ENCOURAGING LOCAL THEOLOGIES

Cebuano-Visayan Resources

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The central task of evangelization, undoubtedly, is to make the message and life of Christ truly incarnate in the minds and lives of people. Toward this end, the Asian bishops assert that the “primary focus of our task of evangelization then, at this time in our history, is the building up of a truly local church.”

This message, first spoken in 1974 (Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences [FABC] I, 9), was reiterated in 1979 during the International Mission Congress held in Manila: “the continued building up of the local church [is] the focus of the task of evangelization today . . .” (International Mission Congress [IMC], 19).

Because a truly local church is to be indigenous and inculcated, it must theologize about faith-and-life realities, using the language, symbols, metaphors, images and meanings of the people and their context.

At the same time, the local church “is not a community in isolation from other communities of the Church one and catholic. . . . In a special way it rejoices in its communion and filial oneness with the See of Peter, which presides over the universal Church in love” (FABC I, 11). Thus, while every local church focuses on its own mission, it is also “co-responsible for the mission of all its sister-churches” (IMC, 14).

This dynamic interaction and cross-fertilization among sister-local-churches within the universal church finds solid grounding within the theology of Vatican II. For example, in the dogmatic constitution on the church (Lumen Gentium, 23), one finds the universal church, the whole Mystical Body, described as the
“corpus ecclesiarum”. In English translation, this has been rendered as “the body of the churches” (W. M. Abbott, The Documents of Vatican II) and as “a corporate body of churches” (A. Ferrer, Vatican Council II, The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents).

It is in their dynamic interaction that local churches within the universal church serve each other for their proper development; conversely, local theologies certainly derive benefit and enrichment from other churches as well as from the universal body of churches. In a word, the structure and interrelationship of local churches within the universal church can be seen as an operative paradigm for developing local, yet catholic, theologies.

Building upon these brief notes describing the necessary role of the local church and local theology within the “corpus ecclesiarum”, this piece now focuses its attention upon those works of the universal church which have already been rendered into Cebuano.

It is readily admitted that this task of translation is but a dimension of developing truly local and catholic theologies.

The list of materials presented here encompasses the last three decades (1960-1990); it is comprehensive to date — 1990. It also serves as a challenge to Cebuano-Visayan Christians to further develop their local church through additional Cebuano theological-critical-biblical-catechetical resources.

The works are simply presented/catalogued in chronological order with their source/author, their title in Cebuano translation, the original Latin title, the place of publication, and the translator/publisher.

--- XXIII Inahan ug Magtutudlo (Selections)
Mater et Magistra
Davao - Maryknoll Language School

--- XXIII Kalinaw sa Yuta
Pacem in Terris
Davao - Maryknoll Language School

Vatican II Mao Kini ang Simbahan
Lumen Gentium
Cebu - C. J. Alcoseba
Finally, this author is aware that additional materials are currently under development; they include two documents of Vatican II (Ad Gentes and Presbyterorum Ordinis) and John Paul II's Christifideles Laici. All these modest contributions to encouraging local theologies within the local church are gratefully received and appreciated.