

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES (1521~1898)



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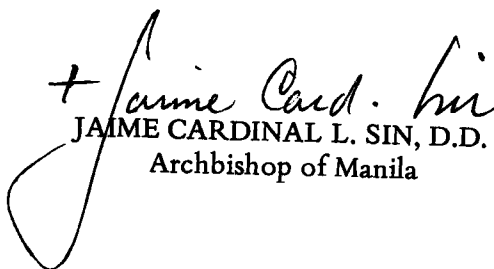
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MESSAGE

It is providential that the reprint of the *History of the Church in the Philippines* (1521–1898) by Fr. Pablo Fernandez comes off the press at a propitious time. The Archdiocesan Synod of Manila, the mother diocese of all the dioceses in the Philippines, is being held in the month of October, four hundred years after Manila became a diocese.

When Bishop Salazar convened the first Synod in 1582 he wanted the Church to *respond to the needs of his time* – and the Synod did that forcefully. We hope and pray that the book of Fr. Fernandez will help the People of God in the Archdiocese to see God at work through the four centuries of Christianity in the Philippines leading the Church to respond to the needs of the times – the very purpose of the Synod of Manila in 1979.

Devotedly Yours in Christ,


JAIME CARDINAL L. SIN, D.D.
Archbishop of Manila



APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE
Philippines



MESSAGE

The publication of **HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES** by Father Pablo Fernandez, O.P., is most welcome and opportune. It is an answer to the long felt need for a book portraying the story of the Church in this country. Its publication at this time is also a very happy one for the Archdiocese of Manila is celebrating its fourth centenary this year. As I stated in my address to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines in Baguio last January 27, 1979:

“... it seems to me that the four hundredth anniversary of the establishment of Manila, on February 6, 1579, as the first Philippine diocese, suffragan of the Archdiocese of Mexico, stands out and offers us a God-given opportunity to direct our attention to the momentous consequences that derive from this event for the whole Church in the country.”

The “high point”, as Cardinal Sin put it, of the Manila quadricentennial will be the holding of the Manila Synod during the month of October. This is an ecclesial event which without doubt will influence and affect the life of the Church not only within the Archdiocese of Manila but eventually of every Catholic in the whole Philippines.

To Father Fernandez go my very sincere congratulations for a work which, although not complete and exhaustive, will certainly be of great interest and usefulness to students of Philippine Church history. We share the hope and wish of the author that his effort would finally serve as a point of departure for a future scholarly ecclesiastical history of this country.



†BRUNO TORPIGLIANI

Apostolic Nuncio



MSGR. LEONARDO Z. LEGASPI, O.P., D.D.
Auxiliary Bishop of Manila



MESSAGE

The Church in the Philippines has a rich history behind her. Part of this richness is etched and will remain etched for a long time to come in the living memories of Her Filipino sons and daughters; part of it is recorded in the fragments of documents scattered in the ecclesiastical archives and libraries of the various churches in the Philippines. Only now, with the publication of **HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES**, is this richness captured in a single volume.

I welcome the publication of **HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES**. I welcome it not only because it comes out at a very opportune moment when we are celebrating the quadricentenary of the founding of the Archdiocese of Manila but also and mainly because the book opens up an important trail which I hope future writers and historians will continue to blaze.

I know how much painstaking efforts and self-sacrifice have gone into the making of this book. Because of this, the book is even more valuable. And **FATHER PABLO FERNANDEZ, O.P.**, author of the book, deserves our heartfelt thanks and congratulations.

†LEONARDO Z. LEGASPI, O.P., D.D.
Auxiliary Bishop of Manila
Chairman, Episcopal Commission on
Education and Religious Instruction (ECERI)

Feast of Sts. Michael, Gabriel & Raphael
29 September 1979

PREFACE

History of the Church in the Philippines (1521–1898), which we are presenting on the occasion of the Fourth Centennial of the Archdiocese of Manila, is a result of long years of study, research, and archival experience.

The original plan was conceived in 1958 when the late Father Jose Ortea organized the Institute of Pastoral Theology at the University of Santo Tomas. The author was entrusted with the task of lecturing weekly to students on matters pertaining to Philippine Church history.

In 1965, the Philippines celebrated its Fourth Centennial of Evangelization. This momentous occasion brought out the urgent need for a kind of history of the Church in the archipelago. As a result of this felt need and accumulation of lecture material, we began thinking about a possible “Manual of History of the Catholic Church in the Philippine Islands”. Certainly, the moment was propitious since the press, the media, and the lecture halls carried into the minds of the people of God the meaning, significance, and implications of the Evangelization Centennial.

