



RAYMOND PANIKKAR

MODERN PROPHETS

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Pedro Arrupe (1907-1991)

A MAN-FOR-OTHERS

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, IN THE BASQUE REGION OF SPAIN, A MAN WAS BORN WHO WAS DESTINED TO RENEW THE LEGACY OF HIS GREAT COUNTRYMAN, IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA. FOR PEDRO ARRUPPE BEING THE GENERAL OF THE JESUITS BROUGHT TO FRUITION HIS EXTRAORDINARY LIFE EXPERIENCES. IT ALSO CRUCIFIED HIM IN A WHEELCHAIR FOR THE LAST TEN YEARS OF HIS LIFE.

On May 22, 1965, Fr. Pedro Arrupe was elected the 28th Superior General of the Society of Jesus, the first Basque to occupy this position since the Founder of the Jesuits, Ignatius of Loyola. In the eighteen years of his service as Superior General Arrupe oversaw a renewal of the Jesuits so profound that made him to be revered by many as a “Second Founder”.

Specifically, Arrupe lead the Jesuits through their landmark Thirty Second Congregation, a meeting of representatives from all over the Jesuit world, held from December 1974 to March 1975 which defined the modern mission of the Jesuits in terms of “faith that does justice”. It was the gathering that presided over the demanding task of responding to the opportunities and challenges offered by the Second Vatican Council.

It is embodied in this statement: “Our faith in Jesus Christ and our mission to proclaim the Gospel demand of us a commitment to promote justice and enter into solidarity with the voiceless and the powerless”. Arrupe’s belief that the Gospel requires effective solidarity with a suffering world had roots in his early years as a young man and as a priest.

A witness to the atomic bomb in Hiroshima

Pedro Arrupe was born in November 1907, at Bilbao, Spain. He studied medicine at the university of Madrid but left to join the Jesuits in 1927. When the Spanish government dissolved the Jesuit order in Spain in 1932, he himself became a refugee. Along with other Jesuits, he was expelled from Spain. In all they were 350 people who stayed in Marneffe, France, in a temporary shelter. He continued his studies elsewhere in Europe and in the United States. After his priestly ordination in Cleveland,

Ohio, in 1936, he worked among Spanish and Puerto Ricans immigrants in New York.

Since his novitiate years he had felt a call to become missionary to Japan, a nation of special interest to Jesuits from the time of Saint Francis Xavier who had admired the character of the Japanese and Fr. Alessandro Valignano, the great strategist of the conversion of Japan. It was not until 1938 that he had the opportunity to go there. Although he was tolerated as a citizen of neutral Spain, he was imprisoned for some time on suspicion of spying. But then he was able to serve as novice master and later became Provincial Superior of the Japanese Mission. He wrote eight religious works in Japanese. He was in Hiroshima on August 6 1945 when the first atomic bomb fell on the city.

Here is his description of that experience: “I was in my room with another priest at 8.15 when suddenly we saw a blinding light. As I opened the door that faced the city, we heard a formidable explosion similar to the blast of a hurricane. At the same time, doors, windows and walls fell upon us in smithereens. We climbed a hill to have a better view. From there we could see a ruined city: before us was a decimated Hiroshima. Since it was at a time when the first meal was being prepared in all the kitchens, the flames contacting the electric current turned the entire city into one enormous flake of fire within two and half hours.

We were looking for some way of entering the city, but it was impossible. We did the only thing that could be done in the presence of such mass slaughter: we fell on our knees and prayed for guidance, as we were destitute of all human help. The following day, August 7, at 5 o'clock in the morning, before beginning to take care of the wounded and bury the dead, I celebrated Mass in the house. In these very moments one feels closer to God, one feels more deeply the value of God's aid. Actually the surroundings did not foster devotion for the celebration of the Mass. The chapel, half destroyed, was overflowing with the wounded, who were lying on the floor very near to one another, suffering terribly, twisted with pain.”

The lessons of Hiroshima

The memory of that day and the suffering survivors whom he tended in the following weeks was present to him in each mass he celebrated for the rest of his life. The compassion evoked by this experience developed overtime into a conviction that ministry to the oppressed and suffering peoples must not remain on the personal level alone. It was necessary also to

promote structural changes in the world to alleviate the sources of oppression and violence.

But, first of all, the Jesuits had to minister to the Japanese people. Pedro Arrupe wondered how the Japanese people could recover from the cultural crisis of a total defeat that meant the death of their cultural order. He focused on how the Jesuits could be of service: “Japan has just gone through a very deep-seated crisis. The Emperor was God and therefore invincible. Then suddenly came the unconditional surrender and the Emperor said: I am not God. This was a complete material and spiritual rupture. As we Jesuits did not recognize the Emperor as God (from whence came imprisonment, persecutions, and continuous suspicions), we then defended the Emperor. “He is not God” we used to say to the Japanese, “but he is the representative of God, he holds the authority: you ought to follow him”.

Moreover, his insights about Hiroshima flowed into his contribution as Jesuit General. In his discussion of the ways Jesuits should serve the contemporary world, he focused simultaneously on the very large question of where God is leading us and on the small mystery of each human face. He noted the living conditions of the city, and the state of the survivors...

He also saw in the wasteland that marked the center of Hiroshima the beginning of the modern environmental sensibility. It became possible to imagine realistically the capacity of humankind to devastate the world through the development of technology. Hiroshima suggested that even peaceful technologies could be destructive in the long term. An increasing number of people became interested in the environment. The movement has gathered force around the reality and threat of global warming.

Finally, in Pedro Arrupe’s description of the Mass that he celebrated the day after the bomb fell, we can see a tension in religious sensibility that remains with us. He leaves us with the question of how to bring together the different aspects of devotion: the presence of God in prayer and silence, and the presence of God in the world’s wounded. He did not solve this question, but characteristically he modeled personally under great pressure how we might address it.

Later it was the misery of the “boat people” fleeing from Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia that strongly influenced him. All these and many more similar incidents shook him and the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) was his response to the plight of the refugees. Fr. Pedro Arrupe was the brain and the heart behind the JRS (and its twin, the Loyola Computer Literacy Center) with its motto: Assistance – Accompaniment- Advocacy.

All these happened in the early 1980 and JRS has now completed its Silver Jubilee but the problem still continues and has increased manifold: Israel-Palestine, Cambodia, Laos, Chechnya, Bosnia-Herzegovina, many African countries, Afghanistan, Iraq...are reeling under feuds and wars leaving millions of people abandoned.

Men for Others

“Men for others” was the address of Fr. Pedro Arrupe to the Tenth International Congress of Jesuit Alumni in Europe, given in Valencia, Spain, on July 31, 1973. The address was published in French, Spanish and Italian. It caused a stir because it called with insistence for change. Continuing education for social justice poses no threat while it remains on the level of abstract theory. Fr. Arrupe brought the doctrine to bear on the personal lives of all who heard him.

His appeal is radical as was radical the contemporary teaching of Pope Paul VI in *Populorum Progressio*. Few years earlier, in 1971, the Synod of Bishops had pronounced the landmark principle: “Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel”.

In his address, Arrupe describes with bold brush strokes our society where the educational task of the Jesuits is called to operate: “The downward spiral of ambition, competition and self-destruction twists and expands unceasingly, with the result that we are chained ever more securely to a progressive, and progressively frustrating, dehumanization: dehumanization of ourselves and dehumanization of others. For thus making egoism a way of life, we translate it, we objectify it, in social structures.”

“To be men-for-others is the paramount objective of Jesuit education. It is the extension into the modern world of our humanistic tradition as derived from the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius. Only by being a man-for-others does one become fully human, not only in the merely natural sense, but in the sense of being the person filled with the Spirit of Christ, the Son of God who, by becoming a human being, became a Man-for-Others”. Thus, Arrupe was a pioneer in urging the combination of pastoral concern, biblical reflection and social analysis.

“Take, Lord, and receive”

Arrupe was aware that the Jesuits would suffer the consequences of this new understanding of their mission, and he urged them to be prepared

for criticism and even persecution. His concern was prophetic. Within three years, five Jesuits had laid down their lives in the pursuit of justice, and criticism was quick to follow. Many others, some would say too many, deserted the society and their vows, in the wake of their social, humanistic, sometimes political, commitment. The Jesuits were accused of substituting politics for the Gospel, and Arrupe was personally charged with leading the Society astray. His passion was quickly coming.

In 1981, after Arrupe suffered a disabling stroke, Pope John Paul II appointed a personal delegate in the person of the old Italian Jesuit, Paolo Dezza, to serve as *ad interim* superior of the Society. Arrupe’s own choice of vicar general was passed over, a fact perceived by many in the Society as a criticism of their beloved superior general.

Arrupe himself never expressed any resentment. Two years later, with the election of his successor, he tendered his official resignation. Unable to speak, he prepared a farewell statement that was read in the assembly.

