



**CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTIONS
IN PREPARATION FOR THE
CANONICAL INSTALLATION OF
THE MOST REVEREND SOCRATES B. VILLEGAS, D.D.
AS ARCHBISHOP OF LINGAYEN-DAGUPAN**





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(to be read after the Post Communion Prayer)

**October 4, 2009 – 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time
THE CHURCH AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD**

There were a lot of attempts to describe the mysterious reality of the Church by using metaphors for her like the Church as *a sheepfold* with Christ as the door or the Church as *a piece of land* to be cultivated and as *the body of Christ* among others (***Lumen Gentium 6-7***). Among these many images, there is one distinct description of the church is considered as a new teaching of the Second Vatican Council. **LG, 9** states that,

“...Christ instituted this new covenant, the new testament, that is to say, in his Blood, calling together a people made up of Jew and gentile, making them one, not according to flesh but in the Spirit. This was to be the new People of God. For those who believe in Christ, who are reborn not from a perishable but from an imperishable seed through the word of the living God, not from the flesh but from water and the Holy Spirit, are finally established as “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people . . . who in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God”.

Since the church is a composition of people who are united in their expression of faith in Jesus, who have been reborn by the Word of God and by the reception of the sacrament of baptism, it shall be considered as the PEOPLE



OF GOD. If there is one fundamental description that we can give, therefore, to the Archdiocese would be the image of being a people. The Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan is a PEOPLE OF GOD.

The Popes have continued to use the expression “the People of God”. Pope Paul VI used it with regard to his profession of faith known as the Credo of the People of God. The Great Pope John Paul II used it in his catechetical instructions, teaching that the Church is the new People of God and Pope Benedict XVI has spoken of “the Church, the people of God throughout the world, united in faith and love and empowered by the Spirit to bear witness to the risen Christ to the ends of the earth”.

The concluding messages of the assemblies of the Synod of Bishops are addressed to “the People of God”.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that membership in this People of God comes not by physical birth but by faith in Christ and Baptism. By virtue of this baptism, we have received the “dignity and freedom of the sons of God” (LG, 9). The consequence of this is that we are called to live in holiness. This is our common vocation as God’s people in our Archdiocese - bearing witness to Christ in the world.

October 11, 2009 – 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

THE LAITY AND THE ORDAINED MINISTRY

According to our Catholic belief, this promised Church, the Catholic Church, was brought fully into the world when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles in the event known as Pentecost. Also known as the Roman Catholic Church, this world’s largest Christian church comprises a total of 2,795 archdiocese and dioceses in 2008, one of which is our very own Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan. Each of these is divided into individual communities called parishes,



each staffed by one or more priests. Our 30 parish communities are made up of **ordained** members (such as bishops, priests and deacons,) and the **laity**.

Men may become **ordained** clergy, through the sacrament of Holy Orders, as bishops, priests or deacons. All clergy who are archbishops and bishops form the College of Bishops and are considered the successors of the apostles. Only bishops can administer the sacrament of Holy Orders through the laying on of hands, following which the newly ordained priest is formally clothed in his priestly vestments, i.e., the priest's stole and chasuble. Administering the sacrament of confirmation is ordinarily reserved to them. Bishops are responsible for teaching, governing, and sanctifying the faithful of their diocese, sharing these duties with the priests and deacons who serve under them. Only priests and bishops may celebrate the Eucharist and administer the sacraments of Reconciliation (Penance) and Anointing of the Sick. They and deacons may preach, teach, baptize, witness marriages and conduct funeral liturgies (CFC 1981-1982). Baptism is normally performed by clergy but is the only sacrament that may be administered in emergencies by any Catholic or even a non-Christian "who has the intention of baptizing according to the belief of the Catholic Church".

One of the many priests of the Catholic Church is Father Socrates Buenaventura Villegas, ordained on October 5, 1985. He was consecrated as a Bishop on August 31, 2001, served as an Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Manila and Rector of Mary Queen Peace, popularly known as EDSA Shrine since 1989 until he was appointed Bishop of the Diocese of Balanga in Bataan on May 3, 2004. This year, on September 8, Pope Benedict XV1 appointed Father Soc, as he is fondly called, our new Archbishop. He will be installed on November 4, ten o'clock in the morning at our St. John the Apostle and Evangelist Cathedral.



The **laity** consists of those Catholics who are not ordained clergy. Saint Paul compared the diversity of roles in the Church to the different parts of a body, all being important to enable the body to function. The Church therefore considers that lay members are equally called to live according to Christian principles, to work to spread the message of Jesus, and to effect change in the world for the good of others. The Church calls these actions participation in Christ's priestly, prophetic and royal offices. Marriage and the consecrated life are lay vocations. Lay ecclesial movements consist of lay Catholics organized for purposes of teaching the faith, cultural work, mutual support or missionary work. Some non-ordained Catholics practice formal, public ministries within the Church. These are called lay ecclesial ministers, a broad category which may include pastoral life coordinators, pastoral assistants, youth ministers and campus ministers. Members of religious orders such as nuns, friars and monks are lay members *unless individually ordained as priests*. Examples of these religious institutes include the Benedictines, Carmelites, Augustinians, Dominicans, Franciscans, Marist Brothers, Paulist Fathers, and the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), but there are many others.

