by Antonio de Morga, deputy governor of the Philippines at the end of the 16th century: "The dress and costume of these natives of Luzon, before the Spaniards arrived, usually consisted of short garments reaching a little below the waist . . . without collars, closed down the front, and short-sleeved. . . . They also wore a red cloth around the waist and between the legs so that it covered the private parts and came half-way down the thighs. These are called *bahaques*." Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, tr. and ed. J. S. Cummins (Cambridge, 1971) 248.

7. An example of Father's awareness of European prejudices.

8. Significantly, in the essay on confession, incest is hardly mentioned.

9. Roughly 8 1/2 centimeters.

10. Pigafetta already wrote: "The youth play on pipes made like ours which they call *subin*." Pigafetta, 156.

treasures; a machete, a rare spear (they use no rifle or shotgun); mats, mosquito net, sometimes a loom.¹¹

Of course, the hurricanes that are quite frequent in this country leave behind such houses and villages of the Indios devastated and strewn on the ground, more ruined than the European towns after a cannonading with heavy artillery.

The surest way to have those without them build even such houses and villages within a discretionary period is usually the serious order of the district head and the threat, the most feared by the Indio, to take them as prisoners to the capital and carried out without hesitation by the *gobernadorcillo* or village *kapitán* (provided the latter can do so). As usual, the ceaseless urging by the priest or missionary.¹²

Professions of the Indios: They are the means just to exist, beyond which the Indio does not ambition. These are the principal ones:

1) Tilling the land [whose result] is in inverse proportion to his efforts. What moves him to work is authority and supervision.

2) Fishing, in which they are quite resourceful, and it is very much according to their temperament. It will always be good to suggest and insist on this.

3) Hunting, especially of wild boars. They do this with traps, dogs, and spears. Only the soldiers use a shotgun. In those virgin mountains they look for and gather the fruits of fruit-bearing trees, wild honey, wax, and roots.

4) Carpentry, quite rudimentary, by a few in each village. This could be fostered with instructors and models, without which the Indio hardly knows how to work at it.¹³

11. Significantly, among the Tagalog, to hunt is "*mangaso*" or get the prey with a dog, "*mabitag*" or set up a trap.

12. Where the missionaries had not yet opened mission stations, permanent villages or resettlement centers were rare as late as the eve of the Bonifacio uprising of August 1896. Even among the Christianized Filipinos in the lowlands, the colonial plan to have the people live in civil towns was not fully successful, and the government had to agree to allow the people to continue to live away from the town or *población*, provided their houses were within hearing distance of the church bells or "*bajo campana*." One reason was their natural desire to stay in their ancestral lands; another was that, in the town, they were an easy prey for the tribute collector. It has been remarked that hamlets or barrios away from the town was the haven of escapees from the law and all sorts of criminals.

13. In 1862, in the Tamontaka mission (today part of Cotabato City), the Jesuits had to teach the Tirurey how to use the adze, the hoe, and the spade. See the letter of Fr. Jose Ignacio Guerrico to the Mission Superior, Tamontaka, 3 January 1880 in Jose S. Arcilla, S.J., ed. and tr., *Jesuit Missionary Letters from Mindanao*, Vol. 1: *The Rio Grande Mission* (Quezon City, 1990) 117-18.

5) For a few, another source [of livelihood] is the retail trade, or resale, usually in the village itself or also by travelling to other villages. Usually these are the shrewder and more malicious Indios, and it is not good to praise them on this point.¹⁴ Wholesale trade all over the Philippines is in the hands of the Chinese who, they say, do better here than the Europeans.

Marriage Among Indios: No human race is without its customs and ceremonies to solemnize betrothals. Those of these Indios, though unbaptized, are noteworthy. Those of the Christians are influenced by the old pagans, although not always.

Betrothal, or promise of marriage, normally lasts an extremely long time. During this period, the betrothed live together illicitly, with illegitimate children. The cause of this anomaly is the "*pangagad*," common among pagans, or the service of the future son-in-law to the parents of his betrothed. He has to kiss their hand, fetch water and firewood, offer gifts, build a house, till a farm, prepare a banquet, give jewelry and money in exchange for the betrothed. The suitor comes with silver to purchase the bride. And it is within the power of those old folks to postpone the marriage rite. Experience shows that the untiring zeal of the missionary going yearly to each village to wed the couples helps to bring an end to this abuse.

This is the usual practice:

1) "*Pamalaye*," asking the girl's hand, typically among them long and indecisive. They usually talk in general terms only about what to discuss and what not. At times, months and years go by before they begin to consider it with some seriousness. In this case, they come up with what they call:

2) "*Hungtao*," or some other name referring to our wedding contract. This hungtao is very serious. The bride's party gets as much as it can, the demands of the groom and his party are unbelievable. There are usually several meetings, banquets, postponements. Some will include pagan rites, even ordering the betrothed to sleep together, and considering them as husband and wife before they appear in the Church.

Christian Marriage: They come before the priest who examines them on the Catechism. To those who do not know it, he assigns a catechist to teach them while the banns are published. They make their confession on the eve of their wedding, sometimes many couples together. For the ceremony next day, with sponsors, they come dressed in their best,

14. One cannot guess why Fr. Viñals would add this observation, except perhaps that these retailers took advantage of the simple people and priced their goods exorbitantly.

wearing golden rosaries and silk scapulars (some à *la española antigua* with shoes and crowned hats — and since it usually is the same for everyone, it does not become them). The priest asks for their consent. Although till then one or the other had been saying "yes," he or she suddenly gives a round "no," *dilí*, and should have spared everyone from coming to the church. Do not be excited; everything is settled later, the pair is married. The priest blesses them, offers prayers for them. They go home, sometimes with music, at other times in silence. They serve a banquet, etc., and live as man and wife. It is commonly said that the married Indio is faithful.

