

**Catechism  
of the  
Philippine Independent Church**

by the Most Eminent  
Gregorio Aglípay y Labayan  
Supreme Bishop of Said Church

Approved by the Supreme Council of Bishops

Prologue by the Renowned Religious Writer  
Father José Ferrándiz

*The one who does not prove knowledge of this catechism  
will not be ordained to the presbyterate.*

Manila, 1912

Isabelo de los Reyes, Editor

English translation by  
Rev. Dr. Jayme Mathias

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## Introduction

Rev. Dr. Jayme Mathias

Prepare yourself to step back in time. In 2022, we celebrated the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Philippine Independent Church. Ten years after its founding, the church's Supreme Council of Bishops approved a catechism written by Supreme Bishop Gregorio Aglipay y Labayan and edited by the church's co-founder, Isabelo de los Reyes, Sr.

110 years later, this catechism provides insight into the world in which it was written and the individuals who compiled it. Riddled with errors and inconsistent punctuation and formatting, the book reveals the challenges of printing in that era. This edition lightly edits the work for consistency and inclusivity, knowing that its references, for instance, to "man" signify "person" or "humankind."

Tellingly, this catechism shares a jaded perspective on the "Romanists" and the "frailocracy" [the rule by friars] of the Roman Catholic Church, who, due to their historical alliance with colonizing forces, was perceived as an oppressive source by many people in the Philippines.

This work reflects the extent to which its compilers were influenced by modern thought and rationalist Enlightenment thinking. Its dismissal of the doctrine of the Trinity, "the imaginary Holy Spirit," angels and demons, hell and purgatory, miracles and other scientifically non-verifiable phenomena shows its esteem for Science, a word always capitalized in the work, and for human rationality. The work's dark conclusion, with the implosion of the sun in some 18 million years and the demise of the earth "much before then," does little more than illuminate "the only way to truth, which is Science."

I express my profound gratitude to our spiritual siblings of the Philippine Independent Church for their courage in living and modeling a new and more prophetic form of Catholicism in our world, a way that greatly differs from the colonized and colonizing Roman church which possesses a much larger footprint in the archipelago than the Philippine Independent Church.

I conclude with a caution for the reader: Please read this work as the historical document it is on "the religion of Science," written by

people in a particular time and place, and *not* as a Catholic catechism that might reinforce the faith that you were taught as a child. Sufficient catechisms have been published for that purpose. Imagine, as the first page of the work suggests, what clergy of the Philippine Independent Church were apparently expected to know prior to ordination. Consider the possible reasons for which the Philippine Independent Church no longer uses this catechism 111 years later. And dare to push the limits of your own religious beliefs, perhaps in a way not too dissimilar to that of the now-famous marginal Jew, Jesus of Nazareth!

## Prologue

*Expurgate vetus fermentum,  
ut sitis nova conspersio, sicut estis azymi....  
Epulemur, non in fermento veteri,  
sei in azymis sinceritatis et veritatis.  
(1Cor. 5:6-7)*

Most Reverend Supreme Bishop  
of the Philippine Independent Church,

I have not been able to explain to myself, Most Reverend Lord, why I have been chosen to write the introduction to the book containing the catechesis of the Philippine Church. I do not find in myself the sufficiency that seeks such a unique honor. Moreover, Your Reverence, as even the very recognition of our inferiority as a judgment in our own cause does not lack a certain shade of passion and self-confidence, I must concede what you and your Church undoubtedly believe of my meager person and very honorably accept this commission.

When undertaking its fulfillment, not without having meditated on it—as Marco Flavio said, *Considerandum est diu, quod faciendum est semel* [Consider for a long time what should be done only once]—I still distrusted my abilities and hesitated. I recalled Horace’s maxim, *Sumite materiam vestris, qui scribitis, æquam viribus* [You who write, choose a topic appropriate to your abilities], and another from Ovid: *Tace, aut dic aliquid, silentio melius* [Say something that is better than silence, or shut up]. What might I say in this work that is more valuable than silence?

After slowly reading the entire book, a pleasant impression remained in my mind, and also in my feelings, and the first words that came to mind were those of Saint Paul at the beginning of this prologue: “Cleanse yourselves of the old yeast, so that you may be a new, unleavened dough, as you really are. From now on, then, let us eat not the old bread, leavened with malice and wickedness, but the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

I found myself synthesizing the efficient cause of the genesis of the new Church: to renounce all the “leaven” that human beings, in ignorance or self-interest, had introduced into the work of Jesus Christ since ancient times, and to nourish the souls of the simple with

the pure, unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, as it was handed to us from the divine hands of the Savior of the world.

The Philippine Independent Church has thus responded to the contemporary Christian soul of our world, which everywhere energetically expresses its longing for a spotless Christianity, the supreme aspiration of enlightened and upright consciences, a Christianity that is necessary both for the simple and highest intelligences, since the spiritual life is impossible without a robust and refined morality.

Since our days in the bosom of the Roman Catholic religion, vivid manifestations of this desire have emerged, with some—like the Americanists of the United States, a large number of modernists, as well as Italians, Austrians, French, Germans, Swiss and South Americans—believing in the possibility of fulfilling this under the direction and tutelage of popes. As a result, these people have refused to ostensibly and definitively shake the papacy. Due to sheer timidity, the results have been hardly gallant and almost entirely fruitless. At the same time, others have been determined to shake free from the papacy: the Old Catholics of France, Switzerland and the Netherlands; the Free Catholics of Germany, Canada and other countries; the *Vom Rom* (“enough of Rome!”) movement in Austria, Hungary and elsewhere; the Mariavites of Poland; and many more courageous, emancipated individuals who have managed to carry out fruitful work and who deserve universal sympathy.

Not in vain did Christ say: “The kingdom of heaven belongs to the courageous.” As in the gospel, it will be said of the timid and hesitant who do not complete their work well: *Hic homo capit ædificare, et non potuit consummare* [This person began to build, but could not finish (Lk. 14:30)]. Even after a very respectable amount of study, good will and talent, what have the Americanists and many followers of modernism achieved? As a final condemnation of the pope, they mistakenly continue under his iron rule, remaining firm in their convictions and rejecting in their consciences his anathemas, not believing them in their hearts, nor allowing extrinsic reprobation to extinguish them. They externally venerate the one who has condemned and subdued them, and they continue to serve the one whom they consider in their hearts to be an adversary and tyrant!

They refuse to see an obvious truth: the absolute and irreducible antithesis of the papacy with all that ties to the Gospel and with all



progress within Christianity. It is as if they are forced to choose between being Jesuits, with all ensuing consequences, or atheists. It is as if they are told, "If you choose to eat this pure bread, rather than accept the pharisaical burdens that I have added to the work of Jesus, I will expel you from the Catholic communion!" Many who are not ostensibly outside of the Roman Church hesitate and remain within, at least in body, while their souls yearn for the truth.

I, however, believe that there are respectable, consistent reasons that determine such behavior. I and many others have remained for a long time inside the pope's house, as internal dissidents who are very convinced of Rome's absurdities. Because we have not been anathematized, we imagine ourselves as producing some good and as avoiding greater evils. In terms of principles, the human conscience, which always operates through straight lines and through attitudes that might be deemed courageous, does not always accept or approve these compromises. *Nemo potest duobus dommisservire* [No one can serve two masters (Mt. 6:24; Lk. 16:13)]. Both our Lord and Saint Jerome have told us: *Incertis est nescire quod licet sibi* [The ignorant are unsure of what is lawful for them]. Today, due to the desires of the Catholic Church, there is no middle ground in this dilemma: You are either with Jesus Christ and the Gospel, or you are with the pope.

Decidedly opting for the beautiful path of Jesus Christ, the Philippine Church has responded to the imperatives of honest, educated and serious people today. Hence, the high consideration that it has obtained for its work. These noble longings for an unblemished Christianity are not unique to today or yesterday; they spring from the very dawn of our religion since, soon after its instituter, Jesus, disappeared, human beings already began to mystify it with excesses of zeal, ignorant faith, and utilitarian or dominating aims.

So many of the first heresies [of the Church] were nothing more than expressions of fidelity to the pure, primitive belief, and of its protests against novel human mystifications! At the same time, so many dogmas today, like the superiority of celibacy over marriage, were heresies in the past! Had anyone tried to institute St. Bernard's or St. Alphonse of Liguori's cult of Mary in the second century, or belief in the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the fourth century, they would

have been excreted as a heretic. Even papal infallibility was condemned in the tenth century!

As a result, Pharisees soon occupied the seat of Jesus—or, if you prefer, the seats of the apostles—just as they once sat in the seat of Moses. Even worse, the wicked Constantine, who became a faithless Christian for political reasons and who brought the Church out of the catacombs through a decree from his free, cultic background, found them sitting there and gave Christian priests access to the governance of the Empire. In their anti-Christian ambition, they took the bait, forgetting the words of Jesus Christ: “My kingdom is not of this world.” “The rulers of the Gentiles rule over them and have authority over them; let it not be so among you.”

Just as one abyss draws attention to other abysses, the participants in the Empire gave free rein to the Israelite prejudice that they had inherited from their Mosaicism from time immemorial, and the greatest calamity imaginable befell the Christian religion: The priesthood claimed for itself the repressive principle or faculty to persecute dissidents and unbelievers with afflictive penalties—either persecuting them themselves, or pointing out opponents to religion and to the priesthood as alleged criminals to the State and enemies of society. In this way, Christianity went from being the persecuted martyr, to being the persecutor and executioner, and we saw the birth of the inquisitorial spirit manifested in the bloody persecution of the philosopher Hypatia by Saint Cyril, and in the first legal execution of capital punishment, decreed in Spain—it had to be here!—by the cruel Itacio against an unfortunate heretic.

The [Roman] Church contradicted itself and blasphemed sweet Jesus, who never directly or indirectly advised or prescribed punishment of anyone and who never empowered his disciples to practice or encourage such persecution. The Church contradicted itself, teaching that faith is a free gift from God—which means that lack of grace implies no guilt or human responsibility. The Church itself affirms the goodness of the conscience and its convictions, which, with or without error, are for the good of the individual and thus is invincible and absolves all sin.

The Church attempts to evade this contradiction, saying: “Neither the State nor I judge the internal workings of consciences; we only judge their external effects in a believing society—and we possess a right to defend ourselves from heresy, which is a social disturbance!”

Aha! You declare the crucifixion of Christ to be legal, carried out according to the laws in force among the Jews and at the demands of their legitimate priests against a disturbing dissident of the people, both in the religious order and in the civil order. Like the Pharisees, you proclaim the theory that the innocent should die in the gallows, even those who are convinced of the justness of their dissidence, so that other people might not suffer. The principle of justice here is that the impunity of a thousand guilty people is worth more than the punishment of an innocent person.

Inspired by this immoral and anti-Christian criterion of iniquity, the friars of the Philippines persecuted the most virtuous priest, Father Burgos, who, according to a contemporary writer, cried out, "I am innocent!" *I, too, was Christ*. It is a miracle that they did not reply with bad theology: "You are not innocent of original sin, and that is enough to justify all torment and even the unjust death that you suffer." The Church employs such evasion when it finds itself cornered and having to justify why it has sacrificed so many lives with notorious injustice. "The pope's palace said, 'kill!' and the apostolic delegate repeated this to the pontifical persecutors of the Albigensians: "Kill all, good and bad, since God will recognize [and save] God's own in the next life!" Nero did not say this much, and the Roman Empire did not shed as much Christian blood in ten persecutions as the Christian Church did every half-century from the era of Constantine to the French Revolution.

Still, the Church alleges: "I do not recognize the possibility of an invincible error in the dogma I promulgate." Who are you, supporters of a religion larger than the world and more complicated than the labyrinth of Crete, full of gaps that cannot be filled in or bridged and of doubtful points that you have not been able to resolve, such that no one really knows whether you are materially a heretic? How can you claim to possess the impossibility of invincible error, which human experience continually denies? Isn't it true that the countries where you dominate most are filled with ignorant people who don't know what they believe or why, with no ability to distinguish the orthodox from the heretical? What would become of you if you did not possess that unconscious mass? A nation of theologians would quickly settle accounts with you, proving to you that you, knowingly and with full awareness of your errors, are heretics.

Where do your powers to go against natural law come from? You neither possess them, nor can you punish dissidence. You merely present texts that are twisted by arbitrary interpretations and arguments over words, which even the logic of a child could undo. Your only “reason” is force.

For this reason, enlightened humanity, Christian or not, could have tolerated the Church’s mystifications, “miracles,” the sacred industries it has created around superstitions, and even its onerous taxes—everything except the claim to impose faith by force in order to politically dominate the world. The universal human conscience accurately perceives the great iniquity and blasphemy of the Church against the Holy Spirit, which will not be forgiven in this world or in the next, the most anti-Christian and intolerable iniquity that results from an impious denial of divine Providence and the help that Christ promised the Church.

This is where your misfortunes arrive at the papacy, and your stubbornness in defending its repressive principles will kill you. To the modern world, all religious communions that maintain such claims are dead; all the reformers have rejected such false doctrines, which are the most disastrous and subversive of the social order known to humankind. The *nihil tam voluntarium quam religio* [nothing is as voluntary as religion], attributed by some to Tertullian and by others to St. Augustine, is indelibly engraved on the soul of the world: Woe to those who do not know this!

In general, human beings want nothing imposed by force. Nothing is more loved and universally esteemed in the spiritual order than Science, art, and, flowing from art, music. Bolster your propaganda with coercive means, dictate criminal laws against those who discuss these things, reject and distort them, and you will see them abhorred everywhere. “Jesus Christ and his religion and priesthood are hated, because they repress human passions.” The Catholic Church, alone detested, tells Catholics, “The world hates you, because you are not of the world,” and it believes itself to be the sole possessor of truth, according to its chorus leaders.

No, what is hated is the Christ and the Jewish God that you have manufactured to be as cruel as you are; and, of all Christian sects, none is more abhorred than the Catholic Church and the schismatic Russian Church, because they employ coercion by force. Roman Catholicism, in particular, bears the stigma of its longing for temporal

domination, crowning as king its chief, Jesus Christ, who did not desire to be a king. As a sovereign, the Church hates all others, but its ambition forces it to ally itself with the greatest of despots, knowing that it will readily betray them if the opportunity arises. The Catholic papist is, by nature, a person *without a homeland*, the champion of a dethroned king and an eternal pretender to the lost crown, who pretends to reign over other kings, always believing that the State is an enemy and a thief of the Church, always looking backward and hoping to revive that which has died, and who, despite believing in God and in Jesus Christ, desires the persecution of those who do not think like the pope. When he is not allowed to hoard the wealth of others, the Catholic priest says he is persecuted and detained, and that he is not allowed to persecute anyone.

There is, then, no Christian so unique as the papist—who should be rejected as dangerous, devious and backed into a corner, as unruly and intolerant, and as completely lacking any notion of charity and faith. The papist is looked upon poorly because the papist does not belong to Christ. Modern societies practice tolerance and profess respect for all beliefs, and none believes the hateful Roman Catholic claim that this is “impossible.” Such a prevention is not what Jesus indicated when he spoke of the world’s hatred of his disciples; if it were, it would not be felt by fervent Christians and by Catholic priests alike.

It comes from the eternal and irreducible antithesis between the Catholic Church and liberalism, with its modern law, as well as the undying rivalry, even if sometimes hidden, between the State and the Roman theocracy.

Let us agree that the Church possesses a logic, not with respect to the Gospel, but with respect to its interest in sustaining such exorbitant claims. If the Church had kept Christ’s inheritance clean and intact, without Jewish and pagan imperialist “yeast,” it would have little to fear from dissidence; instead, the Church has founded almost all of its power on its only objective—gold and earthly values—and it thus needed to resort to bastardized doctrines, which human and Christian reason must logically reject. Without force, the Church would neither have prevailed, nor would it exist today. This is the secret of the Church’s life. Without the Inquisition, Roman Catholicism would have perished already; through the Inquisition, whose acquired force still works, Catholicism in Spain, though it

barely possesses faith in God, retains its arrogance, moreso than in any other nation. How unfortunate that this nation, unique and alone in the world, cursed and despised by all free and cultured peoples, can exclaim with Jeremiah: *Oh vos omnes, qui transitis, attendite et videte si est sorrow sicut dolor meus!* [You, on the road, pause to consider if there is pain like mine (Lam. 1:12)].

The Philippines well knows this pain. On its back, the native has suffered, treated like a beast by the incredulous and corrupt friar and the inquisitorial whip of the pope, which impose the inquisitors' vague and superstitious faith like a beating with a cane palm. Threatened with sticks, natives were robbed of their money, their property, the virtue of their women, their honor, freedom and culture. They have been removed from communication with the world, separated from the Spanish language—the most widespread on the planet. This is their condition to the present day, and when they attempt to simply breathe and not rebel, the implacable Church still points out to the Viceroys or Generals the victims who should be sacrificed. Oh redeeming and precious blood of Gómez, Zamora, Burgos and saint Rizal, the last martyr! You have watered the earth, so that the seed of freedom might bear fruit. You have given life to the Philippine Church!

The [Filipino] clergy were constantly slandered by the friars. Everything was denied to them and to the people of their race: their intellectual capacity, their heart, their feelings, their loyalty, and even their memory! This was necessary to prove to the world that only the Spanish friar was worthy of ecclesiastical hegemony in the archipelago. The indigenous clergy were poorly educated, and then their own educators declared them inept. Even so, the poor, long-suffering clergy, poorly taught in disastrous seminaries and slapped and flogged before the faithful by friar priests, whose reputation for ignorance was widespread in Europe, provided the Church 83 priests skilled in writing in the diocese of Manila, 32 in Vigan, 45 in Cebu, 47 in Jaro, and 23 in Nueva Cáceres. From their number—257 who are known, not counting those who are not cited in current books—came 15 recognized notables and 12 who now wear miters.

For centuries, the Philippine Catholic communion constituted an eloquent example of the iniquitous designs of the papacy and its selfish criteria for churches and nations, all of them, like the Philippines, administered by friars, who kept the people isolated in

their towns, speaking their own languages, and holding hostility toward others, and who enslaved the indigenous, secular clergy until finally they could no longer be suppressed by the monastic Church.

Here is the Roman ideal: Wherever particularist Romanism prevails, it abhors great nations, it promotes separatism and local languages or dialects, and it seeks to extinguish widespread languages that are easy vehicles of knowledge and human solidarity. From this tenor comes the ridiculous Jesuit invention of the “small homeland,” a miserable caricature of patriotic sentiment. The Papacy encourages bitterness through so-called “regionalism”: among the Celts in France, among the Irish in England, trying to replace French with local and very limited Flemish in Belgium, and between the Catalans and the Basques in Spain. By limiting spoken language to a very narrow field, they ensure that people are more likely to be rude, incapable of philosophy, and resistant to the subtleties of a more profound spirituality. The Basque region of Spain, for instance, lacks words to name the abstract, spiritual nature of God. In such languages, it is impossible to write about mathematics, metaphysics, astronomy, transcendental ethics, or law.

The Church has said, “Those poor people who can’t read St. Augustine or St. Thomas or St. Teresa!”

This is of no consequence, we say. The “catechism” and the “devotional” of Science are enough for the clergy. In their preaching, they will transmit the spirit of those authors, even if they cannot read them, because the works of these authors, like those of Renan and Strauss, are not yet translated into their dialects.

Believe me, Most Reverend Lord, most respectable Prelates, venerable Priests, enlightened Faithful of the Philippine Church: The friars do the same in the Basque and Catalonia provinces of Spain, where they dominate, teaching people to hate Spain and the Castilian language, quickly enslaving the secular clergy and making priests of color moan under the monastic beatings they receive.

In God’s great designs, God has allowed the Filipino people to play the sad but beneficial role for humanity of a living example of people who can be totally tamed by the pope and by his ideas for all the peoples of the world. You are already free. *Laqueus contritus est, et nos liberati sumus* [The snare was broken, and we have escaped (Ps. 124:7)], you can say, thanks to your efforts, which have been blessed by God. Persevere, and do not forget the world from which you came,

so that thinkers and politicians might warn the nations: "Beware the Roman Catholic leprosy! Don't become like the Filipinos or the Paraguayans!"

The Philippines now sees the test of its emancipation: eight years of autonomy resulted in independence as a Republic, but if the friars prevail with their regressive ideals, the Filipino people will be lost again, this time under the United States. They will become another Paraguay, a fiefdom of the friar and the shame of the world. In his book, *The Future of Catholic Peoples*, Professor M. Lavelaye of the University of Brussels predicts this fate of death. Life will be enjoyed by those who emancipate themselves from the papacy, the great killer of peoples. All nations testify to this, the living as well as the dead who constantly cry out from their tomb, struggling in impotence like the ill against an invincible nightmare.

The divine oracle has said, "By their fruits you will know them." What can be produced by those who speak of God, but who do not act like God? The papacy resembles a sect that sold itself as the successor and propagandist of Plato, but that does not read his books to the people except in Greek and only in bits, according to its interpreted impulses and interests. The Roman Church has broken with the Gospel and has left the Christian milieu, and God has allowed this as a great test.