Both the ordained and the laity may enter the cloistered consecrated life as monks or nuns. There are also friars and sisters who engage in teaching and missionary activity and charity work. A candidate takes vows confirming their desire to follow the three evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience.

Tertiaries and "Oblates" (regular) are laypersons who live according to the third rule of orders such as those of the Secular Franciscan Order or Lay Carmelites, either within a religious community or outside. There are also "Oblates (secular)", who are not members of the consecrated life but are laypersons (married or single) or secular priests that have individually affiliated themselves in prayer with a House of their choice without making public vows. They make a formal private promise to follow the rule of prayer in their private life.



October 18, 2009 – 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

POWER IS FOR SERVICE

The Apostle Paul devotes the whole chapter of his First Letter to the Corinthians (12) to explain and illustrate the gifts of the Holy Spirit that empower us for service. He begins by declaring our absolute dependence upon the Holy Spirit even for power to bear the simplest testimony to Jesus Christ. He then shows the diversity of the Spirit's gifts, but declares that to every one some manifestation of this divine power is given for improvement and service. He specifies the various gifts of knowledge, wisdom, faith, miracles, healing, prophecy, tongues, discerning of spirits and clearly asserts that they may all be expected in the Church of Christ through the whole Christian age. Service for Christ was understood not as the exercise of our natural powers and talents, but the use of the special gifts of the Holy Paraclete.

This power reaches out alike in every direction of Christian life and service. It was as necessary for a deacon in administering the finances of a church, of a private member in giving his means to God, as to an apostle, to his ministry, or a saint on his knees. Every service for the Lord must be in the Holy Spirit and in the strength of Jesus, to be acceptable to God. All our service, including that of a bishop becoming an archbishop therefore, is simply partnership with Christ in the fullness of his service. It is Christ working in him through his ministries. This was His promise when He ascended to the Father.

That does not mean that we shall do the works that He used to do, but that we shall do the works He is still to do, the works that He is now carrying on in His resurrected life as our Living Head, through us, the members of His body- a living community.

This power, therefore, can never exalt the possessor into self-importance. It is not his power at all, but simply Christ in him, which impels him to be of help and service to others. It is spiritual power that is far deeper and higher.



It is the power of God. It brings men to feel the presence and the fear of God. It leads men to know God, to love God, to obey God, to be like God, to receive God. It is God in man leading man to God. This is our hope for and in our new Archbishop, Socrates B. Villegas. With him, we can live in the service of the Gospel of Jesus, promoting life, the dignity of the human person through poverty alleviation, justice and peace, stewardship of creation and empowerment of our young people in the light of truth.

October 25, 2009 – 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

THE HIERARCHY AND STRUCTURE IN THE CHURCH

We as Catholics are not and never have been just a group of people who gather together because we believe the same things. The Church was founded by Jesus Christ as an institution with a definite structure. While the Church has developed since the first century, the fundamental structure remains the same. Jesus founded this institution with one head and a small group of leaders under that head, the Pope, concurrently Benedict XV1 and the bishops today as the successors of Peter and the Apostles. Thus, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches:

In fact, from the beginning of his ministry, the Lord Jesus instituted the Twelve as “the seeds of the new Israel and the beginning of the sacred hierarchy.” Chosen together, they were also sent out together, and their fraternal unity would be at the service of the fraternal communion of all the faithful: they would reflect and witness to the communion of the divine persons. For this reason every bishop exercises his ministry from within the episcopal college, in communion with the bishop of Rome, the successor of St. Peter and head of the college. So also priests exercise their ministry from within the *presbyterium* of the diocese, under the direction of their bishop. (CCC, 877)

One of the criteria for membership in the Church as the Body of Christ is acceptance of the institution of the Church as Christ founded it. We are part



of the Church by living within the bounds of its hierarchical structure. Scripture records that Christ not only founded a hierarchy, but gave it authority in his Church. The *Catechism* explains this clearly:

Jesus entrusted a specific authority to Peter: “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” The “power of the keys” designates authority to govern the house of God, which is the Church. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, confirmed this mandate after his Resurrection: “Feed my sheep.” The power to “bind and loose” connotes the authority to absolve sins, to pronounce doctrinal judgments, and to make disciplinary decisions in the Church. Jesus entrusted this authority to the Church through the ministry of the apostles and in particular through the ministry of Peter, the only one to whom he specifically entrusted the keys of the kingdom. (CCC, 553)

The hierarchy itself then must always be respected, and every Catholic should be consciously subject to its authority. Authority in the Church is unlike any other authority on earth. As Christians, all of us want to be united with Jesus Christ, and the hierarchical authority of the Pope and bishops helps to preserve for Catholics the unity of the Church as Christ’s Mystical Body. Through humbly submitting to that authority Catholics are inconceivably exalted by being a member of that Mystical Body.

For nothing more glorious, nothing nobler, nothing surely more honorable can be imagined than to belong to the One, Holy Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, in which we become members of One Body as venerable as it is unique; are guided by one supreme Head; are filled with one divine Spirit; are nourished during our earthly exile by one doctrine and one heavenly Bread, until at last we enter into the one, unending blessedness of heaven. (*Mystici Corporis*, 91)