It is therefore one of the more important tasks to bless the marriage of the Indios and make sure that each year as many as are in the village are married. Helped in this task by the Church fiscal,¹⁵ the *gobernadorcillo*, the *barangay* heads, and the elders of the people, the priest (curate, minister, missionary) brings this about through his continued care.

The Sick and the Dead: Divine Providence cares for the sick, or they themselves fight against sickness, and sickness or nature, one or the other, will prevail. The physician is an Indio, someone outstanding among them because of some knowledge of the medicinal herbs abounding in the country.

Their bed, what they are used to when healthy. Care by his own: little, and many times, none. Without inhibitions, they call on the priest to provide them with everything: confession at once and, so to say, a Rodriguez of the Indios.¹⁶

If one has dealt with them, no preliminaries are needed, but, patience! It is difficult to be rid of eavesdroppers. There was once a patient who made his confession with help from someone behind the curtain.¹⁷ The Indio is not embarrassed by an open confession.

The Viaticum, or "*Sumala sa Parí*"¹⁸ — as the priest wishes. They themselves open their outstretched hands for Extreme Unction.

15. The over-all care-taker of the village church or chapel in the priest's absence.

16. Alfonso Rodriguez, a famous Jesuit ascetical writer, author of the well known *The Practice of Perfection and the Christian Virtues* (Sevilla, 1609). Translated into several languages and reedited at least 65 times, both in its entirety and partially, it used to be obligatory reading material for the Jesuit novices and those of many other religious orders. Fr. Viñals refers to something similar and applicable to local conditions.

17. Apparently, in the missions and poorer stations, there were no confessional boxes and only a curtain separated the priest from the penitent.

18. This could be a writing mistake for "*sumama sa parí*," or go with the priest.

Many have no one to help them die properly, but others do. I once came upon an old man, eyeglasses on, his right hand on an open old volume. "What are you reading to her who is close to dying now?" "Read, Father, read; very good, very good." I examined it — Fr. Molina's on the priest.¹⁹ In his left hand, a big heavy crucifix, its pedestal on the breast of the dying woman. "The holy crucifix is good, but its weight can finish her off sooner than the sickness." "No, Father, better that she touch it, that she touch it."

One can talk to the Indio about leaving this life, the other life, and death. I have found no one in disagreement. An Indio seems neither attached to this life, nor horrified by death.

The more common shroud is a piece of cloth reaching to the toes, of the color of the habit of the priest ministering to them, or of their clothes when still alive. Those who have more, a mat to wrap them in. An ordinary bier with cross and candlesticks. After passing the church, they bring the corpse uncovered to the cemetery. Only one or another leading person has a coffin, which even then is usually open.

The cemeteries are usually neglected, rundown, covered with brambles, without a good Cross, unless in his constant zeal the priest keeps them clean.

A novena on behalf of the deceased said by relatives and invited friends (from the same place where he died) usually follows, during which the religious and the profane are mixed, especially on the last day, the "*katapusan*," when they eat, drink, dance, sing, and both sexes waste the night.

The pagans usually grieve by the grave where they deposit food.

2. RELIGIOUS CUSTOMS, OR THE CHRISTIAN FAITH OF THE INDIOS

The Faith They Have: Some, whom I could call optimists, consider it good; others whom I would call pessimists, not so.

The optimists observe that the Christians enjoy an enviable peace, are free of wars, political parties, and uprisings.

The Indios are not, or would be [only] after a very long time, liberals or masons, or enemies of the Church and its ministers.

19. Antonio de Molina (d. 1612), a Carthusian ascetical writer. He entered the Augustinian Order in 1575, was elected Superior of one of the order's houses in Spain and taught theology. Desirous of a life of stricter religious observance, he joined the Carthusians in 1589, and died in the Carthusian monastery at Miraflores, Spain. He wrote especially for priests, the most famous of his books being *Instrucción del sacerdote, en que se da doctrina muy importante para conocer la alteza del sagrado oficio sacerdotal y ejercerlo debidamente*.

The Indios are as lowly as the soil, peace-loving, enemies of bloodshed, long-suffering in all senses, frugal as the greatest ascetic.

When the Europeans broke away from the Church in the 16th century, Divine Mercy opened its doors to the unfortunate Indios: "He deposed the strong from their seats and elevated the lowly."²⁰ The Catholic hierarchy reached India and the Americas. St. Francis Xavier was the Apostle of the Indies. All the holy religious orders have given, and still continue to give, thousands of their sons to the unfortunate Indios. Though exiled and hated to death by the Europeans, they are received with open arms and called "Fathers" by the Indios.²¹

The Holy See enriches them with privileges, and Christian governments help them as poor, yes, but faithful servants.²²

Even the Paraguay missions alone, but others as well, show what Christianity means for the Indios. Millions of Indio children reborn in the water of holy baptism now reside in heaven.²³

*Pessimists or Tutorists:*²⁴ They observe how easily the newly baptized return to their former pagan life; that the old Christians are not fervent; that few Indios know even the essential rudiments for salvation; that many neglect the precepts of the Church (assist at Mass, go to yearly confession), while those who observe them do so under threat; that the Indios have no canonized saints, no martyrs,²⁵ no confessors, no

20. Mary's canticle in Lk 1:52.

21. A clear reference to the anticlerical liberalism in Europe at this time.

22. Explicit in the famous Spanish code of colonial laws, the *Recopilación de Leyes de los Reynos de Indias*. Though not always implemented, they prove that, at least, the royal intention was good.