Pius X recently desired to compile a popular and affordable edition of the Gospels, with brief notes, similar to the old work in French by Father Petite. The Biblical Society of St. Jerome assisted this work, publishing and disseminating a million copies among the Italian people, just as the pope had wished. "Let them know the divine Word," he said. And when they were introduced to the Word of God, they began to leave Catholicism. The priests, frightened by the words of their parishioners, went to their bishops, who in turn went to Pius X. *Domine, salva nos: perimus* [Lord, save us! We are about to perish! (Mt. 8:25)]. The people asked, "Where, Lord, do the Gospels speak of friars, vows, the inquisition, nuns, indulgences, the rosary or tithes?" Italy was on the verge of leaving Catholicism, had it continued to read the Gospel that the pope gave it!

The story doesn't end there: Certain men purchased two- or three-hundred thousand copies—and it came to light that they were Protestant pastors, and that edition made good fare for their faithful! The work had to be removed because it demonstrated the frightening



dilemma between Jesus and the pope, between the Gospel and Catholicism.

Like the choice of Jesus by Mary, the sister of Lazarus, *the Philippine Church can boast of having chosen the best part*. It has trod the path of so many other Churches, which, in a moment of clarity, asked themselves: In order to follow Jesus Christ, must we be burdened with overwhelming political absolutism, hatred of the present, or nostalgia for the past? Must we love tyranny and oppression and fight for temporal power? Must we have an aversion for State and country? Must we make enemies of those who do not think like us? Must we be instruments of the persecution perpetrated by clergy, who impose the faith through force? Must we live governed morally and politically by proud, ungrateful, mean and insatiably greedy foreigners, who seek only their own interests? Must we believe miracles and childish superstitions? Must we pay onerous taxes to the Church and purchase holy things at the price of tariffs? Do we really have to be Jews, oppressed by the immense burden of the beliefs and practices of Pharisees who have forgotten that mercy and justice are the essentials of religions?

The Jewish burden is heavy, but Jesus' burden is light. Parents who demand too much from their children, and princes who impose on people extensive, labyrinthine legislation that is difficult to fulfill can only expect immorality from their subjects. We can't do everything, and so we become accustomed to living in a constant tension with an intricate and demanding law. For this reason, the pope's people are less moral—living under the burden of complicated religious legislation, where months are required merely to learn the rules of fasting—and they are less observant than Evangelicals, whose rules are as simple as their worship.

No, enough of Judaism. Faith by force is a Jewish principle. All religions that have adopted this have died or fallen into barbarism, like Mohammed's Islam and the Greco-Russian schism. That principle is the great Catholic error. If the Roman Church were, as it says, "infallible," it would not commit such sin, and the world would belong to it. Instead, it walled itself into its own castle and lost in the fourth century, when it exaggerated Christ's divinity, and a great part of the world became Arian. It lost again in the fifth century, when it transformed the Virgin Mary into a goddess, imposing such beliefs by force and always with the approval of the Empire. It lost the

Nestorians, from whom came the religion of Islam, a sect that snatched away a large part of civilization, and for which we have no indication of return. In the ninth century, the Greek Schism took the East. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Protestantism took more than half of Europe from the Church. The French Revolution did not take entire towns from the Church, but it did decimate them and open the door through which all dissidents, now free of coercion, continue to walk.

And the multitudes in all nations who have been conquered by rationalism and skepticism? They are innumerable, and, according to statistics, the numbers of Catholics are now nothing more than illusory data, with so many millions here and so many millions there. Such numbers are written, but not real. When it suits the Church, the Church pretends to believe such numbers, exclaiming, "We are the majority! Hand over to us the government and the ability to repress others!" But at times, in the same book or newspaper in which it affirms such numbers, it also conveniently cries that it is persecuted, robbed, hated, detained or coerced. If you are the majority or are the "best," how can a tiny minority oppress you?

In the terrible hour foreseen by David, the charge of Eternal Justice against the papacy will be great: *Cum accepero tempus, ego justitias judicabo* [At the moment I choose, I will judge with all righteousness (Ps. 75:2)]. I gave you my truth, and you made it hateful through your ambitions and cruel greed. What has become of the souls I entrusted to you? Have you realized the good that was your duty? Give me an account of all the blood and tears you shed—and don't talk to me about Satan or about congenital human evil, to which you very comfortably attribute the fruit of your selfishness. Sin is a result of the law, and you have multiplied "sinners" through so many canonical inventions, which suited you as you intimidated the people and made them believe that they are unworthy of anything but your harshness, which you dispensed to them in return for money. Just as I have announced, I have arranged the transfer of my vineyard, not all at once, but parcel by parcel, from your hands, to those of less inept workers in the vineyard. Each defection has been a fulfillment of my prophecy.

Let us say it, Most Reverend Lord, with our hands over our hearts: *No one has emptied themselves more of that Jewish "yeast," of the great error that everyone already repudiates, than the Philippine Church, which has completely broken with everything Jewish. I have learned of this*

emancipation second-hand. I am unspeakably surprised by your 1908 *Calendar*, by the modern gospel of your *Divine Office*, and by the first notebooks of your *Philippine Bible*, such that I am less surprised by your present *Catechism*. It is what I expected it to be: the *greatest* step forward that has been taken by any Christian fellowship.

Without exaggeration, it can be said that your Church has done what other members of the Christian tree would not dare to do – or would not even think of, since they insist that the Bible is the revealed Word of God, and they all preserve a large dose of Judaism.

The Philippine Church's concept of revelation is infinitely broader, and Science is established as an essential part of it. All that is abominable about the Jews, namely their absorbing and persecuting theocratism, has fed the furious anticlericalism of today. As Augusto Dive has said about the clergy of other religions, if we managed to form nations again, non-Jews would be treated worse than Christians, Muslims or anti-Semites of all castes, since anti-Semitism is not a recent phenomenon; it predates Christ and spawns all dark errors that fail to recognize in the priesthood the incapacity for temporal government, in view of the evils caused by any theocracy that governs – that perennial Semitic aspiration, expressed by the exalted John the Evangelist in his Apocalypse, who said: *Sacerdotes regnabimus super terram* [The priests will reign over the earth (Rev. 5:10)]. The Philippine Church has thrown overboard the perfidious spirit of theological sophistry; all ostentatious, ruthless and hypocritical Pharisaism; the fear of Science; the hatred of the flesh and of Nature; as well as the cult of blood, the need for pain, and the Israelite impurities that have always distinguished fervent Christians.

Like all religious works, the Hebrew Bible, the book of tyrants and of impostor priests, that canonized the vengeful rancor and massacres that sacrificed the innocent, was a compilation of the racial prejudices possessed by humans at the time of its creation. Time passes, and Science, which never stops, rectifies religious thought, telling us that Joshua could not stop the sun [Jos. 10:12-13]; and still a fear of knowledge results in theological conflict. Then appear the copy errors, the self-interested interpolations, and the equally self-interested interpretations by priests – and religious chaos is released.

A French bishop has already said: "In the case of conflict between *the word* of God (the Bible, according to him) and Science or Nature, which is *the work* of God, believe the latter, because it admits no errors,

interpolations or interpretation.” That is very true. Christian churches have insisted on undervaluing the Earth, whisking the human being toward a kingdom of God outside this world, despite the fact that Jesus preached the opposite: *Your kingdom come!* They are obstinate in their belief that we love others only in God, such that Christianity has turned out to love God in other beings. For them, the human being is a means to the glory of God, the only purpose of the Universe. No, the human being is an end. Jesus came into the world for us, and not the other way around, as falsified beliefs maintain.

*Ergo erravimus* [So we went astray (Is. 53:6)]. Christianity does not desire that Jesus be an inexplicable, hieratic work; it desires a human Jesus, as defined by modern Catholics: an impulse for the good of the human person with respect to the human person and Nature. Protestants can say what they will, but *operibus credite, non verbis; fides sine operibus mortua est* [Express your faith in deeds, not words; faith, without works, is dead (James 2:26)]. Experience has shown that faithless people can be honest, and that “faithful” people can be evil. Exceeding them in rites and dogmas, Catholics show greater criminality than Protestants; *ergo* [therefore] those dogmas and those excessive rites cannot be the only means of justifying them: Morality is achieved in greater proportion without these. Argument is endless, which is why we don’t ask in the modern world what a person believes; instead we see how that person acts – and that is how God will judge us, too.

In this *Catechism*, the Philippine Church affirms that God never appeared or spoke to human beings: In this way, the Bible is rightly suppressed, since, if God did indeed appear to, speak to and command Moses, by virtue of God’s eternal truth, such words, once understood by capable persons, could not be doubted or disputed as other “truths” are. They would need to be accepted, like well-known scientific truths, which only the ignorant and mad can dissent from or deny. That is the nature of the one truth. For this very reason, there is no “truth” that stands against truth.

Based on this principle, the list of doctrines in this *Catechism* unfolds simply and emphatically. The human being, it says, began in an inferior state and progressed. The idea of God came to us through the great phenomena of Nature. As Horace said, *Cælo tonante, credimus Jovem regnare* [When the heavens thunder, we believe that Jupiter reigns]. Polytheistic religions emerged, and our ideas of God

progressed parallel with human knowledge. Likewise, the utopic Indian idea of the trinity passed to Greece and then, through the Gnostics, to Christianity.

Rather than suggest that knowledge of the soul is self-evident, this *Catechism* allows Science to speak. It recognizes the so-called mysteries of the Universe, which are considered resolved by religious-philosophical people with their prejudices. This *Catechism* opens the doors of religion, obstinately closed by Catholicism, to all progress. It repudiates all ancient religious cosmologies, and it does not specify the moment of the appearance of the human person on the planet, since Science has not yet indicated this. Authority is not given to Moses, the know-it-all St. Augustine, or other holy Fathers, but to Charles Darwin, Ernst Haeckel, John Herschel, and other sages whose authority is recognized. That which Science considers a myth is a myth for the Philippine Church: including angels, hell, paradise, demons, limbo, original sin, and the end of the world. It affirms the existence of interpolations in the Gospel, and it denies all miracles. Enough of the eternal prejudice that the Bible told the truth about God above all!

But can we reject all this and still have something that remains of Christianity? Yes, and not “something,” but everything: All of Jesus’ pure Christianity remains intact. Jesus said it very clearly: “Love God, and love your neighbor as yourself.” These words summarize his entire work. They summarize the Decalogue—the authentic Decalogue (and not the one that has been falsified by the Church), which summarized natural religion in this eternal and irrefutable precept: *Bonum est faciendum; malum est fugiendum; quod tibi non vis, alteri ne feceris* [Do good, avoid evil; do not do to others what you do not want done to you].

Such translucent dogmatics make possible a liturgy that is harmonic, simple, suggestive, democratic and prayed in understood languages, a liturgy that fills the moat that previously separated the priest from the believing people in an endless, labyrinthine and indecipherable Catholic worship in a dead language. Without a doubt, the Philippine Church has been inspired by this rational principle: All humans rites intended for human sanctification are merely superfluous ritual, if not understood by the faithful. Roman Catholicism is informed by the opposite principle: The human being is made for the rite, and both are for the glory of God (a concept that

is never defined or definable), which is absurd, since the classic error of the papacy is to assume that the human being is a means, not an end.

I repeat that there has never been a more radical Christian advance in our days during the formation of a new Church. I confess that when I first learned about it in a vague way, I was assailed by doubts about its success. I thought its transition too abrupt. No one has ever covered so much distance at such a speed. Without judgment against communities that have proceeded more slowly, neither I nor any other experienced canonist would advise such a thing.

When such emancipation from Rome is verified, one acts within a thousand imposed, historical, ethnic or local circumstances. England arrived at Protestantism through a national Church. Today, the admirable Mariavites of Poland continue to make advances, leaving Protestantism far behind, retaining all of Catholicism, even Latin, and suppressing nothing but obedience to the pope. All such people, whether they are Protestants, Old Catholics, Free Catholics, Modernists, Mariavites, etc., do this progressive and civilizing work for one elementary reason: They know that the papacy is the great enemy of all humanity, and to shake its yoke is to enter into life. All other things, including new rites and dogmatic interpretations and modifications, come over time.

My fellow Priests, Father Segismundo Pey Ordeix and Father José Pérez Martínón (may he rest in peace), as well as Misters Sala and Juste from Barcelona, all of us who work here in Spain against papal tyranny would content ourselves with a reform like that of the Mariavites. The secular clergy here, as well as many bishops and religious, detest Rome and the papacy *in corde, toto corde* [in their hearts and with all their hearts]. Here, Father Pey Ordeix has just discovered in the national archives public proof that St. Ignatius of Loyola was a fraudulent charlatan, burned in effigy in Alcalá as an enlightened fugitive heretic, and that the famous anagram of the Society of Jesus (JHS) was used by his colleagues, who were heretics. All the clergy and all the friars have relished in this discovery, although it was concealed by some, for the Jesuits and agents of Rome have inspired such enemies.

Here the pope has no other support than the force of bayonets, and still the gentlest of reforms would stumble here in light of the many obstacles that persist so long as the pope is not defeated. You can

imagine my astonishment upon seeing the triumph and constitution of the Philippine Independent Church.

I do not know that beautiful country, nor do I know of its sincere, long-suffering and industrious people beyond what I have read in books and heard from the mouths of Spaniards who have come from there. Learning of that victory, my heart was filled with joy, and I exclaim with Segismundo Calderón, "Praise God that this is possible!" By our faith in Jesus, all of us who are separated from Rome constitute parts of the true Christian Church. Romanism will declare us Arians, Nestorians, Albigensians, Hussites, Protestants, Rationalists and Liberals – all sorts of heresies. Yes, we participate in all those protests against theocratic innovation, and we say that the papacy, rather than preside over Catholicism as the most religious of all religions, to cite the words of Renan, instead encompasses the sum of all errors, aberrations and impostures in the world that have been varnished with religion. The Romanist is, in effect, a Jew, an Essene, a Gnostic, a Brahman, a Syrian, a Hellenic pagan, a Montanist, a Muslim, a Machiavellian, an anthropomorphist, an idolater, a Molinist, and a profoundly authoritarian anarchist: all of which is wrapped up in the two monstrosities of an ungodly divorce from Christ and the worship of human egoism. After her visit to Rome, Saint Bridget summarized, "The pope is worse than Satan, and in his court there is no god except money." Dante similarly said, *Fatto v'avete dio d' oro e d' argento* [You have made a god of gold and silver].

Most Reverend Supreme Bishop, venerable Prelates, Priests, Deaconesses, Deacons and all the Faithful of the Philippine Independent Church, may God – the true God – bless this work and its illustrious and self-sacrificing authors. We praise the enlightened martyrs of your Church, and we show our deepest respect to our women collaborators. From my soul, I shout "Hosanna!" across the seas to all of you and to all in your Church, asking your blessing and that you keep me always in your prayers.

From your very ardent admirer and affectionate friend,

Father José Ferrándiz

Madrid

May 25, 1912

**Catechism  
of the  
Philippine Independent Church**

by the Most Eminent  
Gregorio Aglípay y Labayan,  
Supreme Bishop of the Same

*Approved by the Supreme Council of Bishops*

**Invocation before Studying**

Oh, Supreme Intelligence, splendid beacon of the Universe! With all the fervor of our souls, we beg you to lend us a ray of your uncreated light, so that, amid our journey along the path of Science, we may know the wonders of your supreme power, glimpse your exalted nature, and learn the virtues so necessary for our dignity and well-being.

Holy things must be treated in a holy way. Begin, O my God, by sanctifying our spirit and our intelligence, so that we may be fit to make this most revered study.

Father, be our help. In your august Name. Amen.

**Prayer upon Waking**

My God, I thank you for having brought me to a new day and for your continued gifts. In gratitude, I offer you my humble heart: Sanctify it, so that it may be more worthy of you, guide me along your paths of virtue and charity, never allowing me to deviate from them. Lift me when I fall, oh Father, and forgive my many sins. Make me good and worthy of your inexhaustible mercies. In your infinite love, as the Father of all, be the generous provider for our needs, our safeguard in times of trouble, and the compassionate doctor of our infirmities. Amen.



### Prayer before Going to Bed

Thank you, my God, for this bed that you provide me after the fatigues of the day. I truly thank you for the favors you have bestowed on me, just as I bless your inflexible justice that has punished, albeit paternally, my sins. Now, oh Father, sanctify me with the memory of death, which stops us all. This bed is the image of my tomb, and I do not know if my lying down tonight will be definitive. My God, how I have wasted my days! From now on, I firmly resolve to do good for the rest of my life, dedicating it to things useful to me and others. Forgive, O Father, my many sins, and do not allow me to be lost forever. Grant me more new and happy days, that I might bless your sweet Name until I expire. Amen.

### The "Our Father" Explained

Our Father, you who have the immensity of the Universe as your heaven and throne, let us sanctify your majestic Name, not with words, but with our good deeds. May your reign of love, justice, virtue and wellbeing come to us. Make us fulfill your holy will, just as you wish for our own good. Make us worthy of the sustenance we need every day. Forgive us our sins, as you command us to forgive all those who are indebted to us. Do not let us fall into the temptations of evil, but free us from it. Amen.

### The Philippine Independent Church

**What is the Church?** It is the assembly of Christians, as opposed to the synagogue or meeting of the Jews, from which Christianity came.

**What is Philippine Independent Church?** It is the association of new people educated in the teachings of Jesus, who seek God through the path of free Sciences, and who worship God in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:23).

**What does it mean to be a new person?** According to St. Paul, the new person abandons the errors of ancient religions and puts on justice, holiness and truth (Eph. 4:22-25).

**Thinking without prejudice, where can relative truth be found?**  
In the free Sciences.

**What do you understand by “free Sciences”?** Sciences that are freely investigated and not hindered or obscured by dogmatisms that impede their development.

**What is worship in spirit and in truth?** That we worship God through good feelings and humanitarian works. You cannot say that you adore or love God if you do not fulfill God’s commandments of virtue and charity, according to the divine Master (Jn. 15:10). We must adorn our souls with noble sentiments and preserve them from all evil. Thus, God is worshiped in spirit and in truth.

**Why is this Church called Philippine?** Because it was established in the Philippines and by Filipinos, but it does not exclude anyone; instead, it embraces and extends to all.

**Why is it called independent?** Because it is independent of all foreign superiority.

## Religion

**Where does the word “religion” come from?** According to Cicero, “religion” comes from *relégere*, to reread, to meditate, and, according to others, from *religatio*, a “bond” between God and humanity.

**How is religion understood now?** As the worship that is rendered to the Supreme Creator.

**What should that worship consist of?** It is worship in spirit and truth, fulfilling the commandments of God imprinted on our very conscience.

**What is the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas on religion?** He elevated religion to a moral virtue, and Romanist theologians stuck with this definition: “Religion is a moral virtue, by which God is worshiped as the first principle of all things” (Charmes, *Dogmatic Theology*).

**What is Immanuel Kant’s doctrine of religion?** According to this great German philosopher, “Religion is morality. It is the recognition of our duties as God’s orders, imprinted on our own conscience. Any worship that consists of immoral acts is itself superstition.”

**What about Johann Gottlieb Fichte’s doctrine of religion?** According to this immediate successor of Kant, “Religion is science, which gives us a clear vision of ourselves and answers the highest questions, thus placing us in full harmony with ourselves and

sanctifying the soul." Fichte dispensed with the true object of religion, which is God, but he was also correct in saying that religion is Science.

**How does the Philippine Church define religion?** Religion is the Science that, through rationalist investigations, studies the still unknown nature of God and our intimate relations of kinship with and dependency on God, rendering God a worship of lofty sentiments and good works, so that by beautifying our souls, we might become worthy of our mysterious Father.

### **The Origin of the Idea of God**

**Is it true that God first appeared to humankind to teach us God's will and how God had created us?** We cannot believe this for many compelling reasons: (1) Because inherently the tales of God appearing in human form are very innocent and implausible; (2) Because it is not possible to enclose the infinite greatness of God in the smallness of the human being; (3) Because, if it were true that God has ever appeared to humans to guide them, with greater reason God would appear to us now that many wise people have thousands of adherents who deny God's existence; according to Ecclesiastes 1:10, what happens today also occurred in past ages; (4) Because it has been fully proven that only the unbalanced see visions; (5) Because the general rule that we see in Nature is that God has endowed the person with faculties and progressive elements, so that, through our study and activity, we gradually discover unknown things. The kingdom or the truth of God, as Jesus said, begins as small as the mustard seed and wonderfully develops into a tree where the birds of the sky nest, without the knowledge of human beings (Mk. 4:26-32). This is how all the marvelous works of the Maker begin and develop, and not as claimed in the children's stories of ancient people.

**At its beginning, was the human being already civilized, or was it in a savage state?** The human person began as a completely naked savage, as Genesis 2:23 attests.

**What have sages deduced from this with respect to the study of religion?** That the origins of religion are found in the embryonic theogony expressed by savages.

**According to these studies, where did the first idea of God come from, since you say that God never appeared to the human person, at least in human form, as is claimed in ancient religions?** The first

idea of religion or belief in supernatural beings was born from the fear of natural phenomena, whose causes were initially unknown by primitive human beings.