Like Saint Ignatius had described in the Third Week of *The Spiritual Exercises*, Arrupe joined his anguish to Christ’s anguish, his agony to Christ’s agony. He spent his final years entirely dependent on others for his daily care. Whereas he had once served God through bold and prophetic leadership, now it was through prayer and patient suffering. As always he set an example of the Ignatian discipline of “finding God in all things”. He died on February 5, 1991.

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Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955)

MYSTIC FIRE

He was a Jesuit priest and a scientist who labored hard to reconcile the language of science and the language of religion. A mystic, afire with a vision of the divine at the heart of matter, he wrote: "There is a communion with God, and a communion with the earth, and a communion with God through the earth. I want to teach people to see God everywhere, to see Him in all that is most hidden, and most ultimate in the world". Systematically opposed during his whole life, he responded by a heroic silence and obedience. His prophetic vision is still source of inspiration for both scientists and theologians.

Mobilised in December 1914, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin served the whole length of World War I as a stretcher-bearer. He was a young priest since he had been ordained in 1911 and a promising scientist. The war of position with its miles of trenches and its bloody attacks involving tens of thousands of human beings, touched him deeply. For his valour, he received several citations including the Military Medal and the Legion of Honour.

With a mystic's eye he had perceived the face of the divine in all of creation. For Teilhard as for the Jesuit poet Gerald Manley Hopkins, the world "was charged with the grandeur of God". In a "Hymn to Matter", Teilhard wrote: "Blessed be you, harsh matter, barren soil, stubborn rock: you who yield only to violence, you would force us to work if we would eat...Blessed be you, mortal matter! Without you, without your assaults, without your uprooting of us, we should remain ignorant of ourselves and of God".

This vision was reinforced in the midst of death, as he confessed later: "The war was a meeting with the Absolute". The powerful impact of the war on Teilhard is recorded in his letters to his cousin, Marguerite, now collected in the book *The Making of a Mind*. They give us an intimate picture of Teilhard's initial enthusiasm as a "soldier-priest," his humility in bearing a

stretcher while others bore arms, his exhaustion after the brutal battles at Ypres and Verdun, and his unfolding mystical vision centered on seeing the world evolve even in the midst of war.

In these letters are many of the seminal ideas that Teilhard would develop in his later years. Like when, during a break in the fierce fighting at the battle of Verdun in 1916, Teilhard wrote: “I don't know what sort of monument the country will later put up on Froideterre hill to commemorate the great battle. There's only one that would be appropriate: a great figure of Christ. Only the image of the crucified can sum up, express and relieve all the horror, and beauty, all the hope and deep mystery in such an avalanche of conflict and sorrows”.

Throughout his correspondence he wrote that, despite this turmoil, he felt there was a purpose and a direction to life more hidden and mysterious than history generally reveals to us. This larger meaning, Teilhard discovered, was often revealed in the heat of battle. He described the experience that had occurred to him as he sat in a chapel near the battlefield of Verdun, meditating on the consecrated host.

It seemed as if the energy of God's incarnate love expanded to fill the room, and ultimately to encompass the battlefield and the entire universe. He was thrilled with the idea that, through work and suffering in the world, human beings were participating in the ongoing extension and consecration of God's creation. This insight was especially nourished by his devotion to the Eucharist.

Years later, while doing field work in China, he was inspired to write a booklet *Mass on the World*: “Since, Lord, I have neither bread nor wine nor altar, I will raise myself beyond these symbols, up to the pure majesty of the real itself; I, your priest, will make the whole earth my altar and on it will offer you all the labors and the sufferings of the world”. As he adores the presence of the creative power of God in matter, the Eucharistic miracle of Transubstantiation is, in a certain sense, realized in nature by the energies of evolution: matter becomes Christ. In this sense, the world is an altar, an immense altar for the celebration of this Mass on the World.

Certainly an echo of Teilhard's vision can be perceived in this striking autobiographical passage of pope John Paul II in *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (2003, 8): “I have been able to celebrate Holy Mass in chapels built along

mountain paths, on lakeshores or seacoasts; I have celebrated it on altars built in stadiums and in city squares... This varied scenario of celebration of the Eucharist has given me a powerful experience of its universal and, so to speak, cosmic character.

Yes, cosmic! Because even when it is celebrated on the humble altar of a country church, the Eucharist is always in some ways celebrated on the altar of the world. It unites heaven and earth. It embraces and permeates all creation. The Son of God became man in order to restore all creation, in one supreme act of praise, to the One who made it from nothing". Teilhard pronounced his solemn vows as a Jesuit in Sainte-Foy-lès-Lyon, on May 26, 1918, during a leave.

The discovery of fire

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin was born on May 1, 1881 and grew up in an eighteenth-century manor house located in Sarcenat, near the provincial capital, Auvergne, France. Coming from a family of eleven children, Teilhard was reared in an atmosphere of discipline and devotion. He learned from his father, Emmanuel, the love of nature and natural history which later became so important to his spiritual life as well as to his science. The countryside was rich in rocks and minerals, animal life, and flowers, and Teilhard spent many hours with his father exploring, climbing the mountains, riding, fishing, hunting, and collecting samples.

His mother, Berthe Adele, seemed to have had a more immediate influence upon the child's religious life. Teilhard lovingly attributes to his mother, whom he referred to as my "dear, saint maman," all that was "best in his soul." It was the influence of his mother which he looked upon to "rouse the fire into a blaze." The fire of which he speaks here is that of a mystical illumination from within". And the spark by which my own universe was to succeed in centering on its own fullness, undoubtedly came through my mother."

Teilhard's life spins itself around these two poles of thought and feeling: his sense of fascination and wonder about the natural world and his sense of God's presence welling up from within the world. As he told the story much later: "Throughout my whole life, during every moment I have lived, the world has gradually been taking on light and fire for me, until it has come to envelop me in one mass of luminosity, glowing from within".

Drawn to the natural world, Teilhard developed his unusual powers of observation. Yet among the earliest memories of his childhood was a striking realization of life's frailty. He recollects: "A memory? My very first! I was five or six. My mother had snipped a few of my curls. I picked one up and held it close to the fire. The hair was burnt up in a fraction of a second. A terrible grief assailed me: I had learnt that I was perishable... At this discovery, I threw myself on the lawn and shed the bitterest tears of my existence!"

Theilhard joined the Jesuits as a university student, studied theology in England, science in France and specialized in paleanthropology. He spent the years 1923 to 1946 doing research and field work in China. The assignment was a kind of exile, the result of his superiors' desire to keep him far from the theological limelight in Europe. But it was there that he worked out his most mature thought.

Theilhard went on to become a scientist of the first rank. He published over a hundred scholarly articles and took part in excavations in three continents. He was part of the team that discovered the remains of the "Peking Man", at that time the oldest human ancestor on record. But all the while he was working out a profound theological synthesis, integrating the theory of evolution with his own cosmic vision of Christianity.

Theilhard last "exile" was to the United States where he spent his last years in New York. He once noted, "I should like to die on the day of the Resurrection". So it came to pass. He was felled by a heart attack and died on April 10, 1955, Easter Sunday. Throughout Teilhard's seventy-four years, his experience of the divine and his insight into the role of the human in the evolutionary process emerge as his dominant concerns. In dying, his vision was at last released to the world: "The day will come when, after harnessing the ether, the winds, the tides, and gravitation, we shall harness for God the energies of love. And, on that day, for the second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire".

Silence that speaks

The work of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin lies behind many of the most creative movements in contemporary theology and spirituality. He was also a man of profound faith who exemplified a spirituality of engagement in the world. Yet little of this was publicly recognized during his lifetime.

Throughout his career he was denied permission by Rome and his religious superiors to publish any of his theological or philosophical writings, to lecture publicly, or even to accept any significant academic appointments.

Yet he submitted in obedience, convinced that he served Christ best by faithfulness to his vocation. “The more the years pass, the more I begin to think that my function is probably simply that...of John the Baptist, that is, of one who presages what is to come”.

Theilhard’s suffering, however, was acute as he once despairingly confided: “In a kind of way I no longer have confidence in the exterior manifestations of the Church...Some people feel happy in the visible Church; but for my part I think I shall be happy to die in order to be free of it and to find our Lord outside of it”. As it happened to other theologians, he maintained his own integrity and personal responsibility as he spoke to the Church. The responsibility expressed itself in accepted silence, obedience and loyalty. These values ensured the effective communication of truths and continue to deserve imitation. His silence still speaks admirably today.

Copies of Theilhard’s writings, however, were passed from hand to hand among a selected audience of friends and fellow Jesuits. His work might have disappeared altogether if Theilhard had not taken the precaution of naming a laywoman friend as his literary executor. To this initiative was due Theilhard’s posthumous fame and influence.