23. What is now the Republic of Paraguay began as a mission founded in the 17th century by the Jesuit Luis Bolaños between the Paraguay and Uruguay rivers. He was not the first to go there, for missionaries had already reached the region from Peru and Brazil, but these earlier efforts did not last. With Fr. Bolaños, the Jesuits grouped the indigenous Guarani tribes in seven permanent communities or resettlements (in Spanish, "*reducción*"), with schools, churches, sedentary agriculture, etc. By 1760, on the eve of the Jesuit expulsion from all the Spanish dominions, there were 60 towns of about 20,000 inhabitants each. Because of the success of the Jesuits, legends grew about the fabulously rich "Jesuit Empire of Paraguay," about which there is an abundant literature.

24. "Tutorism" is the moral doctrine that teaches that in case of doubt regarding the morality of an action, one should follow the safer, or in Latin, "*tutor*" opinion, i.e., the legal view, unless the law likely does not bind. This opinion, therefore, seems to say that in this case the law, even if doubtful, is binding. Never formally rejected by the Church, tutorism is now not accepted by moral theologians. God would not have imposed an intolerable burden and occasioned innumerable anxieties, unless the opinion favoring freedom from the law were most probable.

25. No longer true with the canonization of the Manila-born Chinese mestizo,

virgins; that they are quite easily led to vice, sloth, drunkenness, above all, lust; that they do not even cherish virginity, are not constant in virtue, are like the leaves of the tree which a light breeze stirs.²⁶

Some priests in the Visayas were discussing whether or not the Indios were good Christians, whether they are saved or all are damned. They say the Bishop of Cebu, Fray Gimeno,²⁷ cut them short with these words: "Most of the India women are saved; many Indio men are; but among you, not one."

The optimists' opinion will always be better. It has always been the best since the beginning when doubts were raised about the Indios' Christianity, as we read in Fr. de Acosta, *De salute indorum procuranda*.²⁸ More to the point is the pessimists' opinion, like that of the rigorists in general, does not promote the good of souls and cools off zeal for their salvation.

Holy Baptism: The Indios more or less contaminated with Islam, which is hundreds of leagues²⁹ away from Asia where it had been introduced, are more or less averse to holy baptism. It is believed that outside of the datus, panditas, and the old, the majority would less likely refuse it.

The Indios untouched by Islam are not repelled, except one or two because of vice or particular interests. They only await the missionary to instruct and baptize them.

The Indios who are Christians for some time are diligent in bringing their children for baptism, looking for sponsors, and usually imposing the name of the saint for the day of birth. Among them one comes across the most pleasing variety of names. It is true there have been one or two slips from the Roman Martyrology.³⁰ Someone is named "Ceniza" (Ash), because the child was born on Ash Wednesday, and

Lorenzo Ruiz, martyred in Japan in the 17th century, together with some friars from the Philippines.

26. A good brief summary of European prejudices.

27. Romualdo Gimeno (or Jimeno), O.P., bishop of Cebu in 1846-1872.

28. Jose de Acosta, S.J., *De Procuranda Indorum salute* [Corpus Hispaniorum de Pace, XXIII-XXIV], ed. Luciano Pereña (2 vols; Madrid, 1984-1987). See also John N. Schumacher, S.J., "The Depth of Christianization in Early Seventeenth Century Philippines," *Philippine Studies* 16 (1968) 535-39.

29. One league is about 1.5 kilometers.

30. The traditional record of martyrs and saints in the Roman Catholic Church and used in the liturgy. First sanctioned in 1584 by Pope Gregory XIII, it was frequently revised, especially after Pope Urban VIII (1623-1644) issued stricter norms of canonization. The edition of 1924 was severely criticized according to modern norms of sophisticated historical research. A new list continues to be made since the process of canonization also continues and will continue as long as the Church exists. See René Aigrain, *L'Hagiographie* (Paris, 1953).

they found it on the calendar, another "*Corpus*" (Body), because the child was born on the feast of Corpus Christi. And so on. No less than a village teacher brought his child for baptism with the name "*Brazil*." "Who is this saint?" Fr. Ceballos³¹ asked. "Father," the Indio replied, "it is in the *Almanac*." True enough, the child was born on the feast of the Forty Martyrs of Brazil.

What a bountiful and precious harvest when baptizing Indios! St. Francis Xavier would have cherished it!

Holy Mass: The Indios have many justifiable reasons for not assisting at Mass: only one Mass at times within dozens of leagues, or the distance of two, three, or four leagues from the Church where it is celebrated. The priest's zeal and efforts bring them together a greater or less number in the village where he offers it. In many villages, a third of the people are present on holy days of obligation.

Yearly Confession: The Indios know how to confess in the best way one could expect. Apparently a public confession would not faze them. At times, drops of sweat fall from the poor Indio while confessing. The good ones, by the dozen like the members of some confraternity, make their confession at the priest's suggestion. If a confessor is available at the hour of death, no Indio dies without confessing. When accosted by the priest, everyone in the village fulfills the Easter duty, and as long as the latter's energy and time allow it. Grant that about 100 in the bigger villages, about 50 in the middle-sized, do not come, more out of ignorance than malice. Confessors and energy are lacking rather than work.

The Indios find it hard to understand if they are not allowed to go to communion.³² It is an effort to so convince those not obliged to do so. There are difficulties, but the children are usually present during the preparatory instructions given during several days.

They ask for Viaticum in the same manner, and habitually adorn their houses for it.

Holy Week: They hold the Stations of the Cross on Sunday and Friday

31. Jesuit missionary in Mindanao, born in San Felices de Buelna, Palencia, Spain on 18 December 1830, entered the Society of Jesus in 1859, and came to the Philippines in 1862. He worked in Mindanao until he returned to Spain in 1899. He died in Loyola, Spain on 22 August 1909.

