EDITOR'S PREFACE

Theological reflection is ultimately concerned with the life of the community of believers. In order to live in a way that is evermore human and evermore Christian, believers need to enter into a continual deepening of their relationship with Jesus the Christ and to mature in a personal appropriation of Christian values.

Joseph Roche goes back to the basics. He addresses the urgent need for basic catechesis and religious education among Catholic Filipinos. Focusing on the catechetical ministry and its message, he provides an overview of some basic problems concerning the content and sources of the catechetical message as well as the methods and goals of a renewed catechesis. He identifies some general principles which could provide the basis for developing and implementing an effective, well-planned catechetical program which is responsive to the needs of the Philippine Church. From another perspective, Christina Astorga addresses the need to mature in Christian faith by way of Christian morality. She argues that making moral decisions and forming moral character need to go hand in hand. Since moral judgment arises out of moral vision, and moral vision is our acquisition of the lived expression of beliefs, values, and loyalties of the communities to which we belong, it is crucial that we draw from the wellsprings of worship and doctrine, both of which provide the formative ground of Christian morality.

Patricia Panganiban looks back to Vatican II in order to better understand the problems we now face in inculturation. She goes
back to the conceptual roots of inculturation in select Vatican II documents and offers some leads in addressing the challenges faced by a world-Church.

As through a prism, the articles of Victoria Parco, Lloyd Baugh, and Mercedes Abaya address the figure of Jesus the Christ from different angles. Parco, using the typological sense of Scripture, indicates the links between the Jewish Passover and Jesus the Christ, the Passover of the Christian community. With, through and in the Passover of Jesus, the Church, the mystical Body of Christ, partakes of and announces this mysterious passage. The life of the believing community has a paschal character; through the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist, the community participates in the divine life which flows from the risen Jesus’ redemptive work. Abaya compares and contrasts how the prefaces and the historical approach communicate the meaning and significance of Jesus’ death. She considers the two as sides of a coin, both necessary to bring out the depth and richness of meaning of the death of Jesus. She emphasizes the need for believers to get a more complete understanding, in order to avoid re-enforcing the culture of victimization and spiritualization of suffering that abound in Philippine religiosity. Turning to the art of the cinema, Baugh evaluates the recent and highly popular *The Passion of the Christ* in the context of the Jesus-film tradition. He compares and contrasts *The Passion* with other Jesus films, particularly Pasolini’s *Gospel*, and also with Ignatius of Loyola’s contemplation in the *Spiritual Exercises*. Baugh’s article helps us how to critically appraise cinematic esthetics and Christological depictions.

May the articles in this volume stimulate our reflection, but more importantly, lead us to a more personal encounter with the risen Jesus who meets us in the community of believers.

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Editor