Yet he was never formally condemned, even when the impressive volumes of the works were published and appeared in front of the public opinion. In 1962 there was a *monitum* (reprimand) of the Holy Office which denounced the “ambiguities and indeed even serious errors which offend the Catholic doctrine” and exhorted the Bishops and the other leaders of Catholic institutions to “protect the minds of the youth from the dangers presented by the works of Fr. Teilhard de Chardin and of his followers”.

As time passed, it seemed that the works of Teilhard were gradually becoming viewed more favourably within the Church. For example, on June 10, 1981, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli wrote on the front page of the Vatican newspaper, *l'Osservatore Romano*: "What our contemporaries will undoubtedly remember, beyond the difficulties of conception and deficiencies of expression in this audacious attempt to reach a synthesis, is

the testimony of the coherent life of a man possessed by Christ in the depths of his soul.

He was concerned with honoring both faith and reason, and anticipated the response to John Paul II's appeal: 'Be not afraid, open, open wide to Christ the doors of the immense domains of culture, civilization, and progress'. Some of Teilhard's views became influential in the reform of the Second Vatican Council. Pope John Paul II indicated a positive attitude towards some of Teilhard's ideas. In 2009, Pope Benedict XVI saluted Teilhard's "great vision" and praised his concept of the universe as a "living host".

Not Prometheus but Jacob

In nature, every being gives and receives energy. Teilhard de Chardin's mystical view is the presence of God's creative power in evolution: matter becomes energy, energy becomes consciousness, consciousness becomes holiness in Christ who is the Omega Point of the evolution/development of the universe. The great scholar in paleoanthropology is especially a great mystic according to the Ignatian spirituality: to see God in everything. It was in 1927, at the height of his career in paleontology while he was studying bones and fossils in northern China, that Teilhard wrote a very influential book of spirituality, *Le Milieu Divin*: Jesus is the place, the ambience, the milieu where God accomplishes the most striking transformation which is to change our human consciousness into love.

Teilhard's writing is graphic and unrestrained: "All around us, to right and left, in front and behind, above and below, we have only to go a little beyond the frontier of sensible appearances in order to see the divine welling up and showing through. By means of all created things, without exception, the divine assails us, penetrates us and moulds us. We imagined it as distant and inaccessible, whereas in fact we live steeped in its burning layers. *In eo vivimus*. As Jacob said, awakening from his dream, the world, this palpable world is in truth a holy place, and we did not know it. *Venite, adoremus!*"

If evolution itself points toward a form of conscious life which has personality, perhaps God is the goal toward which this universe is moving after all, since from God it came in the first place. Hence the deep affinity which Teilhard felt between science and religion. "There is less difference than people think between research and adoration." "Religion and science

are the two conjugated faces or phases of one and the same act of complete knowledge".

In order to sustain and extend the huge, invincible and legitimate effort of research in which humanity is at present engaged, a faith, a mysticism is necessary. Humanity is no longer imaginable without science. But no more is science possible without religion to animate it. As Teilhard envisions the future, the greatest need is for a new type of seeker who devotes himself, ultimately through love, to the labours of discovery. No longer a worshipper of the world but of something greater than the world, through and beyond the world in progress.

Not the proud and cold Prometheus, but Jacob passionately wrestling with God. Jacob wrestled and even fought with God until he emerged the morning after with a clearer sense of his own destiny, a better understanding of the world, and a closer relationship to his Creator.

Thus, in the final analysis, Teilhard returns to the Bible and finds in the sacred Scriptures of his own tradition a God who is most compatible with a world in continual evolution. Not the static and unchanging God of the philosophers, the unmoved mover who stands over and against creation, but rather the same God who is so intimately related to the world as to enter into its deepest tragedies and struggles. The future may depend on whether enough of us have the courage to move with Teilhard from research towards adoration.

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Raimon Panikkar (1918-2011)

A MODEL OF DIALOGUE

Decades before the interfaith studies, Raimon Panikkar set the Catholic world astir by insisting that Christianity could learn from the Eastern religions. The diminutive Catholic priest and scholar, son of an Indian Hindu father and a Spanish Catholic mother, who died last year on August 26 at 93, did much to prepare the Church for the globalization of Christianity. Some thought of him as dangerously radical. But to his students and many admirers, Panikkar was a prophet whose teachings helped Christianity spread like wildfire throughout the non-Western world.

Some years ago, the great British historian Arnold Toynbee declared that when the historian of a thousand years from now comes to write the history of our time, he will be preoccupied not so much with the Vietnam war, nor with the collapse of communism, but with what happened when for the first time Christianity and Buddhism began to meet and penetrate one another deeply.

We can now realize more and more how the above remark is not only profoundly interesting, but especially very true. In connection with this, William Johnston wrote with enthusiasm: "Christianity and Buddhism are penetrating one another, talking to one another, learning from one another. Even the stubborn, old Catholic Church, in a flush of post-counciliar humility, feels that she has something to gain by sitting at the feet of the Zen *roshi* and imbibing the age-old wisdom of the East. Surely this is progress".

Now, the communications revolution is throwing peoples and cultures together. This is increased by the extraordinary mobility of populations that is taking place in this beginning of the XXI century. Physical contact, however, does not mean by itself understanding, esteem and cooperation. This is why thinking people are promoting a conscious and deliberate effort to make the different civilizations meet.

At the heart of this encounter of civilizations, undoubtedly there is the meeting of the different religious traditions. A widespread and profound process of secularization marks our age, yet the understanding, tolerance and mutual acceptance of the great religions is perceived by many as vital for the peaceful coexistence of tomorrow's humanity. In the future, peace shall depend on the good relationship between the different religious traditions and their capacity of dialogue. To this ideal Raimon Panikkar dedicated his life.

Unusual Origins

Raimon Panikkar i Alemany was born on November 3 1918 in Barcelona. His origins, though, are unusual in that his mother was Catalan and Catholic (Carme Alemany), from an important bourgeois family, and his father was Indian and Hindu (Ramuni Panikkar), a Malabar of aristocratic origin and British nationality, who settled as a businessman in Barcelona in 1916 and lived there until the end of his life. Raimon was the firstborn of four children. He often explained how much he owed to his family roots: "There was a profound harmony between my father and my mother, in spite of belonging to two different traditions".

From an early age, Panikkar tried to bring together his multicultural origin with his deep religious leanings: "I don't see myself as half Spanish and half Indian, half Catholic and half Hindu, but fully Western and fully Eastern".

Panikkar attended school with the Jesuits in Barcelona, then he was a university student of both Science and Humanities. The Spanish Civil War put his family at risk. He left for Germany, where he spent three years studying Physics, Mathematics, Philosophy and Theology. He returned to Spain in the summer of 1939, planning to go back to Germany to get his degree. But the outbreak of the Second World War prevented his return. Panikkar completed his degrees in Spain with a doctorate in philosophy and later on a doctorate in chemistry.

In 1940 Panikkar joined a group of laymen (later on to become the Opus Dei) that were trying to achieve a full Christian life within their professional work. He met Saint Escrivá de Balaguer, its founder, shortly after having returned from Germany, and they established a close relationship. Panikkar was for twenty years a numerary member of this Roman Catholic

organization and it was Fr. Escrivá de Balaguer himself who suggested that Panikkar become a priest. He was ordained in 1946. The association with Opus Dei came to an end in 1962, when Raimon realized that his deepest vocation was not pastoral work but academic life and research. Since he left the Opus Dei, Panikkar was incardinated at the Indian diocese of Varanasi.

Digging into the roots of Hinduism

At the end of 1954 Panikkar left Europe to go to India. He was already 36 when he went to the land of his forefathers, feeling that this would be a decisive event in his life. Meeting India's cultures and religions opened up new horizons in Panikkar's understanding of God, the human being and the cosmos. He encountered Hinduism and Buddhism at a deep level; he remained a Christian, but his perspective and positions changed. He wrote: "I left for India as a Christian, there I found myself a Hindu and I return a Buddhist, without having ceased to be a Christian».

In India he mainly lived in Varanasi, the most holy city of Hinduism, in a small room within an old Shiva temple by the Ganges; he was happy and devoted himself to studying, writing, praying and meditating. "I see this period of my life as one of the most joyful", he will remark a number of times. He worked as a researcher, digging deeply into the roots of Hinduism and Buddhism while acknowledging that these are also his own roots.

Panikkar was transformed by a number of people that he met in those years, among them two French monks who pioneered interreligious dialogue, Jules Monchanin and Henri Le Saux, both founders of the Saccidananda ashram, as well as the English Benedictine Bede Griffiths. All of them tried to incarnate themselves into the Hindu reality, deeply committing themselves with its culture and religion, to the extent of declaring themselves both Christian and Hindu.