32. Until the recent liturgical reform instituted by Pope Pius X (1903-1914), daily communion was rare, and the Christians in the missions had to prove they understood the sacrament before being allowed to receive Holy Communion, even after they had begun to make their sacramental confession. In the 18th century, parish records in Pangasinan still included these two categories: "*sólo confesión*" and "*confesión y comulgantes*" (confession only, and confession and communicant).

afternoon during Lent. They go to confession and with their leaders, the people observe Holy Week with notable devotion. Each village fixes up the church and prepares the repository altar.

General communion is held on Holy Thursday, the leading figures and the "Twelve Apostles" (12 persons selected [to represent the Apostles] for the rite of the washing of the feet) receiving the Holy Sacrament. *Tenebrae*³³ are chanted, and people visit the repository altar until deep into the night.

On Good Friday, the people *en masse* assist at the Divine Office, the adoration of the Cross, the Seven Last Words (in the afternoon), and the solemn procession of the Holy Burial.

On Holy Saturday, the blessing of the baptismal font and the sung Holy Mass which they call "Mass of the Halleluia" are quite solemn.

On Easter Sunday itself, they hold with simple joy the procession of "*Pagsugatan*," or meeting of the Blessed Virgin Mary with the Risen Jesus.

All Souls' Day: The people prepare themselves with a "Novena to the Souls," during which they sing in their idiom some sad and very slow lamentations. On All Saints' Day, they erect a catafalque, if not materially elegant, at least surrounded with lighted candles during the Masses for the Dead and the Responsorial prayers. They clean and visit the cemeteries and, those who can, request a "*Pamisa sa manga kalág*" (Mass for the [departed] souls).

The Indios are devoted to the departed souls, just as to those being baptized. They cherish the memory of their dead, and most of the Masses they request during the year are for the departed souls. Many are sung Masses, with catafalque and responsories, a privilege they received [to celebrate such] three times during the week, unless they are first or second class days.³⁴

33. Matins and Lauds of the Holy Office, recited publicly before the liturgical reform under Pope Pius XII in 1955. The name comes from the medieval practice of holding the office in darkness ("*tenebrae*" in Latin). One by one, at the end of each psalm, the 15 candles on a triangular stand by the altar was extinguished. Gradual extinction and increasing darkness symbolized the Apostles' desertion of Christ during His passion, while the extinction of the last candle symbolized Christ's death. The din and clatter following this final extinction symbolized the time when the Apostles were in total darkness and bewilderment because of the crucifixion, although it was originally the noise when the monks closed their huge liturgical tomes and they shuffled out of the choir. Pious devotion also added that it signified the earthquake the gospel records when Christ expired on the cross.

34. Before the last liturgical reform, feast days were graded according to "importance." Simplified, we now have, besides Sunday, only a "Solemnity,"

A Confraternity (e.g., of the Sacred Heart): This pious association produces the best fruits. As soon as it is explained, almost all enlist as "*sakop*." And almost each one in the village, not all, confesses and receives holy communion monthly. An energetic priest for so much work would be unusual.

They are certainly in the best dispositions. At home they pray and commend the associates to God, especially when one passes away.

Christian Life and Daily Practices of the Good Indios: Prayers on rising, at times sung. Mass on as many days as they can, on holy days of obligation without fail. Work, poverty, suffering for God the rest of the day. Quite noticeably when the Angelus bell rings, the entire world, even in Manila, stops, a deep silence is observed, and people pray. In the evening, they kiss the hand of the oldest person around and greet him "Good evening."

Not all yet know how to pray the Rosary, but those who do, recite it, if not, several other prayers. Usually at night such a deep silence pervades the Indio villages that no one breathes! Only where they have not removed what they call "*kampanes*"³⁵ does one hear a noise or two at night.

Some Good Qualities of the Indios: The Indios are as lowly as the ground. Humiliation, prostrations, genuflections, reverential acts are not unnatural to them.

The essence of that humility the intelligent understand. From this understanding it seems the correct way to deal with them will be not to belittle them further. I do not see how it will harm to make them understand their true dignity.

The Indios Are Long-Suffering: Indeed they are extraordinarily stoical despite the hunger they endure, the whippings they customarily receive,³⁶ in their natural sicknesses, no matter how diametrically different from theirs is the temperament of the Europeans they deal with.

a "Commemoration" (or recall of the feast day of a Saint), and an "Ordinary Ferial Day."

35. Unintelligible.

36. The translator of this document interviewed an old man in Caraga, Surigao, in 1969, one of the early Jesuit missions in the eastern Mindanao coast in the last century. Asked which of the two governments, the Spanish or the American, he preferred, the man answered without hesitation, "The Spanish! Then there was discipline," he added. A man who could not justify his absence from Mass on Sunday or a holy day of obligation was given the usual penalty, "*Al banco*" (On the bench!). He prostrated himself on a bench and received a few whippings. "That," the old man in Caraga proudly said, "made us good, responsible people."

Hunger, however, they can remedy as much as it is in their capacity, and partly in the manner they themselves exercise foresight and are diligent. The Indios have to be urged to work and provide for themselves.

It is good to bring to an end the abusive use of the *bejuco* (rattan whip). Properly used, it benefits the Indio and, many contend, at times needed. Its use will then be a matter of prudence. It is part of the Indio custom, not anymore among Europeans.

As for caring for the sick — advise them to improve. . . .³⁷ The European is still not as concerned or worried, and will admit it reluctantly.