**Explain.** The first human beings, not understanding the causes of thunder, volcanoes, earthquakes or hurricanes, or of the ravages caused by beasts, diseases or death, entertained the idea that two “people” exist within every individual: one that dies, and another, which survives death, is a shadow that follows us and appears in the mirror of the waters. From this came the belief that the human being has another self or soul. From the ancient Sanskrit root *anitu* or the Malay root *ani*, originated the Malay *api-ani*, the Tagalog *anito* and *anino*, the Ilocano *aniwaas* and *aniniwan*, and the Latin *anima*, all of which mean “shadow” and “soul” at the same time.

**What did primitive human beings—and even less-educated persons today—believe about that shadow?** They assumed that the soul, no longer attached to the body, remained on earth after death, except that it only rarely became visible. To these almost-always invisible souls, they attributed—and still attribute—all inexplicable phenomena.

**What was the first god that human beings believed in?** It was the very human being itself. The Bible participates in the puerile belief that God takes on human form (Gen. 1:27). At first it was assumed that, in order to build the “roof” of the sky, human beings must have been gigantic, and Genesis 6:4 participates in this childish belief. The Ilocanos say that the first human being, Angngaló,<sup>1</sup> was a great giant who dug the seas and put in place the roof of the sky. It was believed that the souls of the first human beings thundered, produced lightning, blew in the wind, and moved the foundations of the earth with tremors, etc.

**What did primitive human beings believe about those who were devoured by wild beasts?** That their souls remained or incarnated in the same beasts, and so they deified alligators, large snakes like *sawá*, lions, elephants, oxen, etc.

**And of the souls of those who drowned?** They remained in the water and became the gods of the waters.

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<sup>1</sup> *Angngaló* seems to mean *ngalog*, the heart of the sweet cane, a cutting used in planting.

**And of the souls of those who were buried under houses?** They remained there as gods of the homes.

**And the souls of those who were buried in the shade of trees?** They became the deities of the trees, while those who were buried in the open fields became gods of those places.

**And the victims of lightning?** They became the divinities of the sky, in union with the souls of certain deceased fishermen who sail their aerial ships.

**Where did the belief in God and the devil arise?** The souls of relatives, friends, compatriots and of good people in general were considered saints or good gods, while the souls of enemies were blamed for harming the living through illnesses and misfortunes. In this way, the gods were divided into good and bad: those who were good and protective of their own, and others who were bad. The Bible turned the Ekronite god Beelzebub into the devil, surrounding him with the *démons*, the gods of the Greek who were much more civilized than the poor Jews who wrote the Bible. This same phenomenon has happened all over the world. In the Philippines the friars and Jesuits, despite innocently assuring that the *anitos*, the Filipino gods, could work incredible miracles, labeled them demons—and we believed them and came to despise our *anitos*, which were nothing more than the venerable souls of our holy grandparents, who were also children of God, who would never make such hateful distinctions or preferences. The real demons are those foreign tricksters who taught us such intolerable errors.

**Did religion begin with polytheism or monotheism?** From the above, we see how the belief in gods or supernatural beings originated with the fate of the living. Many people died, so we believed in many gods, and even Genesis begins by speaking of the gods, *Elohim*, in the plural, rather than of a single God, *Eloha*, in the singular.

**Explain so-called euhemerism.** When savage, isolated human beings began to gather in groups and tribes, they chose as chiefs or rulers those who were distinguished by their intelligence and courage. Naturally, after death, the ruler continued to rule over souls. From this came the idea of a God superior to all other gods. The word “God,” *Tieos* in Indo-European languages, *Theos* in Greek, etc., comes from the Chinese root *Ti*, which means nothing more than “sovereign.” Since ancient times, euhemerism advances that the first

gods recorded in history, like Mithras, Zeus or Jupiter, Osiris, Horus, Belo, Brahma, Zoroaster, Tien, etc., originated as human rulers.

**How did Sabianism or worship of the stars originate?** The court singers began comparing their rulers to the brightest stars, just as the Bible compares Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, to the morning star (Is. 14:12); from there came the belief that the souls of rulers became the sun or Sirius, the brightest star to the naked eye. The earliest recorded instances of religion among civilized peoples consist of sun worship. In Spanish, the word "God" (*Dios*) comes from the ancient Sanskrit root *Diw* (meaning "bright"). From this same root, we derive the *Dewa*, the ancient gods of India; the *Diwata*, the *anitos* of the Visayas; and *Diwa*, the *anito*, soul or intelligence of the Tagalogs.

**When and how did the belief in a Trinity of gods arise?** It arose almost at the same time as the deification of rulers: Because rulers have spouses and children, the queen and the prince had to be gods, along with the king. They became the "second-in-command" and intermediaries between the sovereign and his subjects, just as they were in life. The most ancient civilizations testify to this: The *trimurti* of India consisted of Brahma, his wife Sara-vadi, and his son Wishnu. The Egyptian trinity was comprised of Osiris, his wife Isis, and his son Horus. The Babylonian trinity was formed by Belo, his wife Semiramis, and his son Nino. And there are other examples.

**How did the idea of God progress?** The idea of God progressed with the marvelous advances of the sciences. With telescopes and other advances in astronomy, it was discovered that space is infinite and filled with immense stellar masses and cosmic matter that over time becomes nebulae, suns and planets, all endowed with a prodigious plan of universal movement. It was recognized that, however immense the suns or stars may be, there must be a Supreme Being, infinitely greater than them, who endows them with life and movement and who directs the entire Universe. Such an immense God, who fills all infinite space, cannot be enclosed in a sun, or in one or several solar systems. Instead, God is found in the limitless cosmos. It is even more impossible to imagine God being enclosed in a human being, beast, tree or mountain. For this reason, the great prophet Moses forbade fashioning images of God in the likeness of anything in heaven, on earth, or in the waters (Ex. 20:4).

**Can the idea of God be the pure invention of human fantasy?** No; but it is the most necessary thing that we can conceive, the existence of which was first divined through human instinct, and then improved and confirmed through continual observations, through mature reason, and through the progress of admirable Science. God is just as real and self-evident as the Universe, which is God's work. Only God's supreme power and wisdom could have created this, and only God's sweet and ineffable paternal love can preserve it. Even the most atheist scientists who know the secondary causes through their study and analysis know and confess that there is some unknowable primary cause toward which all the phenomena of life converge: That mysterious, primary cause is what we call God.

### The Idea of Divinity

**What do you understand by "God"?** We understand God to be that intelligent, supreme and mysterious Power that creates, gives life, directs, moves and preserves all beings: God is the soul of the Universe, the beginning of all life and all universal movement.

**Is it not possible that, as atheists claim, the Supreme Agent is "pure chance or spontaneous Nature"?** No; because chance, like all spontaneous things, is blind, while the Universe, even in its smallest details, operates according to uniform laws through which a vast plan and purpose are evident, all conceived and executed with supreme wisdom, which evidences the existence of an intelligence that directs everything. That superior intelligence that so wisely produces and directs all beings and natural phenomena is what we call God.

**What about those who claim that Nature possesses intelligence?** We respond that this same intelligence is what we understand by Divinity.

**Isn't it possible that the phenomena you attribute to God are simply the natural properties of each being?** No; because the Universe very clearly evidences a plan that no one can deny. It is thus necessary to believe that a universal Intelligence has coordinated all things under a single plan. Without such an Intelligence, there would be a frightful anarchy in the Universe, instead of the admirable harmony that we see.

**Is God identical with Nature itself or the Universe?** No; God is the universal Force, the Supreme Agent, while Nature is the Law of God imprinted in the Universe. God is the Agent, Nature is the Word or Law, and the Universe or Matter is the Object. God is perfect, while the Universe is still on the way to perfection.

**What is the nature of God?** Science has not yet discovered it, but it supposes that God is the energy, power and life of all that exists.

**Is God pure spirit?** It is proven that there is no force without matter, and no matter without force. A pure spirit, completely detached from matter, cannot act without matter. Thus, even though God still seems invisible, God cannot lack a certain body, however subtle and impalpable, like that of the ether or of a gas, as Ernst Haeckel ironically states. In any case, this would be more believable than biblical accounts of God as wind or as a human person who ate with Abraham, or who walked, got angry, cursed, and fought hand-in-hand with Jacob (Gen. 3:8, 3:28 & 3:31).

**Is it possible that God is manifested in the soul or intelligence, in the ether or cosmic matter, in electrons<sup>2</sup> or electricity, in gases, magnetism, universal attraction, heat and all invisible forces?** The nature of matter, force and ether are still unknown. We know only that heat, light, sound and electricity are produced by movement, and we believe that God is the principle of universal movement and all life. Attraction is a property of material bodies, but someone must have endowed these material bodies with the property of attraction. We call that "someone" God. Thus, God is the first cause, the beginning of all things, which the wise have not yet come to discover in their investigations, but which will likely come to light with the continuous progress of the Sciences.

**Why do you say that God is like the ether?** Because the ether, whose existence is proven by the phenomena of electricity, optics (or light) and attraction, is the one that best represents the idea we have of God. The nature of ether is still unknown, but we attribute light, radiant heat, electricity, magnetism, etc. to it. Nearly unfathomable, ether possesses thirteen trillionths the density of atmospheric air, and its weight is calculated at 250 pounds for a volume equivalent to our earth. Ether is presumed to be the original cosmic matter, filling all

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<sup>2</sup> According to modern chemistry, the atom, which not long ago was considered to be a simple body, is divided into electrons or electric sub-atoms.



infinite space – except that which is occupied by ponderable mass or matter. It fills the gaps between atoms, and, according to the pyknotic theory, the ether, by continuous condensation, successively passes through such states as gaseous, liquid, liquid-solid (in living plasma, which could represent the appearance of animal life) and solid. Some suggest that ether would not be capable of producing individual psychic life; the denial of this is uncertain, since the true nature of ether is still unknown.

**Is it not also possible that we already see God, without knowing God, in those things that we consider to be God’s works?** It doesn’t seem so to us. These works, though perfectible, are not yet perfect, while the Maker must be perfect, since God’s greatness, wisdom and goodness are manifested in God’s works, and we presume that God has been the most perfect possible thing since the beginning. We do not yet see God, but we perceive God’s existence, power and wisdom to be self-evident in God’s marvelous works. We hear God’s most holy voice in the depths of our conscience, and we experience the sweetness of God’s loving and diligent parenthood in the providential satisfaction of our daily needs.

**Is God omnipotent?** Perhaps, though we cannot assure this with certainty. We know that God is extremely powerful and above all things, but we have no proof that God can do the impossible on God’s own – for instance, that God could contradict the laws that God has dictated for the Universe, or that God could sin, which is something that God forbids.

**Is God eternal?** Certainly. We cannot imagine God as possessing a beginning or an end, just as it is impossible for us to conceive of the beginning or limits of time. Without God, the existence of the Universe is inconceivable, since God is its engine and indispensable life. God is the life of all that exists! Nor can we conceive of God without the Universe, which is God’s indispensable laboratory and place. Without the Universe, where would we place God?

**So, are the universe and matter also eternal?** Yes; it is necessary that matter be eternal, since it is the indispensable body and material of God for God’s prodigious activity and energy. The Maker gave original matter its many forms. We do not conceive of absolute creation, in the sense of creating something out of nothing, because nothing can be created out of nothing. The Bible itself does not say that God created the universe out of nothing, but rather that the

universe already existed in the form of chaos, and that the Maker was limited to ordering that chaos (Gen. 1:2). As supreme energy, God must also be of supreme activity. God does not exist in inaction, nor could God exist before or without matter, upon which God exercised God's fruitful activity.

**How big is God?** Just as we cannot imagine the limits of space, we cannot imagine the limits of the Divine. God is immense, infinite like space, and fills all things. Where there is space, God exists.

**How many gods are there?** There must be only one God, since we see only a single plan in the Universe, as well as the uniform laws that govern the movements of the stars and planets, and all animals, plants and minerals. We also see this uniformity in all organisms and their properties. If there were several gods, a frightful and impossible chaos would reign in the place of admirable uniformity and harmony.

**What does the Bible say?** The Bible categorically and constantly assures that there is only one God, and voices from Moses to Jesus repeatedly say: "Listen, Israel, the Eternal, our God, is one" (Deut. 6:4; Mk. 12:29).

**And where did the imagined Trinidad come from?** When the Greeks mixed with the Christians, they grafted in Plato's trinity, applying to Jesus the role of the Platonic Word, despite the fact that the sublime Master never referred to himself as the Word of God. The Holy Spirit was imagined as a dove, the symbol of Semiramis, who was worshiped in ancient times as the third person of the Assyrian trinity.

**So, how should we understand Matthew 28:19, where Jesus orders his friends to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit?** This is evidently a later interpolation, since, according to the acts and epistles of the apostles, they baptized only in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38, 8:16, 10:48, 19:5; Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27). Even mathematics, which is the exact science *par excellence*, would be nothing more than a fantasy if it were to suggest that three is one, and one is three.

**Can you give us a more concrete idea of God?** That is impossible, because the nature of God has not yet been discovered, but we will venture an opinion, which is of no more value than the evidence upon which it is based. We imagine that God is the life, the engine and the directing principle of all the beings of the universe, although the free will of each being modifies the impulses of God. A practical example:

Our life or soul is a very part of the divinity, and the one who speaks to us in our conscience is God, who is part of our being. For this reason, it seems many times that there are two different beings within us: God or our share of divinity, and our share of animality. While the latter drives us toward the animal, our divine part leads us to all that is noble and holy.

**Is it shocking to hear that the human being has a divine part?** We answer this with Jesus: Do not be shocked by this, because the Bible itself says that we are gods (Ps. 82:6; Jn. 10:34).

### The Soul

**What is the soul?** The soul is the “breath or spirit of God,”<sup>3</sup> the life,<sup>4</sup> the energy or the mysterious engine within us that thinks, desires, feels and vivifies our body. According to the Bible, “the soul of all flesh is in the blood” (Lev. 17:14). Indeed, according to Ernst Haeckel, the soul is “living plasma,” the vital and invisible part of the colorless liquid in the blood that contains the nutrition, renewal and composition of the tissues, that is, its life. According to the same author, it is a “material” but “invisible” substance that develops as the child grows, it becomes ill when the body becomes ill, it ages, it becomes deranged in the insane, and it dies with the body. At the same time that it is “psychic matter,” it is also “energy”: the organs of thought are the groups of ganglion cells of the brain, just as the organs of the senses are the sensory cells. So, the soul, like God, is not pure spirit, but a composite of energy and invisible matter; it is like the ether, which seems to have been discovered in recent years with the progress of optics and electricity.

**What do advances in the microscopic anatomy of the brain show?** Paul Flechsig claims to have discovered the organs of thought. He has shown the existence of four “internal spheres of sensation”: the bodily sensation sphere in the parietal lobe, the olfactory sphere in the frontal lobe, the visual sphere in the occipital lobe, and hearing in the temporal lobe. Among these four sensory centers are the four great homes of “thought” or association centers, “real organs of the life of the spirit,” and they are the most perfected of psychic activity: the frontal association center in front, the parietal association center

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<sup>3</sup> Gen. 2:7; Ps. 104:30.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. 9:4-5.

behind and above it, the great occipital-temporal association center (the most important of all) behind and below, and the insular association center below everything, in the interior, the "island of Reil." All these are located in the brain. These organs of thought possess a special and complicated nerve structure that is not found in other mammals, and which explains the superiority of human consciousness. Pathology confirms this discovery of modern physiology, since the functions of these organs suffer when the organs suffer from disease, and the functions cease when these organs are destroyed.

**Does it necessarily follow from this that spirit, life or energy are the same thing as the body?** No; these intellectual and sensory organs exist in the corpses of the recently dead, and yet, they neither think nor feel anymore. They no longer have life. The spirit of God (the soul) that gave them life has already escaped them.

**Is that soul the ether?** We do not know, just as we do not know the nature and properties of ether; we presume that ether fills all the cavities and pores of the corpse, and yet the corpse does not possess life.

**Is the soul a property of the body?** No; it is the life of the body, but it is something distinct from the body, just as the engine is distinct from the rest the machine.

**Does the soul die with the body?** No. According to the laws of chemistry, no atom disappears at death. According to the laws of physics, no amount of energy is lost either. The soul, although material, is volatile. According to Psalm 104:29-30, the soul at death returns to God, to the invisible reservoir of life that fills the entire universe.

**What is known of the soul after death?** In reality, nothing is known about it, according to the Bible (Eccl. 3:22).

**Is it true that souls have been seen after their bodies have died?** This is impossible! Only brains disturbed by madness, fasting or great nervous excitement could see such visions. Even if we brought a buried body back to life, it could not arise from the grave without the help of the living; and if the soul is a pure spirit, as claimed, it cannot appear in bodily form, for the simple reason that it lacks a body and the necessary organs for this. Scientifically-speaking, this is a great absurdity. Those who understand anatomy and physiology well know this. When the body dies, its gaseous parts escape into space,

the liquid in part evaporates and in part goes to earth, as the remains of the solid portion form new lives in the bodies of plants, animals and minerals. Our present bodies are comprised of atoms from other corpses that have entered our being in the form of food and drink. How then, can you resurrect a corpse that is already part of other plants, animals or minerals?

### The Seven Mysteries

**What are the seven mysteries of the universe?** According to Emilio du Bois Reymond,<sup>5</sup> President of the Berlin Academy of Sciences in Germany, they are: (1) the nature of matter and force; (2) the origin of movement; (3) the first appearance of life; (4) the (seemingly preconceived) finality of nature; (5) the appearance of simple sensation and consciousness, or the bond between matter and force; (6) reason and thought with the related question of the origin of language; and (7) the problem of free will. Du Bois Reymond considers the first, second, and fifth to be transcendent and unsolvable; the third, the fourth and the sixth might possibly be solved with difficulty; and the seventh is doubtful.

**Does free will exist?** Certainly. We know that we are the arbiters who choose to do or not do many things. If we deny the existence of free will, we would have to close all prisons; but there is no doubt that the will is inclined to that toward which the environment, circumstances and associations of each person push them, all of which must be taken into account by judges, if they are to be lenient with the accused.

### The Commandments of God or of Moses

**Is it true that God appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai and gave him the Ten Commandments?** We have already said that the alleged appearance of God is a pure tale of infantile people. The truth is that ancient legislators, like Lycurgus, Moses and others, shared their decrees in the name of God, so that they would be obeyed by the people. In addition, Moses and other prophets in good faith believed that the good thoughts of people are inspired by God and must be

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<sup>5</sup> Speech delivered in 1872 before the Congress of Naturalists in Leipzig, and an 1880 memorial on the seven wonders.

true; for this reason, Moses was right to attribute to God the ten principal commandments, which were the very bases of all morality and religion in other peoples.

**Tell me those commandments.** Jesus expounded on them and fulfilled them. We divide them here into two tablets: The first contains the five commandments on what we must do, and the second contains the other five, on what we should avoid.

### First Tablet

I. The first commandment of all is: Hear, Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first commandment (Deut. 6:1 & 6:4-5; Mk. 12:29 & 12:40; Mt. 22:37-38; Lk. 10:27).

II. The second is similar to it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Love all human beings as neighbors, as children of our one heavenly Father (Lev. 19:18; Mk. 12:32; Mt. 23:9; Lk. 10:27-37). So all the things that you would like others to do to you, do also to them: for this is the Law and the prophets (Mt. 7:12). There is no other commandment greater than these (Mk. 12:31).

III. Six days you shall work, seeking your sustenance by the sweat of your brow (Ex. 20:9, 31:15 & 34:21; Deut. 5:18; Gen. 3:19). More so than treasures that can be lost, seek treasure that lasts forever: You will possess this treasure in heaven if you do works of charity, thus trading in expiring riches to store up eternal riches (Lk. 12:33 & 16:9).

IV. But the seventh day will be a day rest for the Lord your God. You shall therefore keep the Sabbath holy by doing no work, neither you, nor your children, nor your servants, nor your beasts, nor the foreigner who are within your gates (Ex. 20:8-10; Deut. 5:12-14).

V. Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that your days may be prolonged and all might go well for you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16), unless some other tradition prevents you in your duty to love and assist your parents (Mk. 7:9-13; Mt. 15:1-9).

## Second Tablet

VI. You shall worship the Lord your God alone, nor shall you make for yourself an image or figure of those who are above, in heaven, nor below, on the earth, or in the waters under the earth. You shall not provoke the Lord (Deut. 6:13-16; Mt. 7:10; Lk. 4:8-12), nor shall you take the Lord's name in vain (Ex. 20:7; Deut. 5:11; Mt. 5:34); nor shall you cause others to transgress God's commandment (Mk. 7:9-13; Mt. 15:4-9).

VII. You shall not kill (Ex. 20:13, Deut. 5:17). And you shall always forgive, so that your heavenly Father might also forgive you. Do good even to those who hate you, and pray for those who insult you and persecute you (Mt. 18:22, 5:41 & 6:11).

VIII. You shall not commit adultery. Whoever looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery in his heart (Ex. 20:14; Deut. 5:18-21; Mk. 10:19; Mt. 5:28).

IX. You shall not steal. Be merciful as your heavenly Father is merciful, for God will give to you a hundredfold what you give to others (Ex. 20:15; Deut. 5:19; Mk. 10:19; Mt. 19:29; Lk. 6:34, 36 & 38).