Although he was now based in India, Panikkar travelled back to Europe many times and also to many other parts of the world. In Rome, he defended his doctoral dissertation in Theology at the Lateran University, which became one of his most successful and widely translated books: "The Unknown Christ of Hinduism" (London 1964). In that book, Panikkar studies the encounter between Hinduism and Christianity, arguing that there is a living presence of Christ within Hinduism. He also took part in the

Second Vatican Council.

In 1964 Panikkar returned to India to resume his research into Hindu philosophy, working for the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society. In that same year he was offered a Chair at Banaras Hindu University, but in the end it was not awarded to him due to his Christian faith. But just when he seemed to be fully established in India he was unexpectedly offered a Chair in the United States. He became a visiting professor at Harvard Divinity School in 1966 and a professor of religious studies at University of California, Santa Barbara in 1972.

He then taught in the spring and spent the rest of the year doing research in India. For a quarter of a century, he was “commuting” between one of the richest cities in the world and its opposite, one of the most chaotic cities of the poorest country in the world, between Santa Barbara and Varanasi.

When Panikkar retired in 1987, he returned to his roots, settling in Tavertet, a hamlet in the mountains of Catalonia. There he lived almost as a monk. He returned to his Catalan roots in order to complete his vital cycle, his karma; in order, as he said, to “make my life round or rooted, returning to the place where I was born”. Although officially retired as an academic, Panikkar continued to write and publish.

Eventually, in a statement from his residence in Tavertet, dated January 26 2010, he wrote: "Dear friends, I would like to communicate with you that I believe the moment has come for me to withdraw from all public activity. I will continue to be close to you in a deeper way, through silence and prayer, thankful for the gift of life which is only such if lived in communion with others: it is with this spirit that I have lived out my ministry." Fr. Raimon Panikkar died on August 26 2011.

A Fourfold Identity

Raimon Panikkar’s existential and intellectual journeys was long, rich and unusual, with multiple dimensions in his life. His Hindu-Christian origin was enriched with a multiple formation: scholarly, intellectual and interdisciplinary, as well as intercultural and interreligious. Raimon Panikkar is doubtless one of the great thinkers of our time.

He developed a fourfold identity throughout his life: he was born and brought up as a Christian; Hinduism was equally part of his heritage,

although he discovered it more slowly (“I had to let it emerge in me”, he says); Buddhism, which developed in him in quite a natural way (“as a result of inner work”), and finally his secular identity, through his interaction with the modern Western world.

Panikkar’s fourfold identity is fertilized by the four traditions mentioned above, to the extent that we cannot understand him unless we know how he sees the profound interior dialogue that unfolded within him: “An inner dialogue within one’s own self, a meeting with another religious experience in the depths of one’s own personal religiosity, at that most intimate level, a kind of intra-religious dialogue”.

Panikkar has been sometimes called a syncretist, but nothing would be farther from the truth; he knows very well that syncretism destroys the richness implicit in the varieties of religious experiences, which he sees as a fundamental wealth of the diverse human cultures.

Writing as a Life-style

Panikkar’s numerous writings were published both in periodicals and books. His wealth of knowledge and depth of thought, together with his good literary background and a suggestive style, creative and precise, can be appreciated in his many writings: around 60 books published, with translations into many languages and about 1.500 articles in journals and other periodicals.

He wrote: “I remember an ideal I used to have: each paragraph I wrote, possibly each sentence, was to reflect my whole life and be an expression of my character. One was to be able to recognize my life in a single sentence of mine just as one could reconstruct the complete skeleton of a prehistoric animal by means of a single bone. One single word, the Logos, expressed the entire universe. Writing, to me, is meditation—that is, medicine—and also moderation, order for this world. Writing is a religious undertaking to me: writing allows me and almost forces me to ponder deeply the mystery of reality”.

It is true that there is an evolution in Panikkar, from a traditionally Catholic and Neothomist position to the very broad perspective that takes him into interreligious dialogue; this second Panikkar is the most interesting and most prolific. But we cannot separate the young Panikkar and the mature

Panikkar.

In spite of the deep transformations he underwent, shaping the evolution of his thinking, there is a continuity that can already be detected in his early writings: aiming to embrace everything, in a constant search for harmony. Panikkar himself insists in this continuity in his thinking: “My great aspiration was and is to embrace, or rather to become (to live) reality in all its fullness”.

Religions—rightly understood—are the base of culture. It is futile to reduce Man to a mere bundle of psychological or economic needs. Unless we come to a religious understanding of humanity, we will perpetuate destructive tensions, both cultural and ideological. Granting that the West has been heavily influenced by Christianity, the question can be asked: Is it possible today to be Christian, i.e., a person with an allegiance to a concrete tradition, and at the same time universal? Panikkar was working on what has been hailed as a “Christology” for the future.

When Religions speak to each other

On October 27 1986, Pope John Paul II, with the inspiration of a prophet, invited the leaders of the world religions to pray and fast for peace at Assisi. Those who were present speak of the humble demeanor of the Dalai Lama, the major Rabbi of Rome, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Mother Teresa and many others as they entered the small chapel where St. Francis died on the bare ground.

All prayed in silence for a short time before dispersing to twelve different locations in Assisi, where they prayed according to their own unique traditions. In this way the unity and diversity of the world religions shone forth clearly. And so, throughout the town of Saint Francis, arose prayer and meditation inspired by the Vedas, the Sutras, the Koran, the Avesta, the Psalms and the Gospel, with incense, flowers, water, fire and peace pipe. In five Catholic churches in Assisi crowds prayed before the Blessed Sacrament, while throughout the world men and women interceded for peace on earth. “The challenge of peace transcends all religions”, said John Paul.

What blessed John Paul did on that occasion has become a point of reference, but it may never have taken place if it had not been prepared by

Fr. Daniel Berrigan, S.J. (1921-2016)

PEACE WARRIOR

Fr. Daniel Berrigan, who has lately passed away, undoubtedly stands among the most influential American Jesuits of recent times. Priest, poet, retreat master, teacher and peace activist, he is the author of more than 50 books on Scripture, spirituality and resistance to war. Fr. Berrigan, however, is best known for his dramatic acts of civil disobedience against the Vietnam War and nuclear weapons. He burned draft files with homemade napalm and later hammered on nuclear weapons to enact the Isaiah prophecy to “beat swords into plowshares.” For this he was arrested and imprisoned many times. His actions challenged Americans and Catholics to reexamine their relationship with the state and reject militarism. He constantly asked himself and others: What does the Gospel demand of us?

In the Bible, God’s dream about a united and peaceful humanity, made up of all his children, without exclusion of race or nation, is already present in Abraham’s blessings, but it becomes part of the messianic age in the prophets. Isaiah dreams of a convergence of peoples on mount Zion, in the city of Jerusalem, and the two signs of the messianic era are the changing of the weapons into implements of peace and the self-taming of the wild animals.

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (*Isaiah 2:4*). “The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatlings together, and the little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like an ox” (*Isaiah 11:6-7*).

If the latter sign may be interpreted symbolically, the former can be believed literally, moreover since Jesus, the Christ, stated in the sermon of the mountain: “You have heard that it was said: An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth”. But I say to you: Do not offer resistance to the wicked”. These are the biblical foundations of Catholic pacifism.

On September 9, 1980, Fr. Daniel Berrigan, his brother Fr. Philip, and six others (the "Plowshares Eight") began the Plowshares Movement. They trespassed onto the General Electric nuclear missile facility in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, where they hammered on an unarmed nuclear weapon, a warhead nose cone, and poured blood onto documents and files: the first Plowshares action. They were arrested and charged with over ten different felony and misdemeanor counts. They were condemned to ten years in prison.

In his courtroom testimony at the Plowshares trial, Fr. Daniel described his daily confrontation with death as he accompanied the dying at St. Rose Cancer Home in New York City. He said the Plowshares action was connected with this ministry of facing death and struggling against it. He added that in 1984, he had begun working at St. Vincent’s Hospital, New York City, where he ministered to men and women with H.I.V.-AIDS.

“It’s terrible for me to live in a time where I have nothing to say to human beings except, ‘Stop killing,’” he explained at the Plowshares trial. “There are other beautiful things that I would love to be saying to people.” On April 10, 1990, after ten years of appeals, the Berrigan's group was re-sentenced and paroled for up to 23 and 1/2 months in consideration of time already served in prison.

Slow move to pacifism

Daniel Berrigan, SJ, was born in Virginia, Minnesota, in 1921. His father Thomas was a second-generation Irish Catholic. His mother Frieda Fromhart, of German descent, would feed any hungry itinerant who would come to the door during the Great Depression. Daniel was the fifth of six sons. His brother, fellow peace activist Philip Berrigan, was the youngest. Although his father had left the Church, Daniel remained attracted to the Catholic faith.

