EDITOR'S PREFACE

In Church History, scholars have suggested various indicators to measure the level of maturity of a local church after a period of missionary work. 1) One common indicator would be the flowering of local vocations to the priesthood and religious life and the setting up of a local hierarchy. 2) Another would be the setting up of structures that are responsive to the needs of the local church such as those found in the areas of education and catechesis, social action, political engagement, etc. 3) A third indicator would be the communitarian expressions of the faith in spiritualities and devotions, in sacramental practices and liturgical celebrations. 4) Still one more indicator would be the ability and readiness of the local church to send missionaries to other lands. 5) An often neglected but rather important indicator would be the ability of a local church to engage in the theological task. It is in the spirit of this fifth indicator that Landas Journal offers this study by Ferdinand Angelo Alipis on Philippine Christological Literature.

There is no Christianity without Jesus Christ. But there is a sense to saying as well that there is no Jesus Christ, and therefore Christianity, that abstractly floats above the messy particularities of time and space. Christology is the theological attempt to explicate the meaning of faith in Jesus Christ as this is embodied and expressed in a particular culture and across diverse contexts. What Alipis then has done, and what Landas now makes available to its readers and the wider public, is a study that attempts in a
disciplined way to bring to conceptual and systematic clarity the Filipino face of Jesus Christ. Originally written as a masteral thesis in Theological Studies, the study was deemed significant enough by its reviewers to be made available through Landas Journal. The principal reason was to make sure it had the widest possible exposure through Landas Journal’s readers both here and abroad. The reader then is enabled to judge whether Christological literature in the Philippines from 1965 to 2000 has attained a depth of content and breadth of expression adequate to the mystery of Jesus Christ. The reader is also enabled to judge more wisely whether Filipino attempts at theological reflection and writing have anything to contribute to the universal Church and to Catholic theology in general.

We thank Ferdinand Angelo Alipis for his interest in Filipino Christology and for the huge amount of work expended on this study. We also thank James Kroeger, MM, Professor of Christology at Loyola School of Theology (LST), for agreeing to write the Introduction to the work of Alipis. Surely, Alipis, expertly mentored by Kroeger, shares LST’s desire as well to see Filipino Christology develop in ways hitherto unexplored, beyond the expressions it has found so far today. May this issue of Landas Journal then be a stimulus to more disciplined and systematic reflection and writing on who Jesus Christ is for the Filipino. Perhaps, in some reflexive way, it would then also enable the Filipino to discover in ever more profound ways who he or she is for Jesus Christ, especially in the wider context of Asia today.

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