The Indios Are Frugal: Their life and food are poor and insufficient, irregular, compared to the Europeans'. Grant it is poor, rice boiled in water, since they live healthy and to an old age, even longer, like the Europeans themselves. But let their meals be at least good and the water clean. Those used to eat the European way (even if local food were better) cannot stand a change.³⁸

Since the food itself is insufficient, it will be good to urge them to add and make it sufficient. Since they eat at odd hours and irregularly, regulate their mealtimes as much as possible.

The Indios Are Peace-Loving: They are not vindictive, are inoffensive. Rare are the whippings, woundings, and killings in Christian villages. The whole world sleeps tranquilly, doors and windows are open, without locks even. This peace and the tranquil life of the Indios many prefer to the Europeans' worries, abundance, and hustle. One can live without fears, no one will molest him; without arms, which he does not need, not even soldiers, unless at this or that post.³⁹

Among the unbaptized mountaineers, there are assassins whom the Mandayas and the Manobos call "*bagani*," and are more numerous among the Moros who call them "*sambil*."⁴⁰

37. The manuscript is illegible here.

38. Refers to some Jesuit confrères who, despite their good will, failed to adapt themselves to Philippine conditions.

39. Many Jesuits insisted that military presence was a deterrent in the missions, an opinion not shared by many in the government who insisted that the only way to deal with the Muslims who threatened the indigenous Mindanao tribes if they befriended the Spaniards, was to use the gun.

40. Mandayas and Manobos were two of the indigenous tribes in Mindanao. See Jose S. Arcilla, S.J., "The Christianization of Davao Oriental: Excerpts from Jesuit Missionary Letters," *Philippine Studies* 19 (1971) 652-53. — A *bagani* was someone who killed to avenge a death, to assuage one's grief, etc. With at least ten victims, one was entitled to use a red turban; with 11-20 victims, a red turban and shirt; with more than 20, red turban, shirt, and trousers, besides all other personal adornments. See Jose S. Arcilla, S.J., "Urios and the *Bagani* of Agusan, 1875-1900," *Kinaadman* 6 (1984) 235-47.

Bad Traits of the Indios: The Indios are "savages," i.e., lovers of the forest, isolation, and solitude. Some, the native-born, do not like society, are neither resettled nor baptized. The latter more or less are descendants of the former. Many registered in the villages still live apart as much as they can, and are seen most infrequently.

The district head of all these settlements, the *gobernadorcillos* of each of their villages, with the priest to help them, must exercise their authority to bring them together, make them live in community and maintain the villages, which are their only link to society. Left to themselves, the people would go back to what they were, or to something worse.

The Indios Are Changeable: Or fickle, variable, inconstant, easily change their mind, like the leaves of a tree stirred by the winds. One has known virginity preserved for some years, but suddenly lost in a moment, servants betraying their trust.⁴¹ Watching one's toil and sweat undone in an instant — who could accept God's will, like St. Ignatius who would have resigned himself after praying for only a quarter of an hour had he witnessed the Society of Jesus dissolved like salt in water?⁴²

The Indios are Slothful: Slow, heavy, like lumber or the dead; late in starting work and taking an eternity to finish it; unappreciative of time, miserably wasting it. With the Indios, "*hinay-hinay*," little by little, slowly, very slowly, as the proverb goes. Rid them of this trait as much as possible, overcome and accommodate oneself to it in the degree one cannot correct it — this will be the rule of good conduct in dealing with them.

Weak and lazy, no one is more so than the Indios. Their house half-built, the field untilled, hunger threatening them, naked by not clothing themselves. The mood and time for work, 9:00 o'clock in the morning or later. They work for four hours in the day.⁴³

41. The meaning is not clear.

42. It is told that the founder of the Society of Jesus, asked what he would do if the Pope dissolved the religious order he had founded, answered that, provided it was not due to his fault, a quarter of an hour's prayer would suffice to restore his inner peace and joy. Exactly this happened when the Jesuits were expelled from all Spanish dominions in 1767-1768, and eventually suppressed by the Pope in 1773. Even their enemies were forced to admit the unexpected resignation of all the Jesuits.

43. This was a common complaint of the earliest missionaries, who used to write in frustration that the people lived miserably in the midst of plenty!

HEARING THE CONFESSIONS OF THE VISAYAN INDIOS

1. PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

Precommunicants: Let them learn to make the sign of the cross and recite the *Our Father*. They should answer the questions essential for salvation: "Do you believe in God? Do you believe in Jesus Christ? What is 'heavenly glory'? Is there a hell?"

During confession: "Did you disobey your parents? Distract yourself looking around in the church? Quarrel with your peers? Filch your parents' food? Tell lies?"

Many of these children cannot yet pray and do not have the knowledge essential for salvation. These are the majority, and only a few are ready for absolution.

Communicants: They will confess like the above. About communion they should know who is in the Host, what is received during communion. Usually many understand and are in need of absolution. Most, especially the girls, confess very well.

Adolescents (15-17 years old, here called "*sacristáns*"): About a third are guilty of all kinds of unchastity (otherwise, however, about a sixth of both sexes), most of those 18-20 years old retaining the same habit until marriage, *verbi gratia*, enjoyment in mutually touching their organs; extreme lewdness; execrable sin with the same sex (a few among the girls, but not as many), among both the single and the unmarried, even with animals, though only a few.

The cure: (1) Confession of all sins, as darkness dissipates with the advent of light. (2) Banning them from communion, which from experience shows not a few have received back their spiritual health and come back in due time. (3) A sterner reprimand from the confessor: "Poor one, you acted that way, shamelessly? Were God's eyes closed not to see you? Come back to God and do not repeat it." Note that this is the general approach to all their grievous sins, and each one of the three questions can be useful for other sins.