At age 5, Berrigan's family moved to Syracuse, New York. In 1946, Daniel earned a bachelor's degree from St. Andrew-on-Hudson, a Jesuit seminary in Hyde Park, New York. He was devoted to the Catholic Church throughout

his youth. He joined the Jesuits directly out of high school in 1939 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1952. In that same year, he received a master's degree from Woodstock College in Baltimore, Maryland.

During his regency period, Daniel taught at St. Peter's Preparatory School in Jersey City from 1946 to 1949. While busy teaching, he also brought students across the Hudson to introduce them to the Catholic Worker. They often attended the "clarification of thought" meetings on Friday evenings, when speakers addressed topics of importance to the young Catholic movement. There he met Dorothy Day.

"Dorothy Day taught me more than all the theologians," Fr. Daniel told friends in 2008. "She awakened me to connections I had not thought of or been instructed in—the equation of human misery and poverty with war-making. She had a basic hope that God created the world with enough for everyone, but there was not enough for everyone and war-making."

Later on he was enriched by his contact with Thomas Merton. He regularly corresponded with Thomas Merton and also made annual trips to the Abbey of Gethsemani, Merton's home, to give talks to the Trappist novices. In *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander* (1966), Merton described Fr. Daniel Berrigan as "an altogether winning and warm intelligence and a man who, I think, has more than anyone I have ever met the true wide-ranging and simple heart of the Jesuit: zeal, compassion, understanding, and uninhibited religious freedom. Just seeing him restores one's hope in the Church."

After 1954, Fr. Daniel was assigned to teach theology and New Testament studies at different Jesuit schools in and around New York. The same year, he won the Lamont Prize for his book of poems, *Time Without Number*. He developed a reputation as a religious radical, working actively against poverty and on changing the relationship between priests and lay people. While on a sabbatical in 1963, he traveled to Paris and met French Jesuits who criticized the social and political conditions in Indochina. Taking inspiration from this, he and his brother Fr. Philip founded the Catholic Peace Fellowship, a group which organized protests against in the war in Vietnam.

The Tet Offensive

In January 1968 came the hinge on which the Vietnam War turned: the Tet offensive. Eighty thousand North Vietnamese soldiers stormed out of the jungles, wreaking havoc on cities throughout South Vietnam, endangering

even the U.S. Embassy in Saigon. Claimed as an American victory, Tet showed irrefutably that the United States had vastly undercounted the enemy it faced. Tet sparked a savage renewal of U.S. bombing of North Vietnam.

As it happened, a pair of American peace activists arrived in Hanoi just then, on a mission to receive from the North Vietnamese three freed prisoners of war. The activists were the historian Howard Zinn and Fr. Daniel Berrigan. He and Zinn spent their first night in Hanoi in an underground shelter while U.S. bombs fell from the sky—"under the rain of fire," as Fr. Berrigan later described it. That night, and on subsequent nights, they huddled in shelters with, especially, children, who for Fr. Daniel obliterated from then on any capacity he might have had to cloak the realities of the war in abstraction. This episode led to his book *Night Flight to Hanoi: War Diary with 11 Poems*, published that December.

His poem "Children in the Shelter" marks his transformation: "I picked up the littlest/ a boy, his face/ breaded with rice (His sister calmly feeding him/as we climbed down)/ In my arms, fathered/ in a moment's grace, the messiah/ of all my tears. I bore, reborn/ a Hiroshima child from hell". It was children whom Berrigan had uppermost in mind when, four months later, he ,with his brother Fr. Philip, burned the draft cards.

The saga of the two brothers

Fr. Daniel was deeply influenced by his younger brother Fr. Philip. Philip served in the army during World war II and after the war became a Josephine priest. Fr Daniel marched with Fr. Philip in the civil rights movement at Selma in 1965. As Fr. Philip became more active in the antiwar movements against U.S. involvement in Vietnam in the late 1960s, Fr. Daniel joined him in the protests.

Their most famous protest was in 1968 . With seven other participants, Frs. Daniel and Philip, using home-made napalm, burned 378 files of young men who were to be drafted for military service. This led to the Berrigans' arrest with the other members of their group. For a time Frs. Daniel and Philip avoided their prison dates and were on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted List. Eventually Fr. Daniel served two years in prison and was released in 1972.

This group, which came to be known as the Catonville Nine, issued a statement after the incident: "We confront the Roman Catholic Church, other Christian bodies, and the synagogues of America with their silence and

cowardice in the face of our country's crimes. We are convinced that the religious bureaucracy in this country is racist, is an accomplice in this war, and is hostile to the poor”.

Fr. Daniel said in a statement, “Our apologies, good friends, for the fracture of good order, the burning of paper instead of children, the angering of the orderlies in the front parlor of the charnel house. We could not, so help us God, do otherwise.” Fr. Daniel Berrigan wrote of the incident and the trial in his play *The Trial of the Catonsville Nine*.

In retrospect, the trial of the Catonsville Nine was significant because it altered the resistance to the Vietnam War, moving activists from street protests to repeated acts of civil disobedience, including the burning of draft cards. As *The New York Times* noted in its obituary: Fr. Berrigan's actions helped "shape the tactics of opposition to the Vietnam War."

Fr. Daniel was fond of quoting a line from his brother Fr. Philip, that “if enough Christians follow the Gospel, they can bring any state to its knees.” At various points, he opposed U.S. military involvement in Central America, the two U.S.-led Gulf Wars, and the war in Kosovo. Despite his image as a radical leftist, Fr. Daniel Berrigan was also an outspoken opponent of abortion.

During a 1984 talk at a Catholic parish in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Fr. Daniel denounced what he called a “theory of allowable murder” in contemporary society. Christians should have no part in “abortion, war, paying taxes for war, or disposing of people on death row or warehousing the aged,” Fr. Daniel said on that occasion. “One cannot be pro-life and against a nuclear freeze”, he insisted, “or be a peace activist and defend abortion”.

“I know that this prophetic vision is not popular today in some spiritual circles,” Fr. Daniel said in a 2012 interview. “But our task is not to be popular or to be seen as having an impact, but to speak the deepest truths that we know. We need to live our lives in accord with the deepest truths we know, even if doing so does not produce immediate results in the world.” Fr. Berrigan’s brother, Philip, died in 2002 at the age of 79.

This was written of the Berrigan brothers in Fr. Daniel’s obituary: “The American Jesuit priest Father Daniel Berrigan, who has recently died , formed a radical partnership with his younger brother, Philip, that energized the movement against the Vietnam war in the 1960s and created a tradition of pacifist activism that lasted a generation. Unlike Philip, a former Josephite who gave up the priesthood and married an ex-nun, Daniel remained in holy orders as a Jesuit thinker, writer and teacher, and a well-regarded poet. If Philip was the heart of the anti-war movement, Daniel’s intellectual and theological contributions made him the brains”.

Berrigan’s Legacy

Even as an octogenarian, Fr. Daniel continued to protest, turning his attention to the U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the prison in Guantánamo Bay and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Friends remember him as courageous and creative in love, a person of integrity who was willing to pay the price, a beacon of hope and a sensitive and caring friend.

“I owe him my heart, my life and vocation,” Bill Wylie-Kellermann, pastor of St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in Detroit, writes of Fr. Daniel Berrigan. “In a century, how many souls on this sweet and beset old planet has Berrigan called to life in the Gospel? How many deeds of resurrection? How many hearts so indebted?”

“It is my hope and belief that the name Daniel Berrigan will one be seen in relation to the American Empire in a way at least partially analogous to the way the name Bartolome de las Casas is today seen in relation to the Spanish Empire: as a witness. Fr. Berrigan followed his conscience and burned paper to protest the fact that the Empire was without conscience willing to burn children. He paid the price for doing so”.

Fr. Daniel Berrigan died in New York on April 30. He was 94 years of age. Almost contemporarily, a large representation of Catholic pacifists gathered in Rome and asked pope Francis to write an encyclical letter condemning the theory of the “Just War”. A leader among them was Fr. John Dear, himself a Jesuit, who continues the legacy of Fr. Daniel Berrigan, fighting for the total abolition of war in international relations.

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James Reuter S.J. (1916-2012)

# **THE GREAT COMMUNICATOR**

*An American Jesuit priest who lived in the Philippines since he was 22, James Reuter, taught at Ateneo de Manila University and was a well-known public figure: a writer, director and producer in theatre, radio, print and film. He was also a prominent figure in the resistance against the dictator Ferdinand Marcos and played a key role in the 1986 People's Power Revolution. He educated and trained generations of students in creative works, inspired by Christian values. Father Reuter received the award for "Outstanding Service to the Catholic Church in the field of Mass Media", personally given to him in January 1981 by Pope John Paul II. He was made an "honorary citizen of the Republic of the Philippines" in 2006.*

On December 8, 1941, the Philippines were invaded by Japanese troops. Following the fall of Gen. Douglas MacArthur's forces at Bataan and Corregidor, President Quezon instituted a government-in-exile that he headed until his death in 1944. He was succeeded by Vice-President Sergio Osmena. U.S. forces under MacArthur came back to the Philippines in October 1944 and, after the liberation of Manila in February 1945, Osmena re-established the government and became its President. The Japanese occupation was marked by savagery and cruelty, especially evident in the Japanese prison camps.