X. Do not give false testimony or go around judging, so that you will not be judged. The bad eye sees everything poorly, so correct your own faults before censoring those of others. God alone is perfect. Speak well, even of those who speak ill of you (Mk. 10:18-19; Mt. 5:14; Mt. 6:22-23; Mt. 7:1-5; Mt. 19:17-18; Lk 18:20; compare with Ex. 20:16; Lev 19:11-13; Deut. 5:20).

## Development rather than Creation

**How were all things created?** As we have not yet witnessed anything that has come from nothing, we believe that, according to Genesis 1:2, God did not create anything, but instead developed prime matter.

**How did this happen?** From eternity, from time immemorial, the universe has undergone such transformations that the beginning of our world could have come about as a result of the resurrection of an ancient world that became extinct. The limitless space of the universe is full of cosmic matter, prime matter in the form of gaseous molecules that vibrate with rotational and translational movements, "possessing a maximum of potential energy," as physicists say. By the law of

attraction, these molecules condense, and, when they condense, they form nebulae, those very distant milky spots that can be seen in the sky (not to be confused with fogs or clouds), which break up into stars; these, in turn, break into planets, and the planets into moons or satellites. In our *Philippine Bible*, this theory, which is due to Immanuel Kant, John Herschel and Pierre-Simon Laplace, is extensively and scientifically demonstrated with many photogravures.

**How was our world formed?** At the beginning of the current period of eternity, our Earth was part of an immense nebula, the Milky Way, which was later divided into stars, one of which is the Sun, from which, among other planets, a nebulous or gaseous ring condensed and formed the globe we inhabit. In this gaseous state, the Earth encompassed an area that reached beyond the Moon. As the Earth further condensed, it became a small star or sun with its own light and heat. Due to its small size, it soon cooled down, reaching 273 degrees below zero in some places; the vapors of the atmosphere condensed into murky, boiling waters that contained many dissolved materials, and the globe was covered with tumultuous, hot waters. The cooling began to coagulate incandescent portions, forming the first crust of the Earth as the salt pans and sugar pylons crystallized on the surface. Since then, our star ceased to be luminous, becoming an opaque planet or body. The atmosphere is the remnant of its old nebula.

**What was the original shape of the Earth?** The Earth was spherical, since this form is natural in gaseous and liquid bodies; but due to the rotational movement it became flattened at the poles and widened at the equator at a time when the Earth's crust was still malleable.

**How were the mountains, valleys and seas formed?** As the earth continued to cool, its volume was reduced as it shrunk: The sunken parts became valleys and seas, and the parts that did not sink became the mountains.

**How old is the Earth?** Based on astronomical observations, on the laws of cooling, on the time it takes for water-dragged silt to form a layer of a certain thickness, and on the time it takes for coral to form reefs, some researchers fix the age of the Earth at 240<sup>6</sup> to 350<sup>7</sup> million

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<sup>6</sup> Ivell, the most eminent of modern geologists.

<sup>7</sup> Bischof, with his experiments on basalt.



years, while others suggest that it is a minimum of only 18 million years old.<sup>8</sup>

**What was the first crust on the Earth?** It is assumed that it was granite or the so-called “living stone” of China, which, over time, became earth.

**When did the first living beings emerge?** It is assumed that, at the end of the first four million years of the Earth’s existence, which is called the Laurentian period, the simplest and most primitive forms of animals and plants arose, possessing an intimate resemblance, as if they had come from the same origin. At that time, many things on sea and land that looked like plants or herbs were really animals, and vice versa, so much so that naturalists have difficult delimiting the true division between the animal and plant kingdoms. These early organisms are thought to have been simple, soft and boneless, like earthworms and ringworms. In the deepest layers of the Earth that scientists have reached, they have found traces of a large foraminifera called *Eozoön canadense* and an earthworm called *Oldhamia*.

**From the beginning, were there many kinds of animals and plants?** Darwin thinks that there were very few types of plants and animals—perhaps four or five—and that they all developed in a singular, unique way.

**What is Ernst Haeckel’s famous theory?** According to this great naturalist, all organic, living things were born from the inorganic or lifeless, beginning with the monera, very small and simple, organless corpuscles that live in fresh water or in the sea. The body of the monera is a small, amorphous, movable, gelatinous lump, a carbonaceous albuminoid substance that sometimes covers fragments of stone or other objects with viscous networks. Primitive monera spontaneously arose, followed by plant monera, then animal monera, producing the infinite variety of species of the two kingdoms of nature. According to Haeckel, the simplest protozoans or primary animals eventually produced zoophytes resembling worms, from which mollusks were born, then echinoderms, then arthropods, then vertebrates.

**How did the plant kingdom develop?** From vegetative monera came the first algae, plants without stems or leaves. From these came fungi, which produced the lichens and mosses. From these came the

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<sup>8</sup> Dana, an illustrious American geologist.

ferns, which, in turn, engendered the phanerogams. From these the gymnosperms were born, which procreated the angiosperms. From these, the monocotyledons were derived, which, in turn, became dicotyledons. The theories of Darwin and Haeckel are extensively explored in the *Philippine Bible*.

**When did the human being emerge?** Based on flint and stones that were apparently carved by human beings, some authors suggest that the human being appeared a million years ago, during the Tertiary Age. Judging by the many remains of human industry that have been discovered in the layers of the earth that correspond to the Quaternary Period, there is no doubt that the human being already existed during that period, some 240,000 years ago.

**How and where did the human race arise?** The great English thinker Thomas Henry Huxley demonstrates with admirable scientific comparison that the anatomical differences that separate the human being from monkeys of our stature, such as the gorilla<sup>9</sup> and the chimpanzee, “are weaker than the same differences between large and small monkeys.” And Karl Ernst von Baer demonstrates that human embryos bear a continuous similarity to anthropoid embryos; their mental faculties are also very similar, except that they are more developed in the human being than in the brute. The very religious naturalist Louis Agassiz confessed that he could not “distinguish between the faculties of a child and those of a young chimpanzee.” From this, it follows that, just as small monkeys seem to have come from the transformation of lemurs, and just as little monkeys became larger monkeys, the human being could have come from the improvement and development of the latter. According to Haeckel, “the human race is a branch of the group of catarrhines (monkeys very similar to the human being); it developed in the ancient world from long-extinct monkeys of this group” (*Natural History of Creation*, vol. 2, p. 265).

**What is this theory called?** Transformism or Darwinism, because the discovery of it is due to the great Charles Darwin, and it was verified and completed by Thomas Henry Huxley, Ernst Haeckel and many other thinkers.

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<sup>9</sup> The gorilla is taller and stronger than the human person, and there are monkeys without a tail that walk on two feet.

**What did Darwin think?** Neither Darwin nor Haeckel said, nor could they say, that the human being descends from the anthropoid or great ape, but, just as the donkey, without being the progeny of the horse, could have descended from the same distant grandparents as the horse, so the human being and the great apes of today could have descended from common grandparents. A mute human being would be very similar to the great apes of today, though without a tail, so it is conceivable that one branch originated and became that of the human being, while another was stationary or degenerated into that of the monkeys.

**Doesn't this lower the dignity of the human being, to suppose that we are the monkey's "cousins"?** In no way. Dignity is individual. A virtuous person will always be worthy of praise and admiration, even if she were the daughter of a criminal, or of one with a defective or strange physique. Nor are the civilized considered disgraced because they proceed from a savage people. The fidelity of dogs and the maternal love of birds will always be admired, no matter what animals they are, while mean people with criminal instincts will always be hated and considered as less than brutes.

**What does the Bible say?** The Bible contains the very childish tale that likens God to a potter who formed a large clay doll, then blew in its nostrils, turning it into a human being. At first glance, this is very far-fetched, since we have not yet seen anything like this and, according to the Bible itself, what is happening now is also what happened in the past. Every day we see cases of transformation and of the creation of new varieties of animals and plants through pure chance or through combinations witnessed by people who understand this matter. We see varieties of dogs, and we note their resemblance to the wolf, indicating a community of origin. We see varieties of cats, and we note their resemblance to the tiger. We see varieties of oxen and horses, and we see, finally, the human being that is very similar to the great apes. It is clear that the varieties are very different from the species, since the crossing of individuals from different varieties results in fruitful differences, while crossings within a species result in nothing new – and it seems that the Maker put insurmountable borders between one species and the other. This has its explanation: Recall that animal and plant life dates back many millions of years, so it is very likely that those that are now species were initially mere varieties, which, over the course of thousands of

years, began to differentiate from one another while others, constituted apparently completely different species, but of the same origin and of the same internal constitution. Other objections are plausibly resolved in modern treatises on natural history.

**What else does Genesis say about creation?** Other great errors, which modern science denies. They are refuted one-by-one in our *Philippine Bible*.

## Heaven

**According to the Bible, what is Heaven?** Those who wrote the Bible had a very wrong idea: They believed that the heavens are a glass roof holding back the sea above, which is why the sky is blue. They did not know that the blue color is from the atmosphere that surrounds the earth. The ancient people believed that God caused rain by opening the windows or locks of heaven, according to Genesis 7:11. They believed that the seas spilled from above, which is also a huge mistake, since the rain is nothing more than the condensation of the vapors of the sea and of our forests. Heaven, the abode of God, is found in the space between the “sea” above and the sea below (on earth), and the Psalmist tells us that the Maker possesses a room between the waters of the two seas (Ps. 104:3.) The Bible used “heaven” for that which is above our heads—but we now know that the earth is a large, constantly-rotating ball, something that the editors of the Bible did not know, so what we consider to be “heaven” or “above” here in the Philippines is precisely in the same direction of what our antipodeans, the Brazilians, would have as “hell” or “below.” We now recognize that what we call “up” at this moment will be “down” in twelve hours, after the Earth has made a half-turn!

**According to science, what is Heaven?** Heaven is the universe that encompasses all that exists. It is the space where all celestial bodies gravitate or fly, rolling with inconceivable speeds. Our Earth is also found in these heavens—and we with it! The space of the universe has no limits since, if it did, there would always be some space beyond those limits. For this reason, we call it infinity.

## Paradise and Angels

**How were the ideas of Heaven and Paradise born?** As the ancients believed that the soul – the shadow or the invisible person – survives the dead person, they believed that the shadows of good people would inhabit depopulated mountains and forests. These secluded places were the paradises of the primitive peoples. As they began to learn astronomy and turned their human gods into stars, they naturally moved their paradise from the mountains and forests, to the sky or firmament above. Primitive people believed that the dead would continue with the same occupations that they had in life, served by the shadows of their slaves and animals, since these too have souls, and eating the shadows of food, since ancient people also believed that each food possesses a “soul,” which is its substance or flavor. When people moved the place of their gods to heaven, they also believed that the souls of animals and birds would continue to serve the holy people there who had become gods.

**According to the Bible, what are the cherubim?** As their name indicates, they are “oxen” with wings and four faces (of an ox, human person, lion and eagle) that shine like fire (like the fabled *Kaibaans* of the Ilocanos) or burn like their former brother, the fabled devil. They can also become frightening wheels full of eyes and spirits (Ez. 1:5 & 1:25).

**What are the seraphim?** They are phenomenal beings similar to the *aswang*, with six wings: two on their heads, two on their sides, and two on their feet (Is. 6:1-7).

**Should we believe in the existence of angels?** No. Genesis states that God made the sky with its stars, sun and moon, and the earth with its plants, fish, birds, animals and humans; but it does not say that God created hell, purgatory, limbo, angels, demons. All those fantasies of Persian Zoroastrianism appeared only about a thousand years after the death of Moses, the alleged author of Genesis, when they were grafted into the Bible by Ezekiel, Daniel, Ezra and other Jews educated in Persia, as evidenced by the fact that all the names of the angels – like Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, etc. – are Persian. The ancient books of the Bible speak of messengers, and since “angel” also means “messenger,” they turned all ancient human messengers into spiritual angels. Science shows that there is no spirit without matter, and no matter without spirit or hidden energy.

## Hell and Demons

**How was the idea of Hell born?** Since primitive human beings believed in the shadows or souls of evildoers and enemies, they thought that the volcanoes, the mountains that vent and vomit the internal fire of the earth, are the roasters and dungeons of evil souls. It is absurd, though, to think that a most merciful Father would condemn children to eternal fire after having paid for their sins through death. It is no less absurd to believe that a spirit can be burned by a material fire in Hell. What is called “Sheol” in the Bible was the sepulcher or town of the dead, like the fabled Mount Kilang of the Ilocanos and Mount Púlad of the Igorots of Benguet. Sheol later became the hell of the idolatrous worshipers of Moloch, a valley to the west of Jerusalem, where idolaters burned their children in honor of Moloch. In Greece, it became Hades, the invisible prison of souls, and in Rome it became the “deep place” of *Inferno*. According to the Bible, sins are punished in this life (Prov. 11:31), and the idea of a hell in the afterlife is exotic and pagan. The biblical proofs of this are found in paragraphs 56, 57 and 58 of our *Philippine Gospel*.

**Are there demons?** No. The temptations to evil that we feel are instincts, natural imperfections, or defects of education. In all cases, they are of our own nature and are not of an imaginary devil that no one has seen, except those who are unbalanced or highly excited by nerves. Genesis does not say that God created the devil, nor could God have created such a repugnant being whose only occupation is ensuring the loss of souls.

## The Two Limbos and Original Sin

**What is the limbo of the just or the “bosom of Abraham”?** According to the Romanists, it was a detention prison for the righteous dead, a theory invented to confirm the novelty that Jesus was the only one who could save us from imaginary “original sin,” something that the divine Master never mentioned nor suggested that he would redeem us from. What is recorded in the Gospel is a story of Jesus sharing an example of how selfish people who do not know how to sympathize with the poor would not be admitted to the place of saints like Abraham. This “bosom of Abraham” appeared as a place of consolation, an ancient Paradise – but the just do not deserve hell, so there is no limbo.

**What is the limbo of infants?** According to Romanists, it is the department of hell where children who die without being baptized go, because they possess original sin. The Bible says nothing of such a limbo, and, according to the law of Moses and the writings of the prophets, there is no original sin, for the simple reason that children do not answer for the faults of their parents, and vice versa (Deut. 24:16; Ez. 18:20).

**When and by whom was this limbo invented?** It was created by St. Peter Chrysologus in the fifth century, as a consequence of the doctrine of original sin.

### **Purgatory**

**What is Purgatory?** Purgatory is another department of the fabled hell, where souls go to be purged of their sins—in such a brutal way, according to Romanists, that the thief is burned for an unspecified number of days, and that relatives can offer masses and acquire indulgences to rescue such souls. Purgatory was invented to exploit the gullible and was only approved by the Council of Florence in 1439. The Bible says nothing of Purgatory. To the contrary, Jesus warns that priests who, under the pretext of long prayer, swallow the houses of widows, will deserve more serious punishment (Mt. 23:11). Purgatory is an outrage to the justice and mercy of God, who is the loving Father of all, both the good and the bad.

### **Rewards and Punishments**

**Does God reward the good and punish the bad?** Undoubtedly. Otherwise God would not be righteous, nor would God be God.

**How and where does the Lord reward and punish?** The Book of Proverbs 11:31 says: “Surely the righteous will be repaid on earth: how much more the wicked and the sinner!” Therefore, people will be rewarded or punished according to their deeds and intentions, in body and spirit, here in this life, where they have earned these merits and punishments. To those who are good, God will give prosperity or contentment, which, after all, is true happiness, even amid the most extreme poverty. Those who are satisfied with their fate, though very poor, will always be happier than the rich with their annoying illnesses and with the insatiable ambition that continually torments

them. And God will punish the wicked with misfortunes and troubles. In this way, no matter how rich you may be, you are not free from great disappointments.

**Why does God sometimes make the wicked rich and fill them with honors and things, while leaving other good people in poverty or misery?** The good person, no matter how poor, will never stop being happier than the wicked, no matter how rich the wicked appear. Everything is appearances. If we scrutinize the hearts of all, we will unfailingly discover that good people are always content in whatever state they are in, while the wicked are never free from great disappointments. The smallest inconvenience for a person exalted by luck is magnified: A slap received by a slave is not the same as a slap inflicted on a lord. These are the rewards of life.

### **The End of the Human Person**

**What is death?** Death is nothing more than a mere transformation. For us, there is no true death because, according to the laws of chemistry, no atom of matter disappears, and, according to the laws of physics, no amount of energy is lost either. This is all the more true with the intellectual and moral part, which is the noblest part of the person and is the person's own energy or soul.

**What is the human being after death?** As Ecclesiastes 3:22 says, no one knows. We only know that the material part remains on earth, according to its various components, and its energy remains in the atmosphere. God will always do what is best: Thinking sensibly, it would be better that we are reunited with our loved ones, not that we disappear forever with no other ulterior motive, which seems inadmissible, because God only acts for permanent purposes. We see that everything endlessly evolves and develops. When people die, then, their spirit or energy evaporates and returns to the spiritual atmosphere, to the principle or reservoir of life, energy, electricity, magnetism, etc. — to the Universal Force, to God! According to the Bible, our spirits return to God. This is true of all of us, good and bad, because God is the most merciful Father of all and makes the sun rise for all (Mt. 5:45; Lk. 6:35), and the wicked also have hope in God (Acts 24:15). Sometimes we ask ourselves: Who knows whether intelligence can be transformed into physical energy, or whether the affections can be transformed into magnetism or something similar?



**Is reincarnation possible?** We assume that the souls of children are “offshoots” of the souls of their parents, detaching from the vital or spiritual energy of their parents from the very moment of conception. If this is successful, there is no room for reincarnation. Even admitting this possibility, we do not believe in reincarnation in inferior beings, except perhaps in rare cases of punishment by the Supreme Creator. The general rule is to always progress and never go backwards, though there are cases of regression. The experimental sciences plausibly demonstrate that we could have descended from brutes, and, by analogy, our “wings” could come from the reincarnation of the souls of the brutes, and this could be why we do not remember our previous existence—but now that we have acquired memory and consciousness, we will likely never lose them.

**Do the dead go into nothingness or into eternal rest?** Because rest does not fit with the activity of the Supreme Maker, which is the sum of all energy and activity, the dead will likely go to another higher life. This is certainly the most consistent possibility with our feelings, which are often the inspiration of God. We apparently become dust, but that dust, as Schopenhauer says, “will very soon dissolve in water, which will become crystal and shine with the brilliance of metals, producing electric sparks, manifesting its magnetic power... to model itself on plants and animals, and to finally develop in its mysterious bosom that life whose loss so torments your limited spirit. Matter is indestructible. Although the individual dies as a passing modality, humanity subsists. When Nature, that sovereign and universal mother, unscrupulously exposes her children to a thousand imminent risks, knowing that by succumbing, they fall back into her bosom, where she holds them hidden. Their death is nothing more than a frolic, a romp, and they are as indifferent to death as to life.”

### The End of the World

**Will the universe ever end?** No. It will only suffer partial “deaths” or transformations, for there is no true death. The Earth, with our entire solar system, will surely die, but it will be reborn again, and the same is true of other worlds and solar systems.

**What will the end of our world be like?** The great physicist William Thomson calculates that in another 17 million years the Sun will have condensed, as the Earth has, precipitating its absolute

cooling or death within 18 million years, a period that Camille Flammarion extends to 20 or 30 million years. The end must inevitably come, like a furnace that has consumed all its fuel.

**And the Earth?** The earth will have died long before. Our planet will go extinct when the sun stops warming it enough for it to live. As the light and heat of the star dim, animal and plant life will withdraw to the equatorial regions of the Earth, the only possible place to live, until finally everything will die of cold, even before the light of the sun is completely extinguished.

**And the Moon and the other planets?** The Moon almost no longer has an atmosphere, and Mars shows its old age in its reddish color; they will become extinct before the Earth. Due to their immense volumes, Jupiter and Saturn will be the last to cool down. All the planets will die before the Sun, which, like an affectionate parent, will continue to walk with the corpses of its extinct children, sustaining them with its attraction.

## Resurrection

**What will happen when the Sun goes completely extinct?** The decomposition of the Sun and the extinct planets will quickly occur. Death implies dissolution, and, just as granite turns into light dust, our entire solar system, like consumed coal, will be reduced to ashes. Then, all the energies apparently lost by those extinct bodies will have actually passed, in the form of electricity, heat, hydrogen, etc., to the spaces through which our solar system will have circulated, and they will then contribute to the formation of a new nebula.

**What do the laws of physics and chemistry prove?** Together they prove to us that nothing is annihilated, nothing disappears: neither energy, nor matter. Everything will be reborn, probably with other forms than the current ones (though similar), because the circumstances that will converge for its formation will be different. Everything, though, will reappear. Worlds are born daily, while other worlds die<sup>10</sup>; but everything is reborn, immediately transformed, because the power of God is inexhaustible.

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<sup>10</sup> By "world," we now understand each solar or planetary system (i.e., a sun with its planets and satellites).

**And what do the sacred scriptures say?** The prophet Isaiah exclaimed: "The heavens will be dissolved like smoke, and the earth will grow old like clothes" (51:6). And the Apocalypse adds that nothing will perish: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, after the first heaven passed, with the first earth and the sea" (21:1).