These people usually have no external religious practices. The remedy: teach and encourage them properly. Obligated to teach them are the leaders, or head guardians of the chapel or church (the "*Fiscals*"). The children's teachers? Good grief! These, too, are negligent. Note: those who completely ignore the necessary means to be saved are unworthy of absolution. But those who have an idea and actually understand them, or under certain conditions, ought to be, should be absolved, if it will do good.

Like the children, they do not know even the teachings essential for

salvation.

Young Men and Young Women: That is, from the time they pay tribute at 18 years of age until they marry. Some indeed remain virgins, not as many as Europeans; neither repelled nor embarrassed by [the loss of] virtue. Whoever, like the adolescents, are afflicted with this malady needs the same remedy as above. They are often easily convinced to marry. Once betrothed, they are usually rid of this sin and live as man and wife. Besides, the native girls are apparently born to marry, not to embrace a life of virginity. And often marriage is good.

Those Engaged to Marry: Together many approach the sacrament of penance the day before their marriages are blessed. The confessor should note that because of sexual sins not properly confessed and the impediment from illicit sexual relations between the first and second degrees of consanguinity, two out of three marriages are invalid. But let not the confessor despair, for past confessions are now covered by freely baring everything in a general confession. They reveal everything about their marriage to the confessor who has the faculties, and they are there and then dispensed from all impediments. They are urged to be faithful and good Christians. This is the experience and a consoling ministry.

The Married: "What is your means of livelihood?" Generally they are uninstructed.

To cure the slothful, inquire: (1) If they neglect to look for food and obtain clothes, perform their duties, pay their debts. The Indios, both the high and the low, are habitually unconcerned about these. Unless pushed by the wife, hardly can the provincial chief or the *gobernadorcillo* stir them. (2) If they neglect to instruct their children — by habit they are remiss. (3) Tell them to arrange their children's marriage. In their houses, to separate the sleeping mat of parents, that of the two sexes. For they usually sleep side by side. (4) Tell them to pray daily — they are usually remiss; explain the *Our Father*, the Creed, God's commandments, the sacraments, the "essential prayers to be recited by your children." If afflicted with jealousy — "that is merely a disease of the mind, let it die away, it is just your imagination."

Widowers: If young and he seems in need to marry, he can do so without offending God and his neighbor. If one seems in danger, to look out for himself, inform his elders, unless the latter could never help him.

The Aged: "Did you speak ill of others? Did you grumble? Then, take a seat, pray." For if they cannot bend their knees, the old Indios neglect prayer. "Did you neglect to correct your children and grandchildren?" The parents themselves are guilty; how much more the grandparents.

The Sick at Home: Go, if summoned. Proceed immediately to hear the confession, and listen until the sick finishes; for the Indios, more than the young, would be capable of hardly anything. . . . all to move away from the patient.⁴⁴ Unless ordered to do so, they remain close around during the confession.

Assistants in the Church and of the Confessor Himself: If possible, let them confess to someone else. Prudently, ask in confession about the usual sins, v.g., if guilty of murmuring. If they trust him, they themselves will confess everything.

The Principales: "Did you appropriate for yourself anything from your people? Have you been unjust? Did you embezzle tributes for the king? How faithful were you to your official duties?" "Very well," their usual answer, even if you know they have been negligent.

Village Teachers: Most of them neglect their duty. You are aware of this out of, more than in, confession.

2. CHIEF ILLNESSES (VICES) AND THEIR REMEDIES

Impurity: Nakedness, more than their clothes explains it. Unlike the Europeans, they are not embarrassed by their nakedness, neither mothers of their children's, nor teachers, the ones called to correct them, of their charges'. So "naturalized," it is hard to change. The confessor to the guilty: "God sees you. Do not sin."

Bathing: Often, naked, in public, both sexes together: "Did you keep looking? In the water, did you touch yourself? The men? The women? What other wrongs did you commit there?"

The Bed: The confessor should advise against easily accessible living quarters. Lift the stairs of the house since they do not close the doors. Not to sleep as one group in a common sleeping room. Pray on retiring. Sleep separately, and covered.

Words and Touches: Jokes, or, as they say, *komedias*, that is, games. The confessor: "Are you crazy? That is a serious sin. Did you touch maliciously? Habitually?" He should sternly warn them. Males with males quite frequently, females with females not as often. The remedy: as earlier mentioned. With lesbians, ask: "What did you do with another woman? Seeing? Touching? Sleeping together? How often? When?" But these are not as bad, for they acknowledge the sin and some recover on proper advice.

Anal Sex: If the man is to blame, the wife should not allow it; "it should never happen." If the wife is guilty, it should be even more strictly

44. The manuscript is illegible.

stopped: "never do it again." The man also should be strongly reprimanded.

Note this is usually abhorrent to the husband and to his wife; it is unnatural, against the Holy Spirit.

Bestiality: Rare; its remedy as earlier mentioned.

Adultery: Not usual. "Did you violate the sacrament of marriage?" The question usually pains them. "Do not repeat it." Let it be purged away with the proper cure, not by denying them holy communion, unless it is efficacious for a specific person.

Note that the Indios are hurt by the denial of Holy Communion, not the denial of absolution.

Illicit Unions: Adulterers, fornicators, the married, the single — whether openly or in secret — seldom amend themselves when advised, but free themselves only when they marry. Women with some difficulty, men easily reveal it. But prudently asked, they all admit it. The remedy as earlier mentioned. In the external forum public justices should ban them from a common "*mensa*."