In one of these camps, situated in Los Baños, south of Manila, the young American Jesuit scholastic James Reuter was interned together with his companions. He had arrived full of enthusiasm, at 22, in 1938 to do his Philosophy first in Novaliches and then in Baguio. In the prison camp, he was assigned the duty of burying dead inmates. Their time in the Los Baños concentration camp was very miserable.

“The real suffering was hunger,” James Reuter wrote years later in a letter. “We were getting two ounces of rice in the morning and two ounces in the afternoon. That was all.” The visions he had were all of breakfast, lunch and dinner. But his accounts of life in Los Baños are full of optimism and humor. Looking back on that year of hunger and deprivation, he later wrote of “feeling sorry” for brother Jesuits not appreciating breakfast, dinner or supper – because they were never hungry. He concluded: “And then I realized: the blessing is not having a lot to eat . . . The blessing is hunger! When you are hungry, everything tastes beautiful!” Underlying his energy and drive was faith, a faith that was at once very deep and simple in its unwavering assurance that God will always be there and will take care.

In early 1945, while the Japanese guards were doing their daily calisthenics, U.S. paratroops sprung a surprise assault and quickly took over the Los Baños camp. As he was liberated, Reuter was overcome by patriotic emotion and vowed then that he would never give up his U.S. citizenship. He would recall four decades later, “Coming into Manila in a military jeep, in the bright morning sunlight, with my hair blowing in the wind, I was in real ecstasy. We were free! We were really free!”

### *A model seminarian*

Fr. James B. Reuter was born on May 21, 1916 in Elizabeth, New Jersey, to German-Irish parents, James Reuter and Marguerite Hangarter. He was the eldest of six children. He went to the Jesuit high school and graduated valedictorian. He was on the school magazine, was into dramatics and excelled in the school’s debating team which went undefeated for three years. He also played football and basketball. All this talent and background he would bring to his mission in the Philippines.

He entered the Jesuit novitiate in Wernersville, Pennsylvania in 1934, at 18, took his Vows, did his two-year Juniorate there as well and then came to the Philippines. In late May 1941 he came to the Ateneo de Manila to do his regency and here the war caught him. His group continued their studies of theology through the war, including their period of internment in Los Banos. After they were liberated in early 1945, he returned to finish theology at Woodstock College in the U.S. and was ordained priest on March 24, 1946.

After special studies in radio and television broadcasting at Fordham University, he returned in 1948 to the Philippines, where he would spend the rest of his life. His first assignment was to teach at the Ateneo de Naga,

in the Bicol region, where he began to blossom. He taught English and religion, but after class he was in charge of five extracurricular activities: the school's monthly magazine and yearbook, the glee club, the debate team, dramatics, and the varsity basketball team.

### ***Mama Mary's agent***

He was re-assigned to the Ateneo de Manila in 1952, where his versatility was put to full use. His theatrical talents were already well-known. But soon after his return to Manila, he revived the Ateneo glee club, which "quickly became something of a national phenomenon," according to one account of those years. He was ahead of his time in understanding the role and power of mass media and so, from 1960 on, his main apostolate was in media: print, radio, television. He became Director of the National Office of Mass Media, coordinating the media activities of the Catholic Church in the Philippines.

It all started like this. It was in 1947 when Fr. Reuter first heard of the rapidly growing mission of Fr. Patrick Peyton of the Congregation of the Holy Cross that promoted the praying of the Family Rosary. Both Fr. Reuter and Fr. Peyton believed that the most effective means of propagating the word of Christ and the messages of the Blessed Virgin Mary was through the use of the emerging mass communication tools like radio, film and television.

Fr. Reuter submitted of his own initiative a short drama for radio to Fr. Peyton and it was used in the weekly broadcasts of the Family Theater radio shows. The drama titled "Stolen Symphony" was awarded as best drama by the Ohio State Award. Upon returning to the Philippines, Fr. Reuter got named Filipino actor and actresses to volunteer their voices and acting talent to dramatize family oriented soaps and the praying of the Rosary. Fr. Reuter brought Family Theater to television in 1953.

### ***"Reuter's Babies"***

It is to Fr. Reuter's reckless faith, together with his foresight in building the Federation of Catholic Broadcasters of the Philippines, that we owe much of the dominant communications role of the Church in the snap elections and in the success of the 1986 EDSA revolution.

Earlier throughout martial law Fr. Jim (as he was affectionately called) helped keep the fire burning through his beautiful and powerful articles

against martial law: they were examples of elegant and effective communication. The radio network of the Federation of Catholic Broadcasters of the Philippines remained the one independent source of news during the years of media control under martial law.

The federation's members, along with Radio *Veritas* and five college radio stations, were linked to each other and to four mobile units by shortwave radio and computers. As the elections approached, Reuter's team trained intensively with the new equipment so that they could relay swift and honest reports on the results.

During the elections, Reuter's studios at Xavier House coordinated the flow of news to and from member stations, the colleges and the mobile units that were placed strategically around Manila and operated by teams of 'Reuter's babies'.

Courageously, they clung to them, ready to be arrested if necessary. Fr. Jim's reckless faith and courage had rubbed off deeply on those 'Reuter's babies'. There were finally the dramatic 18 hours of Radyo Bandido and June Keithley in the secret location right in the middle of the city and the exhilaration of the victory of EDSA 1. In all this, Fr. Jim described his role as accidental. He had mobilized his team for an election, not a revolution. But he said: "When the crisis came, the system worked. "

### *Inexhaustible energy*

This is how Fr. Bienvenido F. Nebres, S.J. speaks of Fr. Jim: "I first met Fr. Jim at Sacred Heart Novitiate, where I entered as a novice after high school in 1956. He was making his retreat and I watched him doing laps in the 25-meter pool of the novitiate. What I cannot forget was when he started swimming slow laps underwater – going to one end and coming back without surfacing, then he would surface, take a deep breath and repeat, over and over again".

"Fr. Jim could swim from one island to another. They used to send a boat to follow him to make sure he was safe. That was when he was in the prime of life, but 30 years later, he still had the same amazing energy. He used to jog regularly at 3 or 4 am and one time he came home with a big gash on his forehead and blood all over his track suit. He had run into a tricycle in the dark. "I'm ok", he said, so we asked, "Yes, but how is the tricycle?". The foundations of Fr. Jim's inexhaustible energy and optimism was a deep and

simple faith, simple in the sense of the beatitude: “Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.”

He brought all the energy and talent to the university he served as we can argue from the many tributes from his former players, debaters, actors and actresses and stagehands. This flurry of energy and activities was simply his use of his inexhaustible enthusiasm and many gifts to bring God to people and people to God. In the end, it was about all these young men and women in a commitment and friendship that would be, for very many, a lifelong one.

Fr. Jim declared during his long old age: "The athletes that I have coached in basketball, when they were students, call me when they are sick. I have visited so many of them in the hospital, heard their last confessions, anointed them, and then said Mass for them, when they had gone home to God." . In this apostolate of media he reached thousands, millions more, and developed new deep friendships in the Lord.

"The only thing that I see is the holiness of the Filipino people. The Filipino people are very, very close to God," Fr. Reuter said in 2009. He received the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Journalism in 1989 and was granted honorary Filipino citizenship by the Philippine Congress in 2006.

### *A mentor of generations*

Fr. James Reuter, an influential force in Philippine education, media and theater for over seven decades, died at the age of 96, on December 31, 2012. He had been ailing for years, but still managed to produce newspaper columns and make periodic appearances at events held in his honor. He was the executive secretary of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines Commission on Social Communications and Mass Media for 39 years.

"He was a very pious and exemplary Jesuit priest who was always wearing his *sotana*, the habit of Jesuits. He was a great communicator of the Good News of Jesus, using modern media" said Bishop Arturo Bastes upon learning of Reuter's death. His appreciation was reflected by the statements of innumerable other public figures both of the Church and of society at large.



The office of the President from Malacañang also issued a statement on the passing of Fr. Reuter, who "was friend, mentor, confessor, adviser to generations of Filipinos, both in public and private life, and in the media, arts, and journalism". "We join the Society of Jesus in the Philippines, the hundreds of alumni of the Ateneo de Manila University, and men and women of media, arts, and letters, who mourn the loss of this man of faith, good cheer, and eloquence. His love of the Philippines and Filipinos was legendary; so much so it earned him a stature and affection beyond the measure of the many awards he received throughout his long life".