## **Religion and Science**

**Is religion necessary?** Since God is an intelligent and conscious Being, and since we are God's intelligent and conscious creatures, it is logical to suppose that God endowed us with understanding, conscience and feelings so that, with our intelligence, we might seek God and know God in truth, which is Science; so that, with our conscience, we might always act justly, following the holy laws that God imprinted on our hearts, and so that, with our good feelings, we might know how to adore and thank our constant Benefactor and love our sisters and brothers and all other creatures. In a word, God desires to have direct intellectual, sentimental and cordial communication with us—not with the lies of ignorant, fantasizing or deceitful priests. Oh! It is undeniable that our intelligence and our hearts instinctively seek our most loving, mysterious Father. Hence the need for Religion that puts us in communication with God and cultivates these holy, necessary and instinctive relationships between the Maker and creation. The rationalist Raoul de Grasserie testifies: "The need for religion is undeniable, and neither philosophy nor (atheistic) science can satisfy this need, just as the conscious state cannot completely replace the instinctive one."

**Is Religion incompatible with Science?** In no way. Science is the daughter of the priests, who were humanity's first thinkers and sages. Religion began as embryonic and crude, just as our intelligence—or means of knowing God—was embryonic and crude. Though "erring," as the Book of Wisdom says, the human being little-by-little came to know the true God, thanks to the lights of Reason and Science. Each scientific progress represents a progressive step in the knowledge of the Eternal. Evidently, the Lord established Natural Reason and Science as our guides to know God and God's holy laws. Thus, the more scientific a Religion is, the more respectable it will be. It is an error to divorce Religion from sound Reason, which is the true inspiration of God, or from Science, which is our only Sacred Book or

“oracle.” The only people who fear Science and Reason are those whose lies, ignorance and deception in matters of Religion resemble the interests created in the shadow of ancient errors. Many priests and wise people dare not go against the Bible simply for the sake of not losing their means of income.

**Does religious intolerance ensue?** No. Except in cases of deceit and exploitation, all religions are good and holy in their common object and natural instinct to seek and love our universal Father. According to Mohammed, if God wanted to be worshiped through only one form of religion, then there would be only one religion on Earth. For this reason, we must be tolerant. No religion has the right to say that it alone possesses the truth, or to ascribe error to the others. If we want our beliefs to be respected, we begin by demonstrating our exquisite education through a deep respect for others.

### Various Religious Systems

**What is Deism or Theism?** It is the belief in God, pure spirit, the supernatural, a creator, preserver and orderer of the Universe—who is therefore distinct from the universe.

**Do you believe in the existence of the supernatural?** No. To date, nothing has been found that is not natural, and cases of the “supernatural” are mere tales. Nature is the law dictated by God for the Universe, and there is nothing that can be removed from this sovereign will.

**What is pantheism?** Pantheism is the belief that God is the Whole, that is, that God is the Universe itself, which is synonymous with God. God works as a force and energy within matter and is found within the Universe wherever there is nature. According to Haeckel, Pantheism is the view of the natural sciences. It appeared with the hylozoism [the doctrine that all matter has life] of the naturalistic philosophers of Greece in the first half of the sixth century before Christ, during the golden age of Greek philosophy. Anaximander of Miletus conceived the idea of the infinite All (*Apeiron*), and the best system of this was formulated by the celebrated Baruch Spinoza in the middle of the seventeenth century.

**Like pantheism, do you believe that God is the same as the Universe or Nature?** No. God, as the Supreme Entity, must also be Supreme Perfection; matter, on the other hand, has not yet reached its

perfection, and our spirits are not perfect either. We cannot identify our great defects, impurities and sometimes crimes with the purest nature of God. It is true that we possess the breath or a part of the spirit of God, and that we enjoy life as a result. But this does not mean that in reality we are part of the Divinity. Through our free will, we can and often do disobey the holy impulses of the spirit of God, spoken to the depths of our conscience, and when we do wrong, we completely separate ourselves from this, which evidences the distinction between the Maker and creation.

**What is atheism?** Atheism is the belief that there is no God, but that the universe exists and operates by chance or spontaneous nature. All phenomena are attributed to the natural properties of bodies, such as energy, attraction, etc., and that attraction produces movement.

**What is monistic religion?** Monistic religion was formulated by Ernst Haeckel and is nothing more than a form of pantheism or atheism. *Monista* means “unitary,” or, as Haeckel says, “all one.” This German professor confesses that religion cannot be dispensed with and proposes “worshiping the Trinity of the True, the Beautiful and the Good, personifying them in the three true teachings of Jesus, that is, in free-thinking Science without revelations or fantastic miracles, in Art inspired by Nature, and in Christian Good or Virtue, as set forth in the Gospels and the epistles of Saint Paul, that is, the one followed by Christianity in the first three centuries—and not the caricature of the pure doctrine fabricated in the Vatican by the Roman popes (the greatest charlatans any religion has ever produced), which has directed European civilization to its greatest harm for twelve centuries of religious exclusivism, brutality and inquisition. Not yielding to this, Protestant sects do not yield to ignorance of reality, to the teaching of the most iniquitous superstitions, or to burning the wise, like Servetus.”

**What does Haeckel take from Christianity?** Haeckel adopts “the precepts of humanity, of love and resignation, of compassion and fraternity, but not the exaggerated altruism that annuls indispensable selfishness, since perfect virtue consists in a fair balance between the love of others and the love of oneself. Our Church [he concludes] is Nature itself.”

**What are the great contradictions of Monism?** Haeckel assures that there is no God other than Nature, and that everything moves by blind chance and by the energy of matter itself. What, then, is the purpose of monistic religion? Can a religion be conceived without God? How can you deny the existence of a God confessed as the unknowable first cause and still invoke religious feelings? The Trinity Haeckel proposes to adore are means to perfect our knowledge, our artistic taste, and our feelings, but Haeckel himself knows that these are not gods and that it is an extravagance to propose these for deification, especially by one who denies the existence of God. How does one worship a “monistic” or “unitarian” Trinity? This proves nothing more than the fact that atheism is inconsolably hybrid, incapable of producing anything even half-acceptable, despite the dazzling genius of those who propose it to us. Furthermore, they do not know what they believe, as they themselves confess, after so much reasoning, that they do not know whether God exists or not.

**According to monists, what is the purpose of the human being?** Haeckel says: “Our Monism teaches us that we are children of the earth, mortals who will not have for more than one, two, or at most three generations the joy of adoring the splendors of our planet in this life, and we should not exchange this for another, eternal life, of which no revelation has yet told us.”

**What do you reply to that?** If the purpose of the human being is nothing more than to enjoy this life, the best thing to do is to eat, drink, have fun, take all the women for whom the fickleness of the human heart takes a fancy, even if you stain virginal beds or invade other people’s territories, stealing resources for all this, and always prospering, no matter whether the means are lawful or not, as long as you attempt to hide it, so as to avoid setbacks, since, as there is no free will, according to Monists, we are not responsible for our bad actions. Attempt to put this dreadful theory into practice, and you will soon be found out, disgraced and punished.

**What does the Philippine Church think about this?** It believes that a holy, wise, just, active and absolute God endowed us with reason, conscience, strength and free will to scale our merits, and who placed us on earth to carry out our mission of contributing within our respective sphere of action, with our virtues and activity, to constant universal progress, attempting to be useful to society, to family, and to those who depend on us, to those on whom we depend, and also

to ourselves, with the highest and instinctive aspiration to continue our progressive improvement in successive lives or transformations to which we are subjected by the universal and eternal law of Nature.

### Our Creed

I believe in one God (may we bless God's holy name), that universal, intelligent, eternal, supreme and mysterious Force that creates, gives life, directs, moves and preserves all beings. I believe that God is the soul of the Universe, the beginning of all life and movement. Although God's nature has not yet been discovered, we can surmise it, and we see in God's prodigious works God's absolute and admirable wisdom. We hear in the depths of our conscience God's most holy voice, and we experience the sweetness of God's loving and diligent parenthood in the providential satisfaction of our daily needs. I believe that, because God is the Supreme Being, God must also be Supreme Perfection. I believe that God made the human being to contribute with human virtues and activity to the well-being and general progress for which we must always be useful, seeking with our work the remedy for our needs. We must think and act rightly, because God rewards the good and punishes<sup>11</sup> bad intentions and works in this life—not with absurd hells, but rather perfecting the inexorable justice of God through God's infinite mercy. I believe that the Maker, who protects me now as a loving parent, will also protect me at my death, and, as modern science proves, I will not disappear forever, but will only be transformed. Amen.<sup>12</sup>

**Why do you sometimes change your beliefs?** We sincerely march alongside the continuous progress of the sciences, and, as these are being rectified with daily discoveries, we also change the moment we discover a better-established belief. This only proves our good faith and true interest in sacrificing our self-love and seeking the truth. Only God is infallible: Therefore, we do not admit any dogma or revelation other than Nature. We teach what we know today, without compulsion, while respecting and guaranteeing others' freedom to think. We only advise that, as each Church must have its official teachings thoroughly studied, examined and approved by its Board of Directors, the Apostles who entertain ideas that differ from our

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<sup>11</sup> Prov. 11:31.

<sup>12</sup> Job 19:26, Ps. 49:15, Is. 26:19, Lk. 20:38, Jn. 5:25, 1Cor. 15:12.

official teachings must share them with the Supreme Council of our Bishops, to determine whether they are acceptable and might proceed to rectify official teaching. If it does not receive approval by said Council, it will be deemed contrary and dissolved, since it is forbidden for an Apostle to wander the world and preach teachings contrary to official doctrine.

**What particularity does the Philippine Church have?** It is the only formally-established Church in the world with more than twenty bishops and hundreds of priests, which puts modern Science above the Bible, making it worthy of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in which it was born.

**What effect have the scientific doctrines of the Philippine Church produced in Europe and America?** The most enthusiastic adherence among “modernist” Christians, as evidenced in their publications, is found among the independent archbishops of Paris, Antioch and Switzerland. Many priests from Spain, Italy and America have also sent their congratulations, and the Protestant publications of Spain, Belgium, Germany, Cuba and other parts of America have expressed their approval, including atheists, like the directors of the Modern School of Barcelona, who consider our Church to be a very useful institution for humanity in that it destroys age-old errors and prejudices and preaches the true Religion of Science.

## The Bible

**What is Bible?** *Biblia* is the plural of the Greek word *biblos*, “book,” meaning the writings of the religious teachers or “prophets” of Israel, which are now the sacred books of Jews and Christians.

**What is the Pentateuch?** In Greek, *penta* means “five,” and *teucos*, “book,” that is, the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. They are attributed to Moses, the first known prophet who taught the religion of “Yahweh,” incorrectly spelled “Jehovah.” In that master’s time, the Pentateuch was written only in hieroglyphics, and its current form and context show that it was written much later, probably by Ezra. Suffice it to say that Deuteronomy describes the burial of Moses and therefore could hardly have been authored by Moses.

**Of whom were the Hebrew people comprised?** The names of Adam, Eve, Cain, Noah and other characters from Genesis to



Abraham are purely mythological. They are imaginary names, not of real people, but of ideas and entire peoples, as is clearly seen in the genealogy that appears in chapter 10, and there are quite a few that are even written in the plural, such as those ending in *-im*, which indicates that they were towns and not people.

**What do Adam and Eve mean?** *Adam*, a Hebrew word, means “earth” and represents the puerile belief that the first human being was fashioned from clay by God the potter. *Eve* means “life” and acknowledges that women are the ones who give life and preserve the human race and are also the “moral life” or the joy of humanity on earth.

**And “Cain”?** *Cain* means “man.” He was believed to be the first man of the Philistines or Phoenicians, the neighbors and enemies of the Hebrews or Israelites. The myth or symbolic legend referring to him suggests that the Philistines initially enjoyed a relationship with the Hebrews, which later fell apart. It is not true that God cursed Cain or his descendants, since the Phoenicians were much more civilized, rich and powerful than the Hebrews; the same Bible says that they were the inventors of music and metal forging, and they already had a kingdom and palaces, while the Hebrews were still engaging in raids as nomadic tribes (Gen. 4:20-22).

**Who is supposed to have been the first real or historical human being?** Abraham, of the tribe of the Terahites, and that is why they called Taré or Terah his supposed or real father. Abraham is a common name in those countries, and some people even worshiped him as God—like Brahma of India, who bears a similar name. Both married their sisters whose names mean “Lady”: Sara in Israel and Saravadi in India.

**What does the Bible say about Abraham?** Around the year 1996 before Jesus, Abraham went from Chaldea to Canaan, bringing with him his worship of the God, Shaddai, which means “Most High,” which was equivalent to the *Elium* of the Phoenicians; but his religion, which was mixed with polytheism, contained secondary gods. It was believed that Shaddai was an old man in human forms, and that he was called the Most High because he was believed to be a giant like our *Ang ngaló*. He assisted the creation of auxiliary gods. For this reason, the first documents that contributed to the formation of Genesis were anthropomorphic and polytheistic: They referred to the divinity as *Elohim*, “gods,” in the plural, not *Eloha*, the singular. The

Bible states that Abraham's parents and relatives were idolaters, and that perhaps even he himself was (Jos. 24:2).

**Who was Moses?** The Hebrews in Egypt had an illustrious son, Moses, who led them in their flight from that kingdom in the year 1491 before Jesus. This Moses was born and educated in Egypt, where he learned magic and mixed the Egyptian religion of Jove or Jupiter with the ancient religion of Shaddai, calling this god Jose or Yahweh. Moses established monotheism and suppressed primitive, ancient religions by prohibiting representations of God in the form of human beings, animals, birds, fish, stars or other things on earth, in the waters, or in the sky. As we have already said, at that time nothing was written except with hieroglyphs, and we assume that Moses left very little writing in reality; nonetheless many of Israel's ancient traditions, ordinances, doctrines, practices and ceremonies were placed under the authority of his name. The *Philippine Bible* shows that Ezra (457 B.C.) was the probable author of the Pentateuch in its present form.

**And the other books of the Old Testament?** They were written by other prophets and those who were educated in Persian courts during the captivity and who mixed the Mosaic religion with Persian Zoroastrianism and its angels, demons and hell or gehenna.

## The Old Testament

**How is the Bible divided?** It is divided into the Old Testament, which embraces everything from the alleged creation to Jesus, and the New Testament, which contains the Gospels or stories about Jesus, as well as the acts and epistles of the apostles.

**What does Testament mean?** Testament means "covenant." God is said to have made an ancient pact with the first patriarchs: Noah, Abraham, etc. The New Covenant or pact is that which God promised to Jesus and his disciples.

**What follows the Pentateuch?** The Pentateuch is followed by the book of Joshua, the book of Judges, the book of Ruth, the two books of Samuel, the two books of Kings (which seem to have been written by Jeremiah 620 years before Jesus), and the two books of Chronicles, (which are also called *Paraleipomenon* and appear to be from Ezra). The Romanists unite the books of Samuel with those of the Kings, putting the four books in their name.

**What else?** They are followed by the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther and Job, which is attributed to Solomon or to an unknown Ephraimite refugee in Arabia after the destruction of Samaria in the year 720 before Jesus. Voltaire assumes that the book of Job is Arabic and not Jewish.

**What follows?** The Psalms, the Proverbs of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes, which is also said to have been written by King Solomon; but it is also attributed to Zerubbabel, Elisha, Sobna, Eliakim, Jonah and others.

**Continue.** Solomon's Song of Songs follows, which is a poem between the king and his beloved, improperly applied, due to its high naturalism, to God and the Church.

**What else?** The Book of the Wisdom of Solomon follows, and the Ecclesiastes of Jesus the son of Sirach. These are considered apocryphal, except by Romanists.

**How many so-called prophets were there?** Sixteen. The four major prophets were Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. The twelve minor prophets were Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. Their prophecies form the last twelve books of the Old Testament.

**Is there anything else?** The two books of Maccabees are missing. They are considered apocryphal by Protestants but are accepted by Romanists.

**What do you understand by prophet?** One announces what probably must happen as a logical consequence of facts and current events. We do not believe that prophets are infallible. The Bible forbids belief in fortune-tellers, and Moses ordered them to be stoned (Lev. 20:27).

**How do you view the Bible?** As a valuable historical book of ancient traditions, interesting news, and holy teachings, but it also includes many scientific errors and unacceptable doctrines, making its language sometimes almost pornographic.

**What is the doctrine of the Apostle to the Gentiles with respect to reading the Bible?** In the same Bible, Saint Paul advises: "Do not underestimate prophecies: Investigate everything; hold fast to what is good, and leave what is bad" (1Thes. 5:20 & 22). This precious instruction from the most enlightened of the apostles guides us when we read the Bible: We accept all that is good in it. You see how we support all our teachings with biblical quotes, and the Psalms

constitute our religious songs, but when we find something that opposes a truth demonstrated by modern science, we resolutely follow modern science and not the Bible. The biblical authors did not understand science, which has greatly advanced, so we will not allow the consideration of any biblical affirmations to present an obstacle to free scientific research.

## The New Testament

**What is New Testament?** It is the second covenant or pact that God is supposed to have made with us through his son, Jesus: that if we comply with God's holy laws of virtue and charity, we will be happy on earth, even in the midst of the most relentless persecution. The New Testament is the second part of the Bible.

**What does the New Testament consist of?** According to the order established by the Councils (although this order seems not to accord with history), the New Testament is comprised of the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke and St. John, of the Acts of the Apostles, and of the epistles of St. Paul, St. James, St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, as well as the Apocalypse or vision of St. John the theologian, which is also called "Revelation."

**What, then, is the most historical order of books, according to modern research?** It seems that the first true Gospel was that of St. Mark, because of the naturalness of its story and the precision of its details. The apostles met in his mother's home (Acts 12:12), and it is likely that the first Gospel was prepared there, though it was later expanded, since it speaks of many miracles of Jesus—even after the Master declared that he would not perform miracles in that generation, and that he forbade speaking of such nonsense that might endanger his seriousness.

**And the Gospel of Saint Matthew?** According to Papias, the only thing that the Gospel of St. Matthew possessed was the preaching or words (*Logia*) of Jesus (that is, his Sermons on the Mount and other teachings). With these teachings added to the writings of St. Mark, a better Gospel was created and placed under the authority of the name of the apostle Matthew. This explains the great resemblance between the two gospels. In the preface of our *Philippine Gospel*, you will find a useful dissertation on this.

**And the Gospel of Saint Luke?** Some authors prove that the Gospel of St. Luke predates the alleged Gospel of St. Matthew, though the *Logia* of St. Matthew are older. While St. Matthew's Gospel was intended for the Hebrews, St. Luke's was written for the Gentiles, whom he attracted, which seem to be excluded by St. Matthew.

**And the Gospel of Saint John?** For theologians, this is the primary Gospel, because it harmonizes with their tastes despite its "indigestible" form. From its modern appearances, it was probably written at least 150 years after St. John died. The Johannine writing that appear authentic is the first epistle of said apostle, and it is assumed that the fourth Gospel was inspired by said epistle, because it copies words from it verbatim.

**What should we keep in mind when reading the Gospels?** That at that time, as there was still no printing press, each Church or group of Christians formed its Gospel by copying the few manuscripts that they could find, increasing the legends and fables that were circulating, and changing the original text according to the criteria of each community. As a result of this were born the great contradictions, errors and lies that are unfairly attributed to the evangelists. Many authors believe that instead of saying the "Gospel according to Mark, Matthew, Luke or John," we should say, "according to the traditions coming from them" – so that it is clear that they did not write them. The Fathers of the Church (Papias, Dionysius of Corinth, and others) complain about the falsifications introduced in the Gospel texts.

**Were there no other Gospels than the four mentioned?** There were about 60 or 70 gospels, since each Church had its own and defended it as authentic. To unify them, the Councils chose four that remain canonical or official. In reality, those that remained apocryphal were also respectable, and some of them complete certain sentences that are incomplete and incomprehensible in the canonical gospels.

**What Gospel does the Philippine Church follow?** Our Church, after thoroughly examining the canonical and non-canonical gospels, found them all worthy of respect, but also as containing many apocryphal interpolations or, although authentic, as implausible and

unworthy of being taught.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, our Church chose the authentic parts of the four canonical gospels and completed them with the very interesting data found in gospels that are just as old but were not declared official. The *Philippine Gospel* was created in accordance with the spirit and progress of our times.

**What follows?** The Acts or deeds of the Apostles, which also seem to be written by St. Luke.

**What are the Epistles of Saint Paul?** Those letters addressed to the Romans, the Corinthians, the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, the Thessalonians, and to Timothy, Titus and the Hebrews.

**What is said of their authenticity?** The authenticity of the Epistle to the Romans, or at least certain parts of it, is much in doubt. Renan says that the first Epistle to the Corinthians dates from the year 57 and that it is the oldest evangelical text. The ancient Marcion denied that the Epistles to Timothy and Titus were from Saint Paul, and only a few authors without independent criteria believe that the one addressed to the Hebrews is from the Apostle. Tertullian attributes it to Saint Barnabas, and others to Apollos, to whom the "Book of Wisdom" of similar style is also attributed.