Thus, in the midst of this religious and historical fervor, the author applied all his energies in making his dream a reality. In 1969, the Director of the *Boletín Eclesiástico*, Msgr. Leonardo Legaspi, took deep interest in the historical output of the writer

and serialized the material in the *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas*. Fr. Jose Arcilla, S.J. facilitated its speedy publication by translating the original Spanish text into English.

The fifty chapters which comprise the work today all appeared in the above-mentioned monthly publication during the years 1970–1974, at an average of about ten chapters to a volume. A limited number of copies, which included only Part One, were published by photographic process in 1973 and primarily for the benefit of the major seminarians at the University of Santo Tomas. Since then, a new demand had arisen for reprinting the entire work.

It is with this end in mind that we offer to the reading public this new edition of our *History of the Church in the Philippines* circa 1521–1898. It is the author's earnest hope and prayer that another historian, or perhaps a group of historians, endowed with a thorough training in the historical discipline, will eventually produce a complete and a scholarly *History of Catholicism in the Philippines*.

And so, through a happy coincidence, a task which began as an aftermath of one centennial reaches its completion with another.

In preparing this work, we do not claim to be exhaustive and all-inclusive. The reader, then, should not be surprised if he finds several *lacunae* which the writer was unable to fill in. His sole aim in the present volume is to offer a panoramic view of the Church in the Philippines during the mentioned period without necessarily going into minute details or pausing to investigate all the aspects of our research. Nonetheless, the curious reader or researcher will not fail to notice here and there first-hand information taken directly from unpublished manuscript material drawn from the archives or from rare and out-of-print books. In this task we have availed ourselves of the rich collection of documents presently extant in the Dominican Archives in the Philippines and in the archives and Filipiniana collection of the University of Santo Tomas. Together with the above-mentioned archival material, a great number of printed works have also been consulted.

Our method herein is descriptive as befits a work prepared primarily to serve the needs of students. We do not intend to write a "philosophy of history" or to pass judgment on persons and facts. We prefer to leave this to every mature and responsible reader.

In our work the chronological order is not neglected; however, it seems more fitting to proceed according to subject matter, that is, to review the events and activities which have stood out in bold relief in the ecclesiastical history of the Philippine nation. Herein are some of the more important topics treated: pre-evangelical religion of the Filipinos; the arrival of the heralds of the Gospel and their missionary, educational and charitable undertakings and institutions; the growth of the dioceses; the origin, development and struggles of the Filipinos secular clergy; the councils and synods; peculiarities of the Faith, morals and liturgical life of the Filipinos; achievements of the Church in the socio-economic field; missionary endeavors abroad; religious repercussions of the Philippine Revolution: and the scientific and literary output in the various branches of scholarly pursuits.

In conclusion, we wish to express our heart-felt gratitude to Fr. Jose S. Arcilla for having so generously and painstakingly translated the entire work; to Msgr. Leonardo Legaspi and Fathers Jose Tinoko, Jaime Boquiren, Pompeyo de Mesa and Efren Rivera for printing it in the "Boletin Ecclesiastico"; to Father Javier Arrazola for the first, although incomplete, edition; finally, deep appreciation to the National Book Store for the present edition.

Pablo Fernandez Villarroel, O.P.
University of Santo Tomas

September, 1979
Manila, Philippines

FOREWORD

In the last twenty years or so there has been a renaissance in historical studies of aspects of the Catholic Church in the Philippines. Think for a moment of some of the works which have appeared, all of which deal in substantial part with the history of the Church:

John Leddy Phelan. *The Hispanization of the Philippines: Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses, 1565–1700* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1959);

Pedro S. de Achutegui and Miguel A. Bernad. *Religious Revolution in the Philippines: The Life and Church of Gregorio Aglipay, 1860–1960* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila, 1960–72, 4 volumes);

Isacio R. Rodriguez. *Gregorio Aglipay y los origenes de la Iglesia Filipina Independiente: 1898–1917* (Madrid: CSIC, 1960, 2 vols.);

Horacio de la Costa. . *The Jesuits in the Philippines: 1581–1768* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961);

Diego Aduarte. *Historia de la Provincia del Santo Rosario de la Orden de Predicadores en Filipinas, Japon y China* (Madrid: Raycar, 1962, 2 vols.);