Fr. Jim's body was transferred to Church of the Gesù, inside the Ateneo de Manila University's Katipunan campus. As per custom, his casket was laid feet facing the congregation to reflect his life's status as a priest ministering to the faithful. The Requiem Mass for Fr. Reuter was held on January 5, 2013, said by Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Archbishop of Manila. The interment followed at Sacred Heart Novitiate in Novaliches, Quezon City, where he rests along with other Jesuit priests and seminarians, in the peaceful cemetery, surrounded by the huge trees and vast grounds of that place of prayer.

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Fr. Zeno Saltini (1900-1981)

## **THE MOST OBEDIENT REBEL**

*On May 10, Pope Francis visited Nomadelfia, the small town where “Brotherhood is the law”. This example of Christian utopia, inspired by the community of the Acts of the Apostles, is the dream of a prophetic figure of priest, Fr. Zeno Saltini, an example of “Holiness in the neighborhood” about which pope Francis wrote in his last apostolic exhortation.*

At Nomadelfia, Pope Francis, on May 10, first gathered in prayer at the tomb of Fr. Zeno, then met a group of families. In the evening, during the festive gathering with the community, more than a hundred people –from three to seventy years of age – held musical, dance and theatrical performances in honor of the extraordinary guest.

Then followed the address of the Holy Father: “I exhort you to continue your lifestyle, trusting in the strength of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit, through your limpid Christian witness”. The pope had officially entrusted two new adopted children to a family which took them as their own. Nomadelfia is the masterpiece of a priest, Fr. Zeno Saldini, who conceived this new “City of God” where the only law is love.

### ***The story of a rebel***

Zeno Saltini was born on August 30, 1900 near Modena, Italy, in a patriarchal family. They were well off and he was troubled by the discrimination of the poor. He later wrote: “Already as a child, I noticed a terrible social difference. Only the sons of the rich could go on with their studies. I had a bicycle, the family doctor, fine clothes. The son of the prostitute was looked down on. I was disgusted of being different. Why? Aren’t we all children of God?”.

At 14 years of age, Zeno refused to continue his studies, stating that the school taught things which did not affect life, and went to work on his family's land. He lived with the workers and became familiar with their miseries and their aspirations. During the period in which Zeno was a soldier in the National Service in Florence, he had a brutal encounter with an anarchist in the presence of other soldiers.

The anarchist sustained that Christ and the Church were obstacles to human progress. In the midst of the other soldiers' whistles, mostly in favor of the anarchist, Zeno decided: "I will answer him with my life. I will change civilization by first changing myself. For the rest of my life, I want to be neither a servant nor a master".

He decided to study law. He received his college degree at the Catholic University of Milan. As an attorney, his intentions were to help those that could not afford to pay for a counselor. Soon after he realized his mission was to prevent people from falling into misfortune and decided to become a priest.

### *The priest's son*

He was ordained in 1931 and he celebrated his first Mass in the cathedral of Carpi. At the altar, there and then, he took Danilo, a 17 years old boy who had just been released from prison, as his son. Later, Fr. Zeno welcomed abandoned children as his own and founded the "Little Apostles". In front of God, he swore never to form a college, but to keep them as in a family.

World War II broke out. In 1941, a young student named Irene ran away from home and asked Fr. Zeno if she could become "mother" of the "Little Apostles". With the approval of his bishop, Fr. Zeno entrusted the youngest children to her care and hence was the beginning of a new and virgin motherhood. Other young women soon followed in Irene's footsteps and became known as "mothers of vocation". Other priests joined Fr. Zeno and together lived in community.

### *Nomadelfia is born*

After the war, in 1947, the "Little Apostles" occupied the ex-concentration camp in Fossoli, near Carpi, to build their new town. As they tore down walls and fences, in addition to the "mothers of vocation", new families were

formed by newlyweds who asked Fr. Zeno's permission to take in abandoned children and raise them as their own.

On February 14, 1948, the constitution was signed at the altar and hence the "Little Apostles" became Nomadelfia, which in Greek means the place where "Brotherhood is the Law".

Eight hundred of the more than one thousand Nomadelfians who made up the community at this time were abandoned children, many of whom were in need of medical treatment. The economic situation became more and more difficult and some used this as an excuse to dissolve Nomadelfia.

In 1952, the Holy Office ordered Fr. Zeno to leave Nomadelfia and he obeyed. Since the Nomadelfians had been forced to leave Fossoli, they looked for shelter in Grosseto on four hundred hectares of land that had been donated by a pious woman. There, most of them lived in tents. Although Fr. Zeno was far from his children, he continued to provide for them. But that was not enough. He then reached an extreme decision.

### ***"Holiness in the neighborhood"***

In 1953, Fr. Zeno asked the Pope's permission to temporarily leave priesthood in order to return to his children. Pope Pius XII granted him secularization "pro gratia" (as a favor). At this time there were about 400 Nomadelfians. The founder's presence contributed to overcome the crisis. In 1961, Nomadelfia became a civil association and drew up a new constitution.

At this point, Fr. Zeno asked the Holy Father's permission to re-enter priesthood. Nomadelfia was made a parish and Fr. Zeno was nominated the parish priest. In 1962, he celebrated his "second" first mass. He died in Nomadelfia on January 15, 1981. On Sunday, May 21, 1989, Pope John Paul II visited Nomadelfia.

At present, Nomadelfia is a tiny but highly significant reality: a group of Catholic volunteers who wish to build a new civilization based on the Gospel. They are 270 people - 50 families - 4 square km near Grosseto in Tuscany – Italy. All goods are shared. There is no private property and no money. The families are willing to adopt children.

Since the beginning until now, more than five thousand young people have been taken in by the families of Nomadelfia. With the major age, the young are free to pursue their life outside Nomadelfia. Those who are willing to stay are welcome and the life of the little “City of God” continues.

In recent times, pope Francis has visited the places of other Italian priests famous for their prophetic action sometimes opposed even by the Vatican, but whom time has revealed as prophets: Fr. Primo Mazzolari, Fr. Lorenzo Milani and bishop Tonino Bello. Their legacy is an asset for the Church: they represent that “holiness in the neighborhood” about which pope Francis has written in his last apostolic exhortation “*Gaudete et Exultate*”.

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Fr. Carlo Gnocchi (1902-1956)

## **ANGEL OF THE WAR VICTIMS**

*He barely survived the defeat of the Italian army in Russia where he had gone as a military chaplain of the Alpine Corps. Fr. Carlo Gnocchi (1902-1956), a diocesan priest of Milan Diocese in Italy, dedicated his short and intense life to the assistance and rehabilitation of the children, innocent victims of the war. For them he created the network of institutions called “Pro Juventute”. During the funeral which was attended by an enormous crowd of people, in the historical cathedral of Milan, in front of Fr. Carlo’s coffin, a mutilated boy shouted: “Before I was telling you: Ciao, Fr. Carlo; now I tell you: Ciao, Saint Carlo!” Fifty three years later, on March 9, 2009, in the same place, Fr. Carlo Gnocchi was proclaimed Blessed by Card. Tettamanzi, following the decree signed by pope Benedict XVI. His*

*institution, now named “Fr. Carlo Gnocchi Foundation” continues to assist thousands of children in need.*

At the outbreak of World War II, Fr. Carlo Gnocchi, a diocesan priest from Milan, volunteered as chaplain of the Alpine Corps and followed them in the Greek and Balcan campaign. In 1942 he went on to the Russian campaign, following the invading German army. As chaplain of the “*Tridentina*” Division, he took part in the battle of Nikolaevka and the disastrous debacle at the river Don, when a rigid winter helped the Russian counter-attack and forced the invading army to retreat in disorder. Casualties were so numerous that the ruinous withdrawal became a massacre.

Fr. Carlo witnessed the death of hundreds of soldiers because of wounds, frost, hunger, exhaustion. He assisted innumerable dying Alpine Corps and comforted their last moment. He himself survived by a miracle. Once that he had stopped to assist a soldier who was in the point of death, he collapsed out of tiredness on the snow. It was his orderly who saved him because he came back looking for him. Even his knapsack was saved which contained the letters, the identification plaques and the photos which the dying soldiers had entrusted to him.

### ***The most basic instincts***

Fr. Carlo gave an account of his Russian predicament in his book “*Christ among the Alpine Corps*” which was reprinted several time. In it he writes: “In those fatal days, I can say that I at last saw what human beings are: naked, totally stripped of any restraint or convention because of the violence of the events too big for them to bear, totally dominated by the most basic instincts, emerging from the depths of their being”.

Back in Italy, Fr. Carlo went house to house, all over Lombardy, in the remotest valleys, to visit the families and bring to them the memories of their deceased loved ones. But the war was still on and the Gestapo became suspicious of the young wondering priest. As a matter of fact, Fr. Carlo was also secretly involved in helping the flight of the Jews to Switzerland and the youth to the mountain to join the Partisans who were waging a guerilla war of resistance against the German occupation forces.