**What should we keep in mind when reading the Epistles of Saint Paul?** That he, with the intention of serving God, sometimes exaggerated and was disapproved of by the Council of Apostles in Jerusalem. He apologized frankly, saying: "But if the truth of God by my lie grew to God's glory, why am I still judged as a sinner? (Rom. 3:5 & 7).

**And what is believed of the Epistles of the other Apostles?** They were written in their names, but their authenticity is doubted.

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<sup>13</sup> "And if you wish to follow me and do not hate your parents, your spouse and children, your siblings, and even your own life, you cannot be my disciple." According to Luke 14:26, Jesus said this and even forbade a man who wanted to follow him to first bury his father, which is unlikely since Jesus criticized the Pharisees precisely for their failure to honor and dutifully serve their parents (Mk. 7:10). It is also incomprehensible to believe that Jesus, who recommended unlimited forgiveness, might say these incredible words: "Bring those who did not want me to reign over them, and slaughter them before me" (Lk. 19:27). It is difficult to believe that Jesus insulted the priests and Pharisees, calling them hypocrites, vipers and thieves, words that Matthew attributes to the Master, since Jesus threatened with serious punishment those who referred to their neighbors as *raca* or stupid.

**What do the great modern critics say about the Book of Apocalypse?** Strauss says that the Apocalypse and the Gospel of Saint John cannot be by the same author since all the prophecy of this fanciful book, Apocalypse, revolves around Nero, who had fallen and was now expected anew as the Antichrist. For this reason, this book was not inspired by the Holy Spirit, but instead by a widespread illusion of that time.

### The Doctrines of Jesus

**Who was the great New Testament prophet?** Jesus (*Jehoshuah* or Joshua in Hebrew), who was born in the first year of the current era, although many suppose that he was born four years earlier, and, according to biblical scholars, four thousand years after Adam.

**What are the main teachings of Jesus?** The sublime Master announced and taught us about the Reign of God, the ideal reign of love among all creatures under the sweet and universal parenthood of the Eternal, to whom we will join in intimate communion through a holy, filial love and the fulfillment of the divine commandments. This is the reign of good and virtue. It is purely spiritual and begins on the earth, in good souls, and it will climax in a heavenly paradise. In order to enter that Reign of God, the Church or Body of Jesus, we must first cleanse ourselves of all our sins, with tears of sincere repentance, and we must definitively die to sin in order to be reborn in purity with a new spirit and a sanctified body for the service of God, always interested in the business of our heavenly Father, because we do not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

**What idea did Jesus have of God?** That God is the loving Father of all, from whom we should confidently expect the satisfaction of all our legitimate needs. Listen to what Jesus told us: The Eternal, our God, the Eternal is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your soul and with all your strength. God is spirit and seeks to be worshiped in spirit and in truth. God is the Father of all, without regard to class, race, sect, or excommunication, and Jesus assured the Samaritan woman that the Jews and Samaritans were mistaken in believing that God could only be worshiped in the Jerusalem temple or on Mount Gerizim – attempts to monopolize our shared Father.

**What are the Beatitudes and the Woes of Jesus?** They are sublime exclamations with which the divine Master transformed the ancient

ideals of glory, riches, power and exclusivity, into modesty, patience and love. In them are contained the original teachings of Jesus, who said that the ones who are blessed are those who now cry, the meek, those who suffer from hunger and thirst, the merciful, those with a pure heart, the peaceful, and those reviled and persecuted because of Jesus or because of justice, because they will be rewarded even in the midst of their sorrows, while the proud, the powerful and the rich, who know not how to perform charitable works, who are well-fed, who get drunk, who laugh at the follies and pleasures of the world, and who enjoy insincere applause and flattery: The time will come when they cry and suffer miseries. And Jesus told us: "Learn to be meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Be merciful, like your heavenly Father. Give, and it will be given to you in good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over."

**What religion did Jesus teach?** He taught us that our salvation is not in false Christs, but in ourselves (Lk. 17:21), in the fulfillment of the divine commandments. He confirmed those commandments and criticized those who forget them by giving more importance to external rituals, or who adulterated or invalidated them with purely human traditions. He taught us that our holiness is not external, but internal; that not only reprehensible acts will be punished, but also intentions and bad thoughts.

**What did Jesus teach us about prayer?** That we should pray without ostentation. That we should enter our closet, close the door, and pray to our Father, who is in secret. That our prayer should not be wordy, because our Father knows our needs even before we ask. That, before presenting ourselves to God, we must forgive those who are indebted to us, so that God may also forgive us. Ask your Father as much as you want, as long as you comply with God's divine commandments. He added: If you, being evil, know how to give good thing to your children, how much more [true is this of] your Father, who feeds the sparrow that does not sow and who clothes the lily of the valley that do not spin, just as Solomon did not dress himself in all his glory.

**According to Jesus, what is a temple?** May the house of God not be a place of trafficking (of victims, as it is now, or of dispensations, scapulars, authoritative teachings, etc.), but of prayer; nor is the house of God a place of sacrifices. Several times, Jesus repeated the saying of the prophet Hosea: that "the Lord desires mercy, not sacrifice;



knowledge of God, rather than holocausts." Jesus dismissed from the temple those who sold animals for sacrifices.

**What does Jesus say about God's calling?** That we should not ignore God's call, so that we not suffer the fate of the fruitless fig tree, which, after its owner waited for some years for it to bear fruit, was cut down, so that a more fruitful tree could take its place. The Master called all people, with the desire that they might follow with a spirit of holiness.

**How did Jesus condemn hypocrisy?** Jesus harshly censured bad priests, who, instead of teaching true holiness and mercy, overwhelmed souls with heavy, unnecessary and counterproductive burdens. As a result, through actions like fasting, which destroys health, and other things that God could never have ordered, they did not enter heaven, and they prevented others from entering. The disciples of Jesus did not fast, because the fasting that is pleasing to God is, as the prophet Isaiah said, works of charity; nor did Jesus' disciples abstain from eating meat on certain days. Jesus said: "Eat whatever is set before you, for there is nothing outside of a person that can enter and defile the person; what defiles comes from within: bad thoughts, words and deeds." Jesus undid the exaggerated scruples of the Jews; he opposed the heavy loads multiplied by hypocrites, with his easy yoke and light load.

**Did Jesus exclude the wicked from salvation?** No. Rather, he felt special compassion for the wicked and assured us that there will be more rejoicing in heaven for one sinner who repents, than for ninety-nine just people who have no need of repentance.

**According to Jesus, what was his mission?** Jesus never said that he came to save us from absurd original sin. He preached repentance and the following healthy doctrines: "Blessed," he said, "are those who hear the word of God and keep it"; it doesn't matter that we heard the word of God, if we don't practice it, since then we would be like the one who builds on sand or sows on stony ground. "The truth," Jesus assured, "will set you free."

**What was the morality of Jesus?** It rested on the rightly-named Golden Rule : "Do unto others as you want them to do to you. Do not harm anyone. Do not repay evil for evil, but always overcome it with patience and goodness. Love even your enemies, so that you may be children of God, who makes the sun rise for the good and the bad, and who sends rain upon the just and the unjust."

**What did Jesus say about greed and charity?** The Master said: Beware of greed, because life does not consist of riches, and do not be like the one who accumulated numerous goods for many years; his goods were worthless on the night on which his soul was asked of him. How will any of the riches of the world help us, if we lose our soul? Our works of charity, however, are permanent deposits in the treasury of heaven. We bear each other's burdens, "that the rich might help the poor in their needs, thus buying heaven with expired wealth." When a rich young man asked Jesus what he should do to enjoy eternal life, the Master told him to keep the commandments. When the young man replied that he had kept them, the Lord replied in the Gospel of the Hebrews: "How can you say that you have fulfilled them, since the first commandment orders you to love God and to love your neighbor who suffers so many miseries while you swim in abundance?" Because the young man did not want to share his goods with the poor, Jesus exclaimed: "How difficult it will be for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! If you share your goods with the poor, the Eternal will reward you a hundredfold in the present and future life. Jesus demonstrated how easy it is to be charitable: He fed many thousands of hungry people with the leftovers of the rich.

**What did the famous multiplication of loaves and fish consist of?** Jesus preached in deserted places, far from the persecutions of his enemies, and it was likely that those who came to listen to him brought their meals, according to their resources—since there was nothing to eat in those places that were so far from neighboring farm houses and villages. Rich fishermen and wheat harvesters brought extra food for the poor, and Jesus symbolically called them "loaves and fish," because, according to the Gospel of Saint Mark, he always spoke through parables. After preaching, Jesus gathered all the food and made his listeners sit on the grass in groups of fifty or one hundred. He equally distributed the food to all, as true siblings, and he fed them through this ingenious means. In this way, he fed 5,000 or more, with twelve baskets left over, thus demonstrating that the leftovers of the rich could satiate the hungry without harming the rich. The master perpetuated these *agapes*, or charity meals, in the Eucharist.

**What are the other aphorisms of Jesus?** The Master said: "Be the salt that gives flavor and preserves food (that is, that we should build a society and give satisfaction to others through our virtues). Shine

with your good deeds, like the light of a candle, so that others may glorify your Father. Give to authorities what corresponds to those authorities, and to God what belongs to God. If you wish to follow me, leave behind your selfishness, take up your cross, then follow me. If you put your hand to the plow and look back, you are not fit for the kingdom of God. Unless you become as simple and pure as children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Avoid scandals. Root out every principle and occasion of sin. If you want to be first, you will be the last and the servant of all. If you exalt yourself, you will be humbled, and if you humble yourself, you will be exalted."

**What did Jesus command regarding forgiveness?** "Forgive always," he told us, "so that your heavenly Father will also forgive you." Then Peter asked him: "And if my neighbor sins against me seven times?" The magnanimous Master answered, "You will forgive seventy times seven times."

**What did Jesus teach on divorce?** The Master censured divorce, except for the cause of adultery, because, as he says, "what God has joined, we must not divide."

**What did Jesus say about the woman caught in adultery?** That before condemning her to death, we must impartially look at our own weaknesses. With a most noble heart, he ended up forgiving her, but he commanded her not to sin anymore, because, apart from her dishonor, she would expose herself to the bloody revenge of her husband.

**Did Jesus believe in the resurrection of the dead?** Yes. He said that "God is God of the living, and not of the dead." All who live for God can no longer die; they are not like us, but are like the fantastic angels, like ether or ethereal beings. As the resurrection and the life, God gives life to God's creatures and raises up the dead.

**Did Jesus perform miracles?** No. He himself assured others that he would not perform miracles in that generation (Mk. 18:12): Miracles are impossible, since they are contrary to the immutable laws of nature, which are also of God.

**Where did the name of Christ come from?** From the Greek word *Christos*, and the Greeks, in turn, took this name from the Krishna of India. For this reason, all the exactly-same fabulous miracles that are told of Krishna are also attributed to Jesus: his virginal conception, the slaughter of innocent children, the visit of three kings or magi, the prediction of his martyrdom by religious leaders, his discussion with

doctors as a child, his healing of incurable diseases, and his raising of the dead. It is even claimed that Jesus was very dark-skinned, like the "Black Krishna." The Greek Septuagint translated the Hebrew word "messiah" as "christ," which means "anointed." This great title was given to the great liberators of the subjugated homeland of the Jews, who expected—and still expect—a messiah to free them from their foreign yoke. Christians said that Jesus was the expected Messiah. The Master himself accepted the fact that he did not descend from David, the lineage from which the messiah would descend.

**Was Jesus human or God?** Twice in the gospel of Matthew, Jesus called himself the "Son of Man" (Mt. 8:20 & 16:13). Saint Peter called him "a man approved by God" (Acts 2:22). According to [those writing in the name of] Saint Paul, Jesus was "a man" (1Tim. 2:5; Heb. 2:17), and the apostle John twice assured that "those who do not confess that Jesus has come in the flesh, are not of God, but are anti-Christian" (1Jn. 4:2; 2Jn. 1:7). In addition, the Master was born of a woman, grew in intelligence and stature, cried, and felt hungry, thirsty, tired, irritated, afraid, sad and sleepy; he lived with others, preached, rebuked, and even whipped the merchants at the temple. He also died. He possessed the bodily appearance of a true person, and he demonstrated the feelings and weaknesses of a human soul (Mk. 14:33; Mt. 26:37-39; Lk. 22:42-44; Acts 2:31). Jesus was less than the Father (Jn. 14:28).

**Yet Jesus was simultaneously God?** Saint Matthew (26:63-64) says that Jesus was "Son of God" and "Son of Man." According to Saint Peter, Jesus was "the son of God," and that "God was with him" (Acts 3:13 & 10:38). Saint Paul [and those writing in his name] assure us that "Jesus Christ was great God" (Tit. 2:13; Rom. 9:5) and that "in Christ dwelt the fullness of the Divine in bodily form" (Col. 2:9). In Philippians 2:8, Paul already noted that Jesus was merely "in the form of God." Saint John categorically asserted that Jesus was "the true God and eternal life" (1Jn. 5:20).

**What did Jesus say about this?** The Master believed and assured us that God was within him, speaking and working through him. "The Father and I," he said, "are one" (Jn. 10:30). "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak to you are spoken by the Father, who is in me and works through me" (Jn. 14:10). "I came from the Father, and I return to the Father" (Jn.

16:28). These exact words of Jesus confirm our theory concerning divinity and the soul.

**What do you deduce from all this?** That Jesus was a divine person. According to [one who wrote in the name of] the apostle Paul, Jesus was “holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens” (Heb. 7:26). The apostle John asserted in turn that “there was no sin in him” (1Jn. 3:5). Indeed, in the midst of the furious invectives of his opponents and enemies, Jesus was able to exclaim: “Which of you accuses me of sin?” (Jn 8:46). Even modern authors who do not believe in his divinity, such as Ernest Renan and David Friedrich Strauss, admit that there is no person more perfect than Jesus. Now, according to our previously-shared theory, our soul is a portion of divinity, and we are more or less good, according to the greater or lesser quantity that we possess of the Spirit of God. And, since it is clear that Jesus was a perfect person, it can be said that he was divine. In him, the divine prevailed over the human, and he possessed more of God, than of humanity. Let us not exaggerate the divinity of Jesus either. We must strictly abide by the very words of the Master and the apostles about their humanity. The little that we glean from their strict statements lead to great implausibility and contradictions. Let us not forget that the Philippine Church denies all miracles and denies that the immensity of God can be enclosed in a human being, no matter how eminent and great.

**Do you believe the teachings of Jesus?** Yes. They are the basis of our religious education – but purged of erroneous interpolations – as we present them in the Gospel of the Philippine Church. Jesus, as a divine person and with very holy intentions, must have possessed, and did possess, a clear intuition of things, and consequently, he could hardly have committed the great errors and hoaxes that have been mixed into the Gospels.

### Means of Attracting God’s Mercy

**What are the means for attracting divine mercy to us?** Our good works, charity, repentance, prayer, the study of useful and edifying readings, and the sacraments.

**What do you say about good works?** They are our true safeguard and blessing. According to the apostle James, “If you persevere in good works, your deeds will be blessed. Faith by itself, without

works, is dead. Pure and spotless religion before God our Father is this: Care for orphans and widows in their distress, and keep yourself spotless from this world" (Jas. 1:25-27 and 2:17).

**Is repentance necessary?** Yes. A sinner who is not reborn through sincere repentance and a firm intention to amend one's ways is impure and cannot appear before the purest of all beings.

**What is the prayer of contrition of the Philippine Church?** The following is composed with the very words of Jesus:

### **Prayer of Repentance**

Oh, heavenly Father! I have ungratefully sinned against you and your inexhaustible mercies: I am no longer worthy to be called your child. Treat me no longer as a child, but as one of your unfaithful servants. I deserve this for my iniquities. My God, have mercy on me, a sinner, and do not completely abandon me, for without you I would be hopelessly lost. You, my most merciful Father, do not wish for the smallest or worst of your children to perish. Instead, you said that there will be more celebration in heaven for one sinner who repents, than for ninety-nine righteous people who do not need repentance. These very consoling words, my God, encourage me to throw myself at your feet, repentant and tearful, and crying: "I am sorry, Father! I am sorry!" (Lk. 15:7 & 15:18-21; Lk. 18:13).

**How should one pray?** Prayer must be accompanied by repentance, submission, trust in God, holiness and perseverance. At the same time that we ask for God's help and blessing to receive what we desire, we also direct our efforts to the same purpose, for the Lord says: "I will help those who help themselves." Your prayer must be short and simple, as Jesus recommended, and not the distracted repetition of automatically-recited Our Fathers and Hail Marys. A single Our Father, recited with attention, is worth more than a whole rosary prayed between yawns.

**What might you say about "useful and edifying readings"?** We must enrich our intellects with useful, scientific and moral knowledge. We must also flee from immoral readings, which only please despicable spirits.

## The Sacraments

**What is a sacrament?** The set of prayers and rituals with which we ask God for the special graces we need for our salvation.

**How does Saint Augustine define a sacrament?** *Invisibilis gratie, visibilis forma*: The visible form of an invisible grace.

**Do the sacraments possess intrinsic virtue?** No. If they did, they would be superstitious ceremonies possessing virtue, like the talismanic prayers of *anting-anting* amulets.

**How many sacraments are there?** Basing themselves on the gospels, Protestants, Greek Orthodox, and other Christian sects say that there are only two sacraments instituted by Jesus: Baptism and the Lord's Supper, or the Eucharist. We, however, follow what was established by the Council of Trent, which admits seven sacraments, but we suppress all superstitious elements of them.

**What are those seven sacraments?** Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Marriage.

## Baptism

**What is baptism?** Baptism is the ancient symbol or rite of washing with water before entering the sanctuary or the communion of the children of God (Lev. 16:4 & 16:24). It signals that we must enter the glory of Jesus clean of all moral and material stains. Baptism does not erase "original sin"—an absurd idea not recorded in scripture. Otherwise, it would be said that the Master possessed original sin, since he was also baptized; instead, his baptism merely provided us an example of obedience to the ancient rites, or, in his words, so that all justice—every act of piety (Mk. 3:15)—might be fulfilled. The Bible gives no indication that baptism cleanses us from inherited sin, and all Christian authors, except the Romanists, maintain that baptism is a visible profession of faith in God and in the teachings of Jesus, our union with God and Jesus, and our duty to live a new life according to their precepts, with repentance and remission of sin (Lk. 24:47; Acts 22:16). William Wilberforce Rand states that "baptism is not a regenerative formality, but a sign of regeneration."

**What did the Master's teach on baptism?** Jesus, although he was baptized, did not baptize himself. He only baptized his disciples. His baptism, like the worship he preached, was spiritual (Jn. 4:2 & 4:24).

As the Master explained to Nicodemus, whoever wishes to enter the Church or corporation of God must definitively die to self and sin and be reborn in the purity and grace of God, forever sanctifying the spirit and body as a temple dedicated to the Lord, in the same way that people dive into water and come out cleansed of impurity. The children of this world are worldly and of the flesh. If you wish to become a child of God, you must possess the same spirit of virtue, peace and charity that shines in our Father, and if you do not possess the spirit of Jesus, you do not belong to him (Rom. 8:9 ). Saint Peter said that the ceremony of washing catechumens with water is not necessary to receive the spirit of Jesus (Acts 10:41-47, 11:15-16). Baptism was instituted by Saint John the Baptist, not by Jesus. The baptism of the divine Master was spiritual, and his spirit is acquired not with mere ceremonies, but by studying his holy Gospel and adapting our conduct to his teachings.

**How is one baptized?** With pure water – lukewarm, if appropriate for the health of the person. The baptized must not be smeared with disgusting saliva, which could be a vehicle for diseases. Instead, they are anointed with perfumed oil, according to the early Christians Tertullian and Saint Cyril.

**Are we baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity?** No. We are baptized in the name of Jesus, as recorded in the acts and epistles of the apostles. A trinity of gods is imagined and not biblical.

**Is it true that spiritual kinship is established between the godparents and the parents of the baptized?** No. There is no such thing in the Bible.

## Confirmation

**What is confirmation?** The ratification by adults of their baptism or entry into the Church of Jesus before they possessed the use of reason. The true foundation of confirmation is that, having introduced the custom of baptizing newborns, it became necessary for those possessing reason to ratify that baptism, for its validity. Confirmation is the *myrron* and *chrisma* of the Greek Christians. Jesus did not institute confirmation, and Acts 8:16, with its suggestion that baptism in the name of Jesus is insufficient and that one receives the spirit of God through the laying on of hands, is interpreted as interpolated and improbable. This does not appear in the oldest texts,



which is why Protestants print it in parentheses. Therefore, those who are baptized as adults do not need to be confirmed, since they are immediately admitted to our Communion. This is recorded in the writings of Saint Justin Martyr, an early Christian.

**What is the practice regarding adult confirmation?** So as not to incur mortal sin, confirmandi must confess beforehand. They possess the use of reason and must purify themselves of their sins before entering the holy congregation of Jesus.

### Confession

**What is penance or confession?** It is the act of confessing or acknowledging our sins (Lev. 5:5 & 26:40; Num. 5:6-7; Jer. 3:13 & 14:20; Hosea 5:15).

**To whom shall we confess?** To God. It is enough for us to confess to God alone (Ezra 9:6; Neh. 1:6; Dan. 9:8; Ps. 32:5; 1Jn. 1:9).

