EDITOR’S PREFACE

The world is changing and the Church must respond to it. But in what ways should the Church respond? Should religious, for example, cling woodenly to their traditions or return to the teachings of their congregations’ founders in order to discern new directions and approaches to live out their charism? In the local setting, should Filipino Catholics look at their faith, intertwined as it is with a history of suffering, as a blessing or curse for the future? And, in light of the Church’s teaching on God’s creation and the Holy Trinity, how does their faith bear on the environmental degradation that is consuming the Philippines? Moreover, faced with the plurality of religions, how are they to engage in peaceful and productive interaction with people of other faiths, specifically Filipino Muslims. One hesitates to ask, but is dialogue really possible?

Confronted with these concerns, the Church—as people of God, as communities, as families, and as individuals—needs to respond effectively. There is a need to interpret Church teachings to enlighten today’s believers. What, for instance, is the difference between natural family planning and artificial contraception? Scholars are tasked to get as near to the background of exemplary Christians who may serve as inspiration for those who seek to follow Christ more closely. Theology students are challenged to clarify for themselves how they do theology. Believers are encouraged to be critical of the way film succeeds or fails to communicate the Jesus of the Gospel.

The articles in this issue attempt to identify paths we may take in responding to the new world we now face. We hope that they raise more questions which stimulate even more critical reflection and creative praxis.

Miguel B. Lambino, S.J.
Editor