Matrimonial Contracts: Once betrothed, they live as husband and wife, their betrothal usually being prolonged. Offerings are made to the girl's parents. Seldom is this sin voluntarily confessed even on the eve of marriage, unless convinced at the confessor's urging. Neither generally are they concerned, even after promising under oath. . . . of their marriage;⁴⁵ nor often are they absolved, unless they are married at the hour of death, and the unction of the Holy Spirit moves them.

Note that the seriousness of the sin, even lasciviousness, depends on intellectual maturity, which apparently among the Indios is not much. The confessor can enlighten them a bit.

Gamblers: We see clearly many Indios and some Indias are rather addicted to gambling, even those that are banned. Although in public and licensed by the government cockfighting is usually the occasion for sins against natural law, namely, when excessive sums are waged. The confessor, then, could ask: "Are you hungry? Did you waste your money? Are your wife and children also suffering? Let your wife keep your money in the house. She will let you gamble small sums, only a hundredth part, for recreation." The confessor should remember they are extremely addicted and the cure is as mentioned.

Many stop gambling only when they die. Those not so afflicted and gamble only for recreation at small amounts are easy to counsel. They should be absolved and may receive Holy Communion.

45. The manuscript is illegible.

Drunkards: Little by little, most Indios and some Indias drink to excess, especially since they drink without eating or only very little, and the Indio becomes drowsy. They should be helped in the same way as the gamblers: "Use your money for food, not wine." The women who try to stop their drinking to save money are easily noticed.

"Hampang" Celebration: Held in the presence of the authority, or even the priest on certain occasions, they are natural occasions for dissipation. The leaders, not the followers, should be helped, as suggested earlier. The confessor may ask: "Were you present at the feasting? What sin did you commit? Were you leading the rest? Did you get undressed yourselves, go to bed?" (Questions about sexual activity.) For you will discover that these things can happen elsewhere, in their saturnalia. Note that these take place in the presence of the corpses of the dead. "Take care to bury the dead before nightfall, and there is no orgy."

The Slothful and the Negligent: "Did you neglect to look for food and clothes to wear? Fail to pay debts and fulfill obligations?"

These the Indios usually neglect as least important, and hardly attended to, unless under pressure by the provincial head, or their immediate authority, the *gobernadorcillo*.

The More "Savage": The confessor should urge on them the most essential things in order to be saved. They do not assist at Mass, do not make their annual confession, do not educate their children, and live in the forest. The confessor should insist on this and on everything else within his faculties, while what is within the competence of the civil power and in the external forum [should be left to the proper authorities].

Many who do not have the necessary knowledge of the Catechism should be helped and instructed. This obliges *ex officio* the village head and caretaker of the chapel, that is the *fiscal*, the teachers of the young (alas, usually the most negligent!).

Note: those ignorant of the essentials for salvation cannot be absolved, but the others who at least have an inkling and actually should know could be absolved, if necessary, even conditionally.

Non-Practicing Believers: They are many. "You are tepid, dead! Go to confession! Tell me: do you believe in God?"

The confessor should revive [their faith] according to his ability and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, or send them to their wife or to someone else capable of encouraging them, if he cannot do it himself.

*Parents of the Betrothed Who Attend the "Pangagad":*⁴⁶ They demand service from the suitor. "Did he fetch water, gather wood, build a house,

46. A session or meeting to come to an agreement.

hoe the ground for planting? Do they live as man and wife? Is she with child?"

The remedy is as mentioned; otherwise, they would not listen, and they should be sanctioned through the public official. The number of children listed yearly in the baptismal registers in these villages can serve as thermometer of *pagpangagad*, although there can be other sources of information.

Creditors and Debtors: Many. "How much can you pay now? Come to terms with your creditor. You can start by working for him tomorrow, etc."

The Indio easily incurs a debt, but refuses to pay. Let him then avoid debts, unless forced by need. Because with a voluntary and conscious loan no injustice is done to the creditor, the confessor should remember to be merciful without being unjust.

The Superstitious: The most despicable are those who circumcise the boys. "Give me this knife with which you operate. Do not do it again. It is a serious sin."

To the superstitious of any kind: "Give me everything that serves your superstitions. e.g., prayers, wooden and earthen crosses, etc." They should be taught the essentials for salvation. The remedy, as already suggested. Unless they truly give up their superstitions (many among the Indios), they hardly confess them. Even if there is hardly a confessor who looks into this, at least in the external forum they are to be investigated.

Enmities: "Have you talked with him/her? Talk with him/her before going to Holy Communion." "Already, yes." "Are you in good relations with each other again?" "We have been reconciled."

With an affirmative answer, the confessor may dismiss him/her in peace, for their ill will is easily gone.

Thieves: Almost all are petty thieves by habit and by intent, but apparently they mutually compensate one another.

"What did you steal?" "Foodstuffs, tobacco, etc." "Do not repeat it. Give alms to the poor."

But thieves of bigger things (very few, however), like the Europeans, should be brought to court.

Liars: Spontaneously almost all tell a lie, without meaning to, and spontaneously they tell the truth. They are thus truthful and also mendacious. If you seek certitude, the more you inquire, the more you will be confused.

"Do you often tell a lie? Do not do it again. The devil is a liar, but God is truthful."

But if you find an Indio who lies, for example, among the leaders

and magistrates, he should be judged according to European norms.⁴⁷

Do's and Don'ts for the Confessor of Indios:

1) One who likes to hunt, catches much; one uninterested, little. So also, it seems, among confessors. One reaps the greatest fruits from hearing the confessions of the Indios. No one seriously doubts this. I have come to the opinion that greater results follow [from hearing confession] than from preaching. Perhaps others do not think so.

2) Be extremely patient and almost dumb. The least sign of anger keeps them away. If they feel you are impatient or in a rush, they stop and keep quiet. Long talk, although pious and good, obscures their mind.