**Who can forgive sins?** God alone (Ps. 86:5 & 103:3; Is. 43:25; Dan. 9:9; Mk. 2:7; Lk. 5:21 & 7:47-48; Mt. 9:6).

**Why does James (5:16) say that we must confess to one another and forgive each other's faults?** This refers to the personal offenses we have against each other.

**When and how did auricular confession originate?** In 763, Chrodegang, Bishop of Metz, established confession for his monastic institute. He did so with the same purpose as the Dominicans of the Philippines and other friars of the world, who have established the obligation to denounce to their vicar the serious faults of their brothers. This was the first historical instance of auricular confession, since apostolic texts referred to something very different. Some authors suppose that Rome established confession to discover the conspiracies that were hatched against their abuses, and to allow bad priests to communicate more freely with women. Only in 1215 did the Lateran Council decree that everyone possessing the use of reason, under pain of mortal sin, must confess to a priest at least once a year. Before this, according to Johann Lorenz Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*, it was left to the discretion of Christians to confess their sins to God or a spiritual director.

**What is the plausible reason for confession?** The only reason is that, since the uneducated did not understand God as an invisible spirit, priests arrogated to themselves the representation of God. They

appeared before people, judging sinners, advising and threatening them with the punishments of a true judge, and this was certainly effective for the ignorant masses. Having faith in the confessor and the penitent, the Lord, who with the slightest pretext shares mercy with us, will not fail to sanction the forgiveness given by the confessor in God's name, unless the confessor is an accomplice of the penitent. We, therefore, accept what Saint John (20:22-23) says: If you do it with a holy spirit or intention, "whose sins you forgive are forgiven, and whose sins you withhold are withheld."

**What is essential for the remission of sins ?** Sincere repentance (Acts 3:19), which involves a firm purpose of amendment, accompanied by a lively hope in God's clemency, as well as possible repair of the damage caused (Num. 5:6-7).

**With mere confession, will our sins go completely unpunished?** Saint Augustine believed that God, as a fair judge, forgives but still punishes evil actions or thoughts, such that we must always fear sinning, despite confession.

**How should we confess?** As penitents, we must remember *for ourselves* our sins, one by one, and focus on their repugnance. Details do not matter in the act of confession, so long as we remember for ourselves the total horror that results from the examination of our faults, provoking sincere repentance and a firm resolution to make amends, not only for the sake of receiving blessing, but for our entire lives. Penitents manifest their sins with great decency, disguising them so as not to cause scandal, even if the confessor does not understand the penitent, since he has no need to know their sins, but only those doubts in which the opinion of an Apostle might be required.

**What attitude should the Apostle have?** That of a severe judge, and that of a loyal and honest counselor: He will not display repulsive delight in listening to the filth that comes out of the penitent's mouth or make any effort to understand it, since this would be very unseemly. The Apostle's decency will only allow him to say: "Tell me the doubts or tribulations that most torment you, that I might help to enlighten you or drive them away." Other questions are shameless, and the penitent should not answer them. Instead, the penitent should immediately leave the infamous confessor who asks such indecent questions and denounce him to the Bishop: Such a confessor deserves absolute contempt and immediate punishment.

**What is the most serious defect of confessions, for which they are mortally combated?** Shameless confessors have committed many indecencies and abuses, taking advantage of the ignorance of penitents.

**How should confessors treat the dying?** Encourage them to repent of their sins and to repair the damage they have caused, and comfort them by inspiring confidence in the infinite mercy of our heavenly Father. Do not terrify them, or, through evil means, cause them to make donations to the Church to the detriment of their relatives who often most need those resources. This should be avoided by every honest Apostle.

**What is the usefulness of confession?** A good confessor can provide you intelligent and honest advice, for your amendment.

**What should confessors pay attention to?** The main defects of penitents, to remedy them through effective advice.

**Please expound on the following commandments of Moses and Jesus.**

**1. Love God with all your heart and strength.** God, our most loving Father is a diligent and tireless benefactor who deserves our fervent affection above all things, and our deep gratitude. To show this love and gratitude, we make the small sacrifice of our passions, so that, being pure, holy and charitable, we might be pleasing to God. Love of God does not consist in praying a lot, or spending several hours at church, neglecting housework and the needs of the family. It does not consist in making material gifts to the Eternal, however pleasing it may be to God that we make donations to promote God's worship and the devotion of the people. Love of God consists in fulfilling God's commandments of virtue and charity to neighbor, especially to the poor, who are God's children and whose indigence awaits its remedy by those of better fortune.

**2. Love your neighbor as yourself.** It is not enough not to harm others; we have an obligation to only do good works—for which we do not suffer great damage to our own interests, since love for neighbor must be balanced with a love for what is ours. The rich are mere managers of their property, sharing it with the poor. According to Jesus, God always rewards us a hundredfold, or even more, and good administrators will be given even greater administration, such that those who are charitable will become even richer. Our Apostles will share with the wealthy the penalty of making them give alms.

**3. Work six days a week.** Discover the way of life of your penitents, and, if you find that they do not work enough, force them to work, since idleness is the mother of all vices.

**4. Dedicate holidays to prayer and meditation on God, but not to sin, since it is better to work than to sin.** God punishes those who force their servants and beasts to work on holidays. Have pity on them, so that God might also have pity on you. Masters are obliged to permit their servants and maids to go out after the principal meal [on holidays], from noon until seven at night. This is done in Europe and America. If the house cannot be left without servants, some will go out on Sunday, and the others on Thursday. It is a very serious sin to mercilessly treat servants or to tyrannize them by preventing them from engaging in legal love affairs.

**5. Honor and serve your parents, and take due care of your children.** Remind penitents that those who do not know how to serve and honor their parents are unfortunate. According to Sacred Scripture, those who serve their parents well will be happy and live a long life, and vice versa: This commandment also obliges parents to take good care of their children, by giving them the best food, clothing, and education possible, within their resources.

**6. Worship God alone.** This worship must not be diminished by worship of saints and angels. The Bible forbids such worship. You will not mention the name of the Lord, except for holy and necessary things, and always with respect. It is disgusting to hear rude people misuse the name of God, and we must not change the commandments of the Eternal, written in Nature and in our consciences, with other “commandments” dictated at the whim of ignorant and exploitative priests.

**7. The spiteful and vindictive are to be scorned, while those who forgive wrongs with nobility are highly praised.** Bullies and rowdy people are praised only by fools; to the sensible, they are pedants with criminal instincts. Forgive always, that your faults may also be excused. Bullies will suffer greatly. Do not be bullies or abuse the weak, since the weak, out of their own fear of their own weakness, are the ones who usually kill the bullies. Nobody is strong against a revolver or dagger.

**8. You shall not commit adultery.** The one who seeks after a married woman suffers infamy, since there are so many single women, and he exposes himself to murder by the offended husband.

Despicable is the one who is bogged down in the most disgusting of vices, which is lust, and which makes us equal to brutes devoid of all shame. How much more for a woman who falls into this infamy!

If a woman confesses to you that she is pursued by a man who cannot be her husband (because, for example, they are close relatives), she must be forced to distance herself from him under any pretext. Threaten her with the great dishonor to which she will be exposed, since the one who does not run away from danger ends up falling into it.

Force the man with illegitimate children to repair the damage by marrying the wronged woman, and, if possible, force them to feed their children, even if the children were conceived through adultery.

**9. Force thieves to return, without any excuse, what they have stolen, or its value, sending it in an anonymous letter, or giving it to the confessor, so that he can take charge of returning it.** When the news spreads that an Aglipayan Apostle has returned a stolen object or its value, it will give him a good reputation and increase the glory of the Religion. It would be criminal for the confessor to keep the money or object that has been given to him for return to its owner. Threaten penitents that, sooner or later, they will lose what they have stolen, and the later it is, the greater the punishment, since the damage suffered by the loser will also be greater. You can live rich now with what you have stolen, but, when you die, your beloved children, already accustomed to the good life, will lose it, and many, instead of one, will pay for the crime. The fruit of theft is always cursed.

Usury is another form of theft. It is always a sin to demand interest from someone in need, and it is an obligation to lend (even when we are sure we won't be repaid) in amounts that won't hurt us much in the event of insolvency. Jesus commanded us: "Give to anyone who asks, and do not refuse the one who asks to borrow from you" (Mt. 5:42).

Legal interest varies from 6 to 8 percent per year. You cannot charge more, unless it is a business that produces more than double the stipulated interest. Anything beyond this is theft – and theft from the needy.

**10. We do not say, "You shall not lie," because lying is sometimes warranted.** If a man threatens to kill his wife, who is hiding in our house, for instance, we must naturally lie if the persecutor were to ask

us the whereabouts of his wife. Except in similar cases, lying is a very despicable vice, and a lying person is despised.

It is also unseemly to speak ill of others, and critics do not have many friends. Gossipy women are despicable, and gossipy men are even worse. Such behavior is not proper for well-educated and noble people.

Many important things—like gaming, drunkenness and other excesses—are missing from Moses' Ten Commandments, proving that they are not really from God.

**11. It is a sin to gamble with money,** (1) because it is a sin against charity: a player wants to win against another; (2) because through gambling you desire to acquire money without working, which is like robbery; (3) because gambling ruins families. You start with a small amount, and you end up losing everything, even your shame. Women, especially single women, should be prohibited from gambling. A woman fond of gambling almost always ends up losing her honor. Above all, this despicable vice must be absolutely forbidden for Apostles: The gambling Apostle is an unworthy minister of Jesus and must be immediately expelled for such rude indecency. Through their scams, gambling priests tend to drag priestly dignity to the ground.

**12. It is also necessary to prohibit drunkenness and the smoking of opium, especially by Apostles.** These are causes for immediate expulsion.

## Eucharist

**What does Eucharist mean?** "Thanksgiving." The *agape* or charity meal was called "Eucharist" because, before partaking of it, participants gave thanks to God, who provided it for them.

**Was it a ceremony like the mass?** No. Jesus never celebrated mass or practiced any ceremony. The religion of Jesus was spiritual, and not ritual or external.

**So, what did the divine Master practice?** On Saturdays, in the synagogue (a type of school or tribunal, but not a temple) or on a mountainside, he read some passage from Moses or the prophets, and then he preached with simple lessons and aphorisms, illustrated with stories, examples or parables. Then he brought together the food that attendees brought, according to the resources of each one. He made

them sit down in groups of fifty, then he distributed the food equally among them, the rich sharing and supplying what the poor lacked, like true siblings. For this reason, these fraternal meals were called *agapas* or charity meals, and later "Eucharist."

**How was the Eucharist instituted?** Hours before Jesus was imprisoned, he said goodbye to his disciples during an intimate Passover meal. He had them eat from one loaf, saying that this was the figure of his body, and that, by eating it, they participated as true siblings in a single body. Then he offered them a single cup of wine, adding that the wine symbolized his blood and that, after they had drunk it, it made them like blood siblings. It is absurd to think that the bread and wine really become the body and blood of Jesus; they become something disgusting that is expelled from the body, as physiology inescapably demonstrates.

**Why do we imitate the mass of the Romanists?** For the same reason that the Christians had to imitate the external worship of the pagans: due to the need to compromise with the routine to which the unlearned adhere. Deep down, our Eucharistic Office is very different from the mass; it is more biblical and more in line with the practices of early Christians.

**What is "mass"?** It is the name of the pagan worship imitated by Christians of Greco-Roman origin. The pagans, at the end of their worship, said: "*Ite, missa est*" (Go, the mass is over). According to Romanists, "mass" comes from *mitto* (to send) and means "mission."

**How is the Eucharistic worship of the Philippine Church different from the mass?** (1) The mass imitates pagan rituals, and even the host resembles the sun-shaped cake offered by worshipers of the sun; our Eucharist, on the other hand, is inspired by the charity meals instituted by Jesus. (2) According to the Romanists, the mass is a sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus, which we offer to God for our sins; our Eucharistic worship is not a sacrifice. The sublime Master did not establish such a sacrifice, and it would be absurd to believe that Jesus did so, when he precisely abolished sacrifices, recalling three times in the Gospels the words of the prophet Hosea: "God does not desire sacrifice, but mercy; knowledge of God, rather than holocausts or burnt offerings."

**What does "holocaust" mean?** In Hebrew, *olah* means to "rise up," like a flame, and in Greek, "holocaust" means "entirely burnt." The ancients killed animals and burned them on altars as a gift to God. A

“holocaust,” then, is the bloody, burnt gift. “Offerings,” on the other hand, were the fruits and other things that were offered to the Lord, that were not bloody or burned.

**How did the word “sacrifice” originate?** All these holocausts and offerings, once offered to God, were considered sacred. From this came the word “sacrifice,” which means “to make sacred” a gift for the Maker.

**What is expiatory sacrifice?** Expiatory sacrifice is offered to expiate or to pay for our debts – which is a mistake, since God is not a judge who changes his mind as a result of gifts or bribes. The belief that Jesus has saved us with his death is absurd, and Jesus never said such a thing. It would never be just to sacrifice an innocent person for the sake of the wicked, just as it is inconceivable that a parent could be pleased with the death of a holy child, to atone for the faults of that child’s wicked siblings.

**What is the most serious defect of the Roman mass?** The fact that it has substituted biblical prayers for others, mixing in invocations to the Virgin and the Saints, despite the Council of Carthage’s prohibition of directing prayers at the altar to the saints, to Jesus, and to the imagined Holy Spirit – all prayers were to be offered to God alone, the creator of the Universe.

**What did Moses command regarding worship?** That the so-called commandments of God be read at worship, something that Protestants and Romanists have suppressed.

### **Anointing or Healing of the Sick**

**What is extreme unction?** It is the act of anointing the dying with oil, asking God to heal them, if God pleases, or, if not, to grant them a good death. They reduced to a simple rite at a time of need one of the highest and principal missions that Jesus himself practiced with special zeal and entrusted to his apostles: the mission of seeking out the sick with interest, and healing them free of charge and with charity (Mt. 10:8; Mk. 3:15; Lk. 9:6).

**What sacred duty do our Apostles have toward the sick?** As ministers of Christianity, which is a heavenly religion of charity, they will possess knowledge of medicine and home remedies. They will equip themselves with medicines, according to their resources, and they will look after the suffering, especially the poor, whom they will



cure with real interest, free of charge, and even asking for alms from others, to provide them needed food and clothing. Parish Priests who behave in this way will be regarded like a beloved handkerchief by their parishioners, and God will reward them superabundantly, while other selfish and negligent Parish Priests will be justly despised and hated by their parishioners, who would otherwise reward them with their services and mutual favors.

**What else should the Apostle do when visiting the sick?** At the same time that he heals the body, he will be interested in curing the ills of the soul, trying to correct the defects of the patient. He will remind the sick of what God, through the mouth of Moses, said: “If you listen attentively to the voice of the Eternal, your God, and do what is right before God’s eyes, hearing God’s commandments and keeping all God’s precepts, I, the Eternal, will be your doctor.” (Ex. 15:26). The Apostle will console and encourage the sick, inspiring them with deep confidence in the sweet parental love of God. From whom are we going to expect mercy and forgiveness, if not from our heavenly Father who so much recommended unlimited forgiveness? The Apostle will never terrify people or exploit their credulity with absurd ideas of hell or purgatory. The best thing that the Apostle can do is to help the sick make amends for the damage they have caused. The Apostle will administer more than extreme unction, and will seek out more than the dying, including all who are sick, especially the poor who are deprived of medical assistance. In this way, Apostles will be worthy of the apostolate of charity that God, our Lord, has entrusted to them.

## Holy Orders

**What is meant by “orders”?** Determined status or class. The first Epistle of Saint Peter quotes Exodus 19:6, asserting that the people of Israel are “a chosen race, a royal priesthood,” or, according to the original, “a kingdom of priests” – but this applied to all people, and not to certain people.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> According to Romanists, Holy Orders is a sacrament of the new Law, by which the cleric is given the grace and spiritual power to consecrate the Eucharist, assist the consecrator, and duly perform other ecclesiastical offices (*Canon Law* by Gómez-Salazar; *Canonical Institutions* by Devoti).

**Does order also mean hierarchy, as the Romanists say?**<sup>15</sup> Certainly, but Jesus did not establish any hierarchy. Instead, he forbade [his disciples] to claim to be greater than others, adding that he, as the greatest, was the servant of all. According to Saint Jerome, there was no difference between a presbyter and a bishop in the time of the apostles. In his first universal Epistle (5:1), [someone writing in the name and spirit of] Saint Peter affirmed that he “was an elder, like the others.” [Someone writing in the name and spirit of] Saint Paul advised that only “the elders who govern well should be considered worthy of double honor, namely those who work in preaching and teaching (1Tim. 5:17).

**Did Jesus establish priests?** No. He only had apostles. A priest is a “sacrificer,” and he who definitively abolished sacrifices could not have established “sacrificers.” At the time of the Master and the apostles, there were no priests in the Church. Throughout the New Testament, this word is not used of the apostles or elders of the first Christian community; the word “priest” was only used for the Jewish priests of the ancient Law.

**Did Jesus employ any ritual in choosing his apostles?** No. He did not lay hands on them or breathe the imaginary Holy Spirit, which is obviously a later interpolation in the false Gospel of John (20:22), since the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 2, says that the supposed Holy Spirit appeared only on the day of Pentecost, after Jesus had already died. Imitating Jewish ceremonies, the apostles later adopted the laying on of hands that was formerly practiced on the heads of victims offered to God (Lev. 1:4 & 3:8). The first seven deacons or chosen assistants were presented to the apostles, and the apostles, after praying, laid their hands on them. This was not a ceremony to consecrate priests, since the apostles also laid hands on the people of Samaria without making them priests. Like Romanist confirmations, they invoked the Spirit of God (Acts 6:6 & 8:17). Neither does the Bible support what Lárraga says in his *Moral Theology*, that Jesus instituted Holy Orders at the Last Supper.

**What does “apostle” mean? “Envoy” or “missionary.”**

**What was the mission of Jesus’ apostles?** He sent them to preach repentance and rectify old errors, transforming greed into charity, pride into humility, revenge into forgiveness, ritual into interior

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<sup>15</sup> *Roman Catechism*, Part II, ch. 7.

piety, etc., and to heal and comfort the sick (Mk. 3:14; Mk. 6:7 & 6:12-13).

**What does “presbyter” mean?** “Elder.” The first Christian communities were very democratic and were governed by the intelligence, fervor, and honesty of the most respectable elders.

**What does “bishop” mean?** “Overseer” or pastor of a church, and, as has been said, bishops and priests were originally the same.

**What are bishops for?** They are pastors of Christian communities, or, as Saint Paul and Saint Barnabas said, they shepherd the Church, the flock of the Lord (Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1).

**Can a priest ordain other priests?** They did in the past. By necessity [since there were no bishops], the first bishops had to be consecrated by mere priests. Saint Paul was a presbyter or elder who ordained presbyters and bishops. The same was true of his assistants, Timothy and Titus, a deacon and priest (2Cor. 8:23, 1Tim. 5:22, Tit. 1:5). It would be absurd to believe that a presbyter, who can change a wafer into the true God, according to them, could not, in the case of necessity and in the absence of a bishop, consecrate a bishop chosen by the Church.

**Where is the fullness of Holy Orders?** In the presbyterate, since the bishopric is nothing more than a hierarchy that emerged 100 years after Jesus died. The hierarchical distinction between bishops and priests appeared for the first time in St. Ignatius’ Letter to Polycarp (107 A.D.). If the bishopric were another sacrament, there would be eight sacraments.

**Were the consecrations of the first bishops of the Philippine Church valid, since they were performed by mere priests?** Of course they were valid, because: (1) There is no Biblical text that prohibits priests from consecrating bishops; instead, the acts and epistles of the apostles recorded elders consecrating bishops. (2) The Philippine Independent Church, by electing and having priests consecrate its bishops, did nothing more than comply with the mandate of Jesus. The sublime Master advised us that, if siblings persist in wronging us, against all justice and despite attempts at reconciliation, we should flee from them and consider them as strangers. The Roman Church, after having falsified all the beautiful teachings of Jesus, adulterating them with very gross paganism and idolatry, and after having unjustly executed Gómez, Burgos, Zamora, Rubio, Herrera, Díaz, Prieto, and so many poor, martyred clergymen, persisted in

stripping Filipino clergy of their canonical rights and properties, ignoring the humble pleas of our priests. To avoid frequent clashes and resentments, many sensible and virtuous priests separated from [the Romanist church] and naturally, when constituting a new church, they had to elect and consecrate their own bishops, invoking the help and sanction of God. It would be folly to pretend that Rome would help and sanction them. They acted on the authorization of Jesus, when he said: "If two or more of you agree on earth about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by your Father who is in heaven; because where two or three are gathered in my name, there I will be in the midst of them (Mt. 18:16-20).

**Whom shall we elect to direct our Church?** According to the recently-discovered *Didache* or "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" (1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century), "for the positions of bishops and deacons of the Lord, you will choose humble, disinterested, truthful and tested people, because they also do the job of preachers and doctors. Do not despise them, since they are your dignitaries."