Fr. Carlo could not avoid being arrested and experienced the horror of the prison. Fortunately, after only two weeks, he was released because of the intervention of a high member of the Church hierarchy. Then the war was finally over and Fr. Carlo joined the Great Invalids Institute and started taking care of around thirty young orphans, with the help of three religious

sisters, but with absolutely no financial resource. He used to go around on a small motorcycle, a gift of the Guzzi motorcycle factory. Soon they stole it from him and the firm was good enough to provide him with a new one.

### ***Alone with the mother***

Blessed Carlo Gnocchi was born in a village of the plain of Lombardy, San Combano al Lambro, near the town of Lodi in Northern Italy, on October 25 1902. His father Enrico was a stonecutter and his mother Clementina Pasta was a seamstress. He was the last of three siblings. He soon experienced the loss of his father, victim of occupational sickness: silicosis. After few years he lost the two brothers. He remained with his mother who was very close to him throughout the course of his life and influenced him deeply because of her piety and sense of duty. God took her in 1939, just before Fr. Carlo went to war in Russia.

Carlo grew up in an environment of diligence and hard work and especially of religious piety. It came natural to him to consider the vocation to be a priest in the large Milan Diocese and enter the seminary. He was ordained in 1925, still very young. His passion as a young priest was the formation of the youth through the parish Youth Center. His proficiency in this task was recognized when he was assigned by the archbishop of Milan as spiritual adviser of the renown Gonzaga Institute of the Brothers of Christian Instruction in 1936.

After the war, he continued caring for the orphans of the Alpine Corps' members who had died in the war, then he took charge of the many maimed children: a sad result of the bombing of the cities whereby thousands of civilians fell victim, including children. Eventually he took charge of the large army of children affected by polio, more the 100.000 of them. To look after them all he covered Italy with a network of colleges which eventually became very modern Rehabilitation Centers.

### ***Please, take the child!***

This is how all started. One day, a woman comes to Fr. Carlo accompanied by a child deprived of one leg. She exclaimed: "Father, I can't make it any more! It is two days that we do not eat... Please, take the child!". Fr. Carlo opens his arms to welcome the child, but the small boy struggles back to his mother who, in a desperate gesture, snatches away the crutches of the boy and runs out. The small boy crawls after her. For two days and two nights, the child is sick with high fever and the priest is beside him to feed him and holds the boy's small hand even when it scratches him.

This is the beginning of the Foundation “Pro Juventute” (*in favor of the Youth*). The first residence is an old villa which accommodates 100 beds and then so many other institutes: in Italy there were 15 thousand maimed children then orphans, handicapped, abandoned: an army of suffering humanity. Overburdened by this immense task, Fr. Carlo went to the media: first a Swiss radio on Christmas 1949 spoke of Fr. Carlo’s many mutilated children.

Few months later, the priest himself entered one day the editorial office of *Corriere della Sera*, the prestigious daily, holding a fat envelope, staffed with the photographic documents of the children he was assisting, and started speaking of children who used to wake up in the middle of the night screaming because of the pain of their old wounds, about prosthesis that needed to be changed because the limbs were growing; glass eyes that got lost while the children were playing, etc.

### ***The treasure of innocent suffering***

At the priest’s words, a great silence descended in that hectic place. Eventually, the newspaper decided to open a fundraising appeal. The material needs were the most impelling, but Fr. Carlo was close to the spiritual value of so much innocent suffering. This people understood later, when the extraordinary spirituality of Fr. Charles became more known. He himself said that he had asked a child: “What are you thinking about when your wounds are aching, when the nurses are tampering with them?” “Nothing” was the answer.

Fr. Carlo commented: “Then, in that moment, I perceived that a very precious treasure was in danger to be lost. The innocents’ suffering that can redeem the world while united to that of Christ, was uselessly going down the drain...I had the duty of teaching the children not to waste such a treasure”. Here the true face of Fr. Gnocchi is revealed: not only the humanitarian organizer, but the priest who, in the disaster of the war, has meditated on the suffering of wounded, humiliated humanity, compelled to suffer without a reason.

This is how Fr. Carlo became the prophet of a mass of defeated humanity to whom it was necessary to give back the lost dignity, showing them the nobility of suffering by lifting it up to the level of a loving self-giving. He understood by personal experience the salvific function of suffering when united to Christ’s suffering. Thus those who suffer lift up their pain to the highest level of dignity.

To this suffering and handicapped infancy, Fr. Carlo dedicated his most significant work by the title: *Pedagogy of innocent suffering*. His last words



were: “Thank you for everything!”. In his Last Will he had written: “Other people may be able of serving the children better than I could and was able to. But no other person, perhaps, will be able to love them more”.

### ***Keeping a smile to the end***

On January 21 1956, Fr Carlo Gnocchi died of leukemia in a hospital in Milan. It was in the evening that Fr. Carlo, holding in his hand a crucifix which he had received years before from his mother and which he loved very much, breathed his last. The metastasis of the cancer had reached the bones and the lungs: Fr. Carlo’s constitution was already weakened by the war deprivations and his hectic rhythm of work and gave way to the unrelenting attack of the terminal sickness. All the same he knew how to keep a smile in his kind face to the end.

A fellow soldier of the Alpine Corps came to tell him : “Fr. Carlo, all your former fellow members of the Alpine Corps are praying for you, even those who do not know how to pray for they never do it”. On the point of dying, Fr. Gnocchi entrusted his immense legacy to those close to him with these words: “I recommend my ramshackle hut (baracca) to you!” This is how he used to call his great achievements. Archbishop Montini, the future pope Paul VI, cried beside Fr. Carlo’s death bed.

At the end of his life, Fr. Carlo had something more that he wanted to give: he donated his eyes to two blind boys: Amabile Battistella and Silvio Colagrande who from then on will be able to see, work and dedicate themselves to the others’ welfare because of Fr. Carlo’s eyes. A gesture which had an enormous impact because still unusual and which promoted the donation of organs to become in the future accepted and matter of course. In Italy, the law that favored the donation of organs was approved in 1957, only one year following his death.

### ***The Saint of the Black Feathers***

Fr. Carlo Gnocchi was considered a saint during his life and especially after his holy death. In 1992, during a national gathering of the Alpine Corps members ( popularly called “Black Feathers”), Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, during the celebration of the mass in Milan cathedral, emphatically stated: “In Russia, all the Black Feathers were heroes, but Fr. Gnocchi was a saint”.

The expression thrilled with deep emotion the crowd of ex-soldiers since they had always considered Fr. Carlo one of them. Many people testified that, after his death, when they invoked his help, they had received graces. The miracle recognized by the Church for his beatification took place in

August 1979 at Orsenigo, Como, when a young electrician, a member of the “Black Feathers”, Sperandio Aldeni, who did not meet Fr. Carlo personally but who was a devoted helper and benefactor of his enterprise, was working in a 15000 volts transformation cabin in order to connect the main switch.

A storm was gathering and suddenly Aldeni saw a lightening and heard a thunder...Too late to get out: a 15000 volts electric shock hit the young man and threw him on the ground. He called to God, the blessed Virgin Mary and Fr. Gnocchi because he had lost every feeling in his legs...but he survived and stood up alive and kicking.

Fr. Carlo fulfilled the deepest call of his being because of his unifying power of love. He loved God and people, especially the children and mutilated humanity heroically up to the last kiss to the Crucifix on his death bed. His complex, rich personality expressed itself in three directions: his conscience to be a manager, almost an industrialist of charity; his strong stance with the government and Church authorities and the extraordinary capacity of human relationship channeled to the welfare of the children he had adopted and to whose destiny he had vowed his life.

### ***A multi-disciplined approach***

Fr. Carlo’s dedication to charity at the service of the youth grew up gradually through the circumstances of his life history. The war experience was the beginning and the condition of Italy immediately after the war stimulated his loving commitment, then it was his genius in involving thousands in the awareness of the tragic destiny of the youth that was crying to be healed and assisted, formed and directed towards the future.

In an ever increasing consciousness of his humanitarian ideal, Fr. Carlo found the strength to almost impose the demands of those whose extreme need he represented to the authorities of the Church and of the government. The more he managed to obtain, the more the courage to ask was welling up in him. The field he was entering of rehabilitation was all but easy and simple. A multi-discipline approach was necessary to accompany the handicapped and mutilated youth gradually towards healing and self-sufficiency.

Fr. Carlo managed with his burning dedication and his capacity of relationship to put together the immense network of expertise and care that were required by the task at hand. The Foundation “Pro Juventute”, now “Foundation Don Carlo Gnocchi” continues his legacy with extraordinary,