- Nicholas Cushner. *Philippine Jesuits in Exile: The Journals of Francisco Puig, S.J., 1768–1770* (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1964);
- Rafael Lopez and Alonso Felix. *The Christianization of the Philippines* (Manila: Historical Conservation Society, 1965);
- Isacio R. Rodriguez. *Historia de La Provincia Agustiniana del Smo. Nombre de Jesus de Filipinas* (Manila and Valladolid: 1965–76, volumes 1–4, 7–10, and 13);
- Robert R. Reed. “Hispanic Urbanism in the Philippines: A Study of the Impact of Church and State”, *Journal of East Asiatic Studies*, 11:1 (1967): 222;
- Peter G. Gowing. *Islands under the Cross: The Story of the Church in the Philippines* (Manila: National Council of Churches, 1967);
- Jaime C. Bulatao. “Split-Level Christianity”, *Brown Heritage: Essays on Philippine Cultural Tradition and Literature*, ed. by Antonio G. Manuud (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1967)
- Felipe Landa-Jocano. “The Philippines at Spanish Contact: An Essay in Ethnography”, *Brown Heritage: Essays on Philippine Cultural Tradition and Literature*, ed. by Antonio G. Manuud (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1967)
- Gerald H. Anderson. *Studies in Philippine Church History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969);
- Miguel A. Bernad. *The Christianization of the Philippines: Problems and Perspectives* (Manila: Filipiniana Book Guild, 1972);
- Isacio R. Rodriguez. *The Augustinian Monastery of Intramuros: The People and the Events that Contributed to its Grandeur*, translated by Pedro G. Galende (Makati: Colegio de San Agustin, 1976).

In addition there is an abundance of material on Philippine Church history in the major journals, especially in the *Archivo Ibero-Americano*, *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas*, *España Misionera*, *Missionalia Hispanica*, *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionwissenschaft*, *Philippine Studies*, and *Filipiniana Sacra*. What a wealth of studies we have available!

The book at hand, written largely between 1969 and the mid-1970s, is a valuable addition to the treasure trove outlined above. We have long needed a dispassionate, informed, and comprehensive survey of the Church in the Spanish Philippines. Some earlier works tried, but failed. This book succeeds in every way but one.

Fr. Fernandez succeeds first of all in comprehensiveness, covering as he does such topics as pre-Hispanic beliefs, ecclesiastical organization, friar accomplishments, linguistic and theological work, relations with the State, disputes and rebellions, friar lands, missionary work from the Moluccas to China to Japan to the Marianas, the Philippine Revolution and the early United States occupation, and many other areas of importance to this history. True, comprehensiveness of this scope in such a compact book must tarry only briefly on each topic. Nonetheless, the author knows his materials so well that even brief treatments are authoritative. This indeed is another dimension to his success: he cites from hundreds of printed works and draws extensively from archival materials, mainly but not exclusively from the exceedingly rich *Archivo de la Provincia del Smo. Rosario (APSR)*, with which he is very well acquainted indeed.

Another of Fr. Fernandez's achievements is his method of organization, especially in Part One Historical Development. He works mainly by topic and eschews a year-by-year or blow-by-blow history; yet within each topic he maintains a strong chronological sense. By avoiding narrative of events by date, he escapes the dreariness many contemporaries find in older histories. Yet, by maintaining a chronological pattern within each chapter he avoids the alienation or weightlessness one occasionally finds in "modern" historiography.

This well-qualified historian has produced a book of real value for both scholars working in Philippine historical studies of the Spanish period and for students trying to get their soundings in what can often appear to be an overwhelming mass of material. For the more advanced, the work is a reliable and complete guide to dates, terms, ecclesiastical organization, and sources. For others it can be recommended as a reliable introduction to a complex subject.

The last major virtue of this study which I would like to highlight is its dispassionate and even-handed character. Many of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century studies are so committed to defending a position on the so-called "friar question" that one may indeed question their reliability as studies of that period (though as exemplars of attitudes prevalent then, they are superb). Fr. Fernandez is dispassionate throughout, even as regards such complex and oft-politicized questions as the Church and Education (Chapter 7), Secularization of the Parishes (Chapter 14), and the Philippine Revolution (Chapters 34-37). Even the Masons are discussed without heat! He is also even-handed in his discussion of the Jesuit and the friar orders. Though a Dominican, he is not at all "Dominican-centric", citing at length Jesuit, Franciscan, Augustinian, Recollect, and other examples, and he draws on and cites freely literature from everywhere and everyone.