3) Have faith in the sacrament, more than a soldier in his arms. You will see health where you thought there was incurable sickness. Is not the sacrament divine, and not human? Even with the simple and unlearned, the Lord Jesus is the best Leader.

4) Look for the proper word and cure. Use the correct word for their sickness, i.e., sin. The light under which they see their sin is amazing. One word suffices, the rest redundant. But do not think this single word is easy to find, since ours are so different from their words and feelings. Hence, today and tomorrow, it is good to study. This is the same with medicine. The dosage is simple from the physician's viewpoint. You think you are stepping on pebbles. So also is the spiritual cure. But that you may find correct medicine, you should inquire about it everyday.

5) Keep in mind you are the minister of the sacrament, not its creator. Our Lord Jesus is the Creator and Lord of the sacrament. Administer the sacrament according to His mind, not according to men's opinions. In the end, you will hear, "Give an account of your ministry," and "We are useless servants."

6) Be a man of prayer and good desires. This ministry is borne, as on our shoulders, through prayer and holy desires.

Faults to Avoid:

1) Boredom while hearing confessions. Even if they do not show it, the Indios immediately notice it and are held back. Because you are heavy of heart, let it not affect them, let it not be externalized. The Lord who sees in secret, will reward you.⁴⁸

2) Rushing. The Indios go slowly. Be slower when dealing with them. They quickly sense your mental attitude and, lest they molest you (the Indios above all avoid this) they will quickly clam up, like a closed door.

47. Moral principles, of course, are universally valid. But note the care to consider local circumstances that can affect their application.

48. An insight into Fr. Viñals constant self-discipline.

Even if the Indio describes other serious sins, do not let the crowd of those awaiting their turn rush you. Remain extremely patient. For days they have been waiting there.

3) Verbosity. Enough if they understand what concerns them. They are not Greeks, pleased with wealth of words, seeking wisdom. For it is not light, but smoke, that usually rises from explanations. Let the essentials suffice.

Other Things the Confessor of Indios Should Note:

1) The confessor not known to the Indios is an angel sent from heaven. To no one will they sincerely reveal what they have been silent about and what have never been confessed in general terms. Everyday we experience how much grace the new confessor has. A new confessor, then, should sympathize with the penitent, open the latter's heart, never utter an unthinking, useless, persistent word. Encourage him with a new rule of life. A new confessor will indeed give new life to the Indio.⁴⁹

2) The annual confessions here are not like those in Europe, but are made during missions.⁵⁰ These unfortunate Indios do not usually have another opportunity. Experience shows one can receive general and particular graces. To the degree that the confessor is willing, insistent, energetic, has time, is patient, or to the degree that he does not have these, so will the results be.

Note in giving these missions here: (1) The distance and dispersion of the Indios' houses, the food they have to bring for four or eight days, due to (2) the need for one or two more to give the missions. (3) Since the Indios cannot always be assisting at such religious movements, they are satisfied with the little or more spiritual nourishment they enjoy. (4) Thus these missions here are difficult, but once the problems are overcome, they always bear fruit.

The Usually Profitable Confessions Here: (1) On All Souls' Day. (2) Monthly, by a few select sodalists. (3) Those about to be married. (4)

49. The Church has long recognized this, and has provided for such situations by appointing what are known as "extraordinary" confessors.

50. These are the few days a priest or missionary goes and remains in a remote town or place to administer the sacraments and evangelize the people. For lack of priests, the Philippine situation has "normalized" these occasions characterized by fervent spiritual activity and devotion. People who have been away, whether out of malice or not, return to the sacraments, have their children baptized, their marriage blessed by the Church, are reconciled to personal enemies, and make a general sacramental confession. The missionary also looks into the social situation, e.g., whether the chapel, the schools, the residences, the streets have been repaired or maintained, crops have been planted and harvested, the children have been receiving catechetical instruction and some academic formation during the year, and, if it was the time, supervise the election of local magistrates.

Annual Easter precept. (5) During epidemics, cholera, smallpox, and other diseases. (6) Special occasions of God's grace given to individuals.

Some Consolations Received by the Confessor of the Indios:

1) That he can and ought to deal with the Indios in a simple way. These unfortunate people are not refined, but are "in the state of pure nature." Treated another way, they will neither understand nor profit from it. We experience this. For drink I gave them, as to infants, milk. Do not test the mind, use rhetorical figures, swallow your saliva, as Fr. Rodriguez says.⁵¹

2) The confessor will see, once the Indios know, how much better than expected they confess by themselves. Anyone certainly would be amazed if he wished to check if they could confess better. He will be disappointed, for their confession will not be as good. But leave them to themselves, merely suggest they be contrite and make their resolutions.

3) The Indios are not averse to confession and confessors. Their upbringing, and evil doctrines⁵² have not yet prejudiced them. If some of them are carried away, it is rather due to their temperament and the power of their vices.

4) The number and even the time, the circumstances which alter the nature of the sin — since this is impossible for the Indios generally to specify — why should the confessor torture himself about them? No one is forced to do the impossible.

5) If they confess only venial sins (and most Indios do), why should the confessor worry, since it is not necessary to mention all venial sins in confession? Let the confessor then look to the good of the Indios, all the more since objectively mortal sins are merely venial among them because of lack of knowledge and advertence.

6) The confessor seated at the confessional has actually very little to do. The difficulties mentioned are more imaginary than real.

The lion is not as fierce as it is described.

51. See n. 16 above.

52. Modern anticlerical liberalism and freemasonry which, to the religious orders in general, were the real cause behind the revolution which ended Spanish presence in the Philippines.