The book does suffer from having been completed in large part by the early 1970s. It fails, consequently, to note or incorporate some of the more recent works which have appeared. I am thinking particularly of recent Ph.D. dissertations and monographs from the United States and articles in, formost of us, out-of-the-way journals. For instance, I think of Dennis Roth's *The Friar Estates of the Philippines* (New Mexico University Press, 1977) and Nicholas Cushner's *Landed Estates in the Colonial Philippines* (New Haven, Conn.: Southeast Asian Studies, Yale University, 1976) which are useful supplements to the discussion in Chapter 30. Or Reynaldo Ileto's *Pasion and the Interpretation of Change in Tagalog Society* (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1975), for a ground-clearing interpretation of Filipino rebellions and

popular Christian motifs. I should also cite Daniel Doeppers' articles, "The Evolution of the Geography of Religious Adherence in the Philippines before 1898" (*Journal of Historical Geography* 2, 1976: 95-110) and "The Philippine Revolution and the Geography of Schism" (*Geographical Review* 66 (1976): 158-177). Other recent works which should be mentioned, at least in passing, are the fine studies of John Schumacher in *Philippine Studies*, especially regarding Filipino secular priests; Fernandez and Cantius Kobak's study of the Bustamante affair in *Filipiniana Sacra*, plus other articles there by Fernandez, Molina, and Arcilla; the special 1978 issue of *Archivo Ibero-Americano* on the Franciscans in East Asia and the Philippines, plus articles in earlier issues by Antolin Abad; Angel Martinez Cuesta's study on *inter alia*, the Recollects on Negros, *Historia de la Isla de Negros, Filipinas, 1565-1898* (Madrid: Raycar, 1974); and Ricardo Romero's "The Imprisonment and Liberation of the Benedictines and Jesuits in Surigao", translated by Francisco Mallari, in *Bulletin of the American Historical Collection* (6:4, 1978, 53-77; 7:1, 1979, 76-105; and 7:2, 1979, 63-106).

It is a sign of the worth of this work by Fr. Fernandez that none of the studies cited above significantly alters the main lines of his book. The work done since the mid-1970s primarily fleshes out local or regional details or focuses on one group or set of problems. For the overall, comprehensive picture, there is no better guide and reference tool available than Pablo Fernandez's *History of the Church in the Philippines (1521-1898)*.

Bruce Cruikshank
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October, 1979
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CONTENTS

| | |
|----------------|------|
| MESSAGES | ix |
| PREFACE | xiii |
| FOREWORD | xvii |

PART I. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

| CHAPTER | PAGE |
|---|------|
| 1 Religious Ideas and Practices Before the Arrival of the Gospel | 1 |
| 2 Discovery, Conquest and Colonization of the Philippines | 10 |
| 3 The Apostolic Work of the Religious Orders | 19 |
| 4 D i o c e s e s | 28 |
| 5 The Paroquial Organization | 36 |
| 6 The Secular Clergy in the Philippines: The Diocesan Seminaries | 44 |
| 7 The Church and Education | 53 |
| 8 Works of Charity | 63 |

| CHAPTER | PAGE |
|--|------|
| 9 Religious Orders and Congregations of Women | 71 |
| 10 Third Orders, Pious Works, Confraternities, Associations, Devotions and Sanctuaries | 79 |
| 11 Councils and Synods | 89 |
| 12 The Royal Patronage | 98 |
| 13 Diocesan Visitation | 108 |
| 14 Secularization of the Parishes | 116 |
| 15 Jurisdiction Conflicts Between the Church and the Civil Authorities | 125 |
| 16 Faith and Customs | 138 |
| 17 Sacramental Life | 147 |
| 18 Religious and Liturgical Practices | 157 |
| 19 Exemplars of Virtue and Sanctity | 165 |
| 20 Services of the Church to the Colonial Government and to the People of the Philippines: Embassies and Special Missions | 177 |
| 21 The Church as Peacemaker | 187 |
| 22 The Church During the British Invasion | 196 |
| 23 The Church at the Service of the State and the Filipino People During the Moslem Raids | 203 |

| CHAPTER | PAGE |
|---------|--|
| 24 | Other Services 213 |
| 25 | The Catholic Church and the Development of Agriculture in the Philippines 221 |
| 26 | Commerce and Industry 229 |
| 27 | Projects for Material Progress 236 |
| 28 | The Church and Some Social Problems 245 |
| 29 | Material Goods of the Church in the Philippines 254 |
| 30 | Friar Lands 263 |
| 31 | The Philippines: Center of Missionary Activity 274 |
| 32 | Missions in the Asian Continent 284 |
| 33 | Missions in the Pacific Islands 296 |
| 34 | Religious Causes of the Philippine Revolution and Charges Against the Religious Orders 304 |
| 35 | The Church During the Philippine Revolution – First Phase (1896–1897) 314 |
| 36 | The Church During the Philippine Revolution – Second Phase (1898–1899) ... 325 |
| 37 | The Church During the Philippine Revolution – Third Phase (1899–1900) 333 |
| 38 | Religious Adjustment After the Revolution 345 |