**How are they to be chosen ?** [The *Didache* continues:] "The bishop must be elected by all the people. After his appointment has been approved, the assembly will gather on Sunday, with the board of elders and bishops, to give their consent." In his *Apostolic Constitutions* (4<sup>th</sup> century), Leo I said: "The one who is placed above all, must be chosen by all."

**What is first tonsure?** It is a novitiate. It is not an order, but only constitutes a layperson in the clerical state.

**What are the minor orders?** There are four: (1) the order of *ostiarios* or porters of the Church; (2) that of the readers, or those in charge of reading the Old and New Testaments; (3) that of the exorcists or expellers of imaginary demons;<sup>16</sup> (4) that of the acolytes or sacristans, in charge of the cruets, candlesticks, and assisting the celebrant.

**Does the Philippine Church accept these minor orders?** Yes, except the order of exorcist, because no serious and enlightened person can believe in the absurd existence of the devil. We do not believe minor orders to be useless ceremonies, but a careful novitiate in which the greatest possible care, cleanliness and zeal is required of aspirants in the internal and external arrangement of our churches,

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<sup>16</sup> The Roman Church itself, realizing that it cannot believe in the existence of demons, has greatly restricted the power of exorcism.

thus avoiding the shameful oversights and negligence that are not proper of Apostles ennobled by modern culture. Above all, [the minor orders require] much study of modern religious doctrines. No one will receive these orders who has not proven their knowledge of this *Catechesis*, our *Divine Office*, the *Philippine Bible*, and our *Constitutional Rules*.

**What are the major orders?** The subdiaconate, the diaconate, and the presbyterate. Romanists consider them as sacred; but since, in the acts and epistles of the apostles, only Deacons and Priests or Bishops are mentioned, it is generally believed that the sacrament is only for these orders. Saint Thomas Aquinas believed that all seven orders were sacraments. We repeat that the episcopate is mere hierarchy.

**What is a subdeacon?** The deacon's assistant in serving the Priest or Bishop. According to the Romanists, the subdeacon is in charge of reading the epistles of the apostles; as almost all of these are considered apocryphal and we give more importance to the teaching of the Gospel and the Commandments of God, we assign the subdeacon to read the commandments of God, to teach the gospel, and to care for the church.

**What does "deacon" mean?** It is a Greek word meaning "servant"; the deacon helps the presbyter and is responsible for reading and teaching our *Gospel* to children and adults, and for collecting alms for the poor and for the care of the church.

**What are the qualities of deacons?** According to Saint Paul, "they must be honest, not duplicitous in their words, not given to much wine, not greedy for dishonorable gains, keeping the gospel with a pure conscience. They should first be tested, and, if they prove to be blameless, then you may allow them to exercise the ministry. Let women [deaconesses or ladies of the Church] also be honest, not slanderous, sober and faithful in all things. Like bishops, all deacons who do not have the gift of continence should be husbands of only one wife, and they should manage well their children and their house. Those who have exercised their ministry well will gain good standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Jesus Christ" (1Tim. 3:8-13, 1Cor. 7:8-9 & 7:32).

**What is the presbyterate?** The presbyterate is the last order in which the apostleship of Jesus is perfected. To reach this degree, one must have ascended all the steps of virtue and gathered a wealth of Science, both religious and profane, to be a worthy depositary,

defender and propagator of the Gospel of Jesus, which is the presbyter's main duty. Saint Paul said to the elders, "Act as befits the vocation to which you have been called, bearing one another in love, with all humility, meekness, and patience, striving to maintain unity of spirit in a bond of peace and building up Jesus' Church in justice and true holiness" (Eph. 4).

**Were there deaconesses and women apostles at the time of the apostles?** Yes. It is clear that Jesus himself was helped by several holy women, such as Mary Magdalene; Joanna, Chuza's wife; Susana; and many others who served him from their wealth (Lk. 8:2-3). Saint Paul mentions other coadjutors: the distinguished apostle Junia, the deaconess Phoebe, Priscilla, Mary, Tryphena and Tryphosa, and Persis of Rome. Thus, the Philippine Church has also established deaconesses and Women's Committees.

**What are the main duties of deaconesses in the Philippine Church?** Their main duties are: (1) to learn and teach the *Philippine Gospel* to women and children in churches and schools, and to preach at religious functions of the fairer sex; (2) to study home medicine and hygiene, under the direction of doctors, and serve as "nurses" to the bereaved; (3) to be responsible for charitable works; and (4) to decorate the altar and, for those who a good voice, to sing in the choir.

### **Duties of the Apostles of the Philippine Independent Church**

The duties that our Apostles will necessarily fulfill, according to our *Constitutional Rules*, are:

1. **Religiousness.** The Apostle will consecrate himself completely to God, since that is the highest object of the apostolate. He will safeguard the greater glory of the Supreme Creator day and night, promoting worship with frequent religious solemnities, daily improving the conditions of our churches, and showing great care, good taste and extreme cleanliness in their interior arrangement. He will attempt to earn the elevated title of minister of God through his conduct, which will mirror to the faithful purity and charitable and noble sentiments. He is well persuaded that, only by keeping his reputation without blemish, will he inspire respect and sympathy in the people, especially in this time of struggle and great need to

demonstrate with obvious facts the superiority of our Church over its persecutors.

2. **Diligence.** He will despise comforts, fatigue, inclement weather, and ungodly hours of the night, in order to run to administer spiritual aid to those who need it. He will always treat people with affection and never with the harshness that other priests have treated him. He will provide formation to Men's Committees, Women's Commissions, or deaconesses of our Church, not only in the towns, but also in remote neighborhoods. He will promote their interests and defend them from attacks of the enemy, but never descending into the terrain of human passions, since bad examples are not to be imitated.

3. **Instruction.** He will dedicate his hours of rest to the study of the divine teachings of Jesus Christ, as contained in our *Gospel*, and will spread them. He will seek to establish schools for boys and girls, to sow in their virgin intelligences the greatest benevolences of our divine Master and other useful, modern teachings. Rest assured that, if he manages to form a group of truly Christian citizens through his evangelical diligence and his exemplary conduct, this will be his greatest crown in heaven, and the strongest bulwark on earth, protecting him and our Church. He must also be very convinced of the great need he has to study and accumulate much knowledge, to be able to answer the challenges of our opponents.

4. **Obedience.** Wherever there is a formal society of people, recommending obedience and deep respect for leaders is excusable. Thus, with Christian meekness, he will dedicate himself to obeying and complying in good will with whatever orders he receives from his superiors, considering that he must set an example of discipline and submission now, in order for him to be obeyed by his subordinates tomorrow.

Serious lack of religiosity and obedience may determine his separation from our Church, and a serious lack of zeal and instruction may cause him to return to the seminary.

In order to fulfill the duties of his difficult and thorny position, he will always, throughout his life, invoke with a pure heart the most effective help of God, frequently praying alone and, even better, accompanied by the faithful, for the mutual edification of all. Common prayer is also pleasing to the Most High.

## Duties of Bishops

### Oath

I, \_\_\_\_, elected Bishop of \_\_\_\_, from today forward solemnly promise and swear to be a faithful servant of God and a diligent shepherd of God's sheep. I swear to follow the divine teachings of Our Lord Jesus and those of his apostles and prophets, contained in the *Gospel* of our Church. I swear to respect the Bible as a sacred book, except for its human interpolations, the existence of which Jesus himself declared in the Holy Gospel (Mk. 7:9, Mt. 5:21-48, Mt. 9:14, Mt. 12:1-7, Mt 15:3). I swear never to go against the truths (not the errors) of the Bible, or against the sciences, because these truths will never be incompatible, and I will advocate Christian charity, freedom and the progress of humanity. I accept the episcopal apostolate of \_\_\_\_, and I swear to carry it out with holy zeal and exemplary conduct. I swear to obey the Philippine Independent Catholic Apostolic Church and, in its name, its Supreme Bishop, abiding by, fulfilling, and enthusiastically defending, first of all, the *Gospel* and the *Divine Office* of the Philippine Independent Church, with its *Ceremonial*, its *Catechesis*, its *Epistles* and its *Constitutional Rules*, as long as they are not subsequently modified by the aforementioned official books of ours, and secondly, the provisions of the Supreme Bishop or his representatives who are superior to me, as any well-educated person must respect and abide by the rules and authorities of the communion in which he wishes to appear, at least while he remains in it. Thus, then, I will retire before conspiring, supporting, or consenting to any conspiracy against this Holy Church of Jesus, against its official books or its legitimate authorities. On the contrary, I will oppose any attempt against them, and my entire, humble person will be dedicated to helping the needs of our Church and to sustaining and defending it with all the strength that God gives me. I swear to interest myself as much as I can in the propaganda of our *Gospel*, which is the spiritual sap essential to the life of our communion, striving to follow the example and exhortations of Jesus to free intelligence from the slavery of errors, which, as a result of being old, are intangible truths that routinely prevent all progress. I will ensure that the worship of God in my diocese gains ever-greater brilliance and everything that redounds to the good of the souls entrusted to me and to the progress of our Church, placing the greatest interest in the good organization of a



seminary and of Christian schools in parishes. I will make the clergy observe the purest discipline and the most cordial confraternity, eradicating any increase in discord with paternal solicitude and impartiality, personally visiting the parishes frequently, at least twice a year. I will not sell, donate or encumber any property of the Church, without the permission of the Supreme Bishop, to whom I will give an account of everything, and I will administer them faithfully as ordered by our *Constitutional Rules*, to whose penal articles I submit. In summary: I swear before God and before God's Church that my diocese and my modest person will be useful and obedient elements of the Church, and not stones for its stumbling.

## Marriage

**What is marriage?** It is the sacrament that perfects the legal union of a man and a woman for the high purpose of the conservation of the species.<sup>17</sup>

**What are the mutual duties of spouses?** They are mutual affection, help, subjection, fidelity and respect. Excessive and disrespectful trust produces abuse and disgust.

**What are the special duties of the husband?** They are: (1) considering his wife not as a slave, but as a worthy companion throughout his life, whom he must dearly love and serve as if she were flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones (Gen. 2:23), treating her with great benevolence as a delicate vessel (1Pet. 3:7); (2) working as much as possible to meet the needs of his family. He will have no other source of well-being than sanctifying work; (3) leading his family along the path of virtue, charity, work and study, and carefully attending to the education of his children; (4) fleeing from vices and seeking his legitimate joy in the sweet peace of his home.

**What are the special duties of the wife?** They are: (1) giving fidelity, respect and submission to her husband; (2) pleasing and serving him with affection, anticipating and preparing for his needs; (3) avoiding everything that may upset her husband; (4) managing the house as an intelligent and industrious housewife, with economy, cleanliness and tranquility, attempting to attract her husband to the

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<sup>17</sup> The canonists define marriage this way: "Marriage is a conjugal joining between legitimate persons, of a man and a woman, which retains an indissoluble union of life" (*Roman Catechism*).

home and keeping him away from places of perdition; (5) taking great care in the early education of their children, trying to instill in them from their early years habits of work and honesty, good feelings, and love for God. She will teach her children elements of religion, and practice it: A house without prayer cannot be holy or blessed by the Eternal. As the sacred book of Proverbs (19:14) says, you will “inherit a house and wealth from your parents; but only from God will you receive a prudent wife” –and a good husband and children, we might add.<sup>18</sup>

**What should the Apostle know when authorizing a marriage, in order to avoid serious consequences?** [The Apostle should know] the current law on marriage, which is General Order No. 68 of the American Military Government, of December 18, 1899.

**According to that General Order, who is capable of getting married?** Any unmarried male fourteen years of age or older, and unmarried females twelve years or older, who do not suffer from impediments [to marriage].

**What are incestuous and invalid marriages?** Those celebrated between legitimate or natural third-degree relatives, that is, between parents and children, ascendants and descendants, between siblings, even if they do not share both father and mother, between uncles and nieces, between aunts and nephews, between stepfathers and stepdaughters, and between stepmothers and stepsons.

**Can a subsequent marriage, celebrated by a married person during the life of their other spouse, be valid?** No. It is illegal and void, except in the following cases: (1) If the first marriage has been annulled or dissolved by a competent court; (2) If the first spouse was absent for seven consecutive years at the time of the second marriage and is generally presumed dead. In both cases, the marriage thus contracted is valid until its nullity is declared by a competent court.

**What should our Apostles take into account regarding the marriages of Chinese, Japanese and other foreigners?** That all marriages celebrated outside the Philippines, when performed in accordance with the laws in force in the country of the celebration, are valid in these Islands.

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<sup>18</sup> Simonides of Amorgos (Greek poet, 680 B.C.) also said: “Jupiter is the one who gives to men women, who are such excellent and discreet housewives.”

**Who can authorize marriages?** Any judge below the Supreme Court, and any justice of the peace, priest or minister of the Gospel of any denomination.

**Can marriages be authorized by “mountain ministers,” Buddhists, Confucianists, or other non-Christian religions?** The General Order only says “priest or minister of the Gospel of any denomination.”

**What formality does General Order No. 68 establish for the validity of marriage?** It does not require a special form of marriage celebration, but the contracting parties must declare, before the person who solemnizes the act, that they take each other as husband and wife. There have already been cases of marriage annulment due to the contracting parties not making this declaration.

**What must the Apostle do to authorize a marriage?** The person who solemnizes a marriage must issue and sign a certificate stating: (1) the true names and surnames of the contracting parties, and their addresses; (2) their respective ages; and (3) the consent of the parent, guardian or any person in charge of the contracting party if the man is under 20 years of age or the woman is under 18 years of age,<sup>19</sup> and said consent has been obtained. To ascertain these facts, the person solemnizing the marriage is authorized to examine and receive witness statements under oath, as well as affidavits, stating these facts on the certificate. Marriage may not be contracted by minors without the consent prescribed above, given personally by the parent, guardian or person in charge of the minor, or by means of a written document signed by said persons and two witnesses, one of whom will testify under oath regarding the veracity of the certificate.<sup>20</sup>

The person who surprises or deceives a priest in order to celebrate an illegal marriage, which is nonetheless valid according to the provisions of the Church, will be punished with imprisonment for six months and one day, to six years. The person who uses violence or intimidation [to pressure a priest to celebrate a marriage, will be punished] with imprisonment for four to six years (*Penal Code of the Philippines*, Art. 474).

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<sup>19</sup> Law Amendment, No. 1451.

<sup>20</sup> The contracting parties must also sign, if they know how, to prevent them from later denying that they contracted marriage.

The minor who contracts marriage without parental consent or the consent of one who can act for this purpose, will be punished with imprisonment for six months and one day, to four years and two months. The minor will be pardoned if a parent later approves the marriage (*Penal Code of the Philippines*, Art. 475).

The widow who remarries before 301 days from the death of her husband, or before the birth of her child, if she is pregnant, will incur the penalty of imprisonment for one month and one day, to six months, and [will pay] a fine of 325 to 3,250 pesetas. The same applies to a woman whose marriage has been declared null and void, if she marries before the birth of her child or before 301 days from her legal separation.

At the request of any contracting party, the person who solemnizes a marriage will produce and deliver a certified copy of the certificate. They will send the original to the justice of the peace of the district within which the marriage was celebrated,<sup>21</sup> or, in the absence of said official, to the lawyer-judge of the corresponding military district, or the officer who acts as such, within 30 days of the marriage. The certificate must be accompanied, if appropriate, by the written consent for the marriage of a minor.

**What responsibility does the celebrating Apostle incur for the non-delivery of the certificate?** The failure to share a certificate or written consent is punishable with a fine of not less than 25 pesetas, nor more than 50 pesetas.

**Is a marriage celebrated by an incompetent person valid?** General Order No. 68 says: No marriage celebrated to the present day<sup>22</sup> before a person who has claimed to be empowered to do so will be invalid if such faculty did not exist or because of any informality, irregularity or omission, if it was celebrated with the belief by the spouses, or at least one of them, that the aforementioned person was effectively empowered to do so, and that the marriage was legal.

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<sup>21</sup> According to Law No. 82, Art. 20, the Apostle-celebrant will also inform the Municipal Secretary of all marriages in which he is involved.

<sup>22</sup> This serves as a precedent and does not say "that will be celebrated."

**What are the cases in which a marriage can be annulled?** There are six cases:

1. When a minor, of the age established by law, has contracted marriage without the consent of a parent, guardian or responsible person. The minor may request an annulment within four years of achieving legal age, or the parent, guardian or responsible person can [request an annulment] at any time before the minor reaches the legal age.

2. The first spouse may request the annulment of a marriage contracted by their consort with another.

3. When one of the spouses is not in their right mind at the time of the celebration of the marriage, the healthy spouse or any relative or guardian of the insane spouse<sup>23</sup> may request the annulment of the marriage at any time during the life of the spouses, unless they voluntarily choose to live together as husband and wife after the recovery of reason.

4. The marriage shall be annulled if the consent of either of the contracting parties has been obtained in an imprudent manner, unless said contracting party, after learning of the deception, continues to live freely with the other as husband and wife. The deceived spouse may request it within the four years following the discovery of the fraud.

5. When force has been used to obtain the consent of either spouse, the victim may request an annulment within four years of the marriage, unless the violence has disappeared and said spouse voluntarily continues to live with the other as husband and wife.

6. When either of the contracting parties suffers from physical impotence for the purposes of marriage, being incurable at the time of its celebration, the other spouse may request an annulment within four years following the marriage.

Thus, General Order No. 68, as well as Law No. 1711 of the Civil Commission, prohibits the joining of those who suffer from a contagious and incurable disease, which, by law, requires the complete isolation of the patient.

**What is the consequence for the Apostle who authorizes a marriage prohibited by law?** According to Art. 479 of the current

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<sup>23</sup> This case prevents a self-interested person from seizing property by marrying a wealthy, insane person.

Penal Code, “the ecclesiastical or civil authority who authorizes a marriage prohibited by law, or for which there is some non-dispensable impediment, will be punished with the penalties of suspension for two to six years, and a fine of 625 to 6,250 pesetas. If the impediment is dispensable, the penalties will be suspension for six months and one day, to two years and four months, and a fine of 325 to 3,250 pesetas.

**Which impediments are non-dispensable?** They are: (1) relationship within the third degree, according to General Order No. 68; but the Roman Church usually exempts the marriage between uncles/aunts and nephews/nieces, if there is sufficient cause, surely based on the mandate of the Constitutional Bill to respect the customs and traditions of this country; (2) married status; (3) the circumstance that the groom is not 17 years old or the bride is not 12 years old, although the marriage will be revalidated *ipso facto* and without express declaration if one day after reaching legal puberty they live together and without protest, or if the woman has conceived before said puberty (*Civil Code*, Art. 83); (4) insanity.

The impediment of widows and divorcees [who are prohibited from marriage] before the time established by law, according to Art. 476 of the *Penal Code*, cannot be dispensed.

According to the *Penal Code*, the person who contracts marriage twice, if the first spouse is living and the first marriage has not been dissolved, is punished in two ways: If there is only public scandal, without the need to dissolve a second marriage, it is punishable by imprisonment from five months and one day, to two years and four months (Art. 440). If legal marriage was contracted, it is punishable by imprisonment for six years and one day, to 12 years (Art. 471).

**Which punishable impediments can be waived?** They are:

1. The marriage of a man who has reached 14 years of age and is under 20 years of age, or a girl who has reached 12 years of age and is under 18 years of age.

2. An adoptive parent who marries an adoptive child without legal dispensation will be punished with imprisonment (*Penal Code*, Art. 477).

3. The guardian or responsible adult who marries the minor for whom they are responsible, or consents to the marriage of the minor to a descendent, without approval, will be punished with

imprisonment for four years, two months and one day, to eight years, unless authorized by the minor's parent (Art. 478).

**What other liability can an Apostle incur for authorizing a marriage prohibited by law?** He will be held seriously responsible for proven malicious complicity in marriages made by force or with bad intentions, or for abusing the unreasonableness of a mentally-ill person.

Next we share a model marriage certificate, according to General Order No. 68.

### Certificate of Marriage

Province of \_\_

City or town of \_\_

I hereby certify that at \_\_ on the \_\_ day of \_\_, 191\_\_ in (the home of \_\_, or the church of \_\_) in said city or town of \_\_, \_\_, a neighbor of \_\_, of \_\_ years and \_\_ months of age, and \_\_, a neighbor of \_\_, and \_\_, neighbor of \_\_, eyewitnesses; I certify that the aforementioned \_\_ and \_\_ are personally known to me (or that their persons were identified under oath by \_\_, whom I know); that before solemnizing the marriage I made sure that the contracting parties were of the age established by law to be able to celebrate it; that the consent to contract marriage had been granted in the manner prescribed by law by a parent, guardian or person responsible for the minor, \_\_ (if both spouses are minors, add: and by parent, guardian or person responsible for the minor, \_\_) that the investigations carried out by me have resulted in the fact that there is no legal impediment to said marriage.

In testimony whereof, I sign [my name] at \_\_, on the \_\_ day of \_\_, 191\_\_.

[Signature]

Parish Priest, Priest, or Judge, etc.

[Signatures of witnesses]

[Signatures of contracting parties]

We repeat that the contracting parties must also sign this document, to avoid likely retractions.

The preceding certificate may include any words or requirements that need to be recorded in accordance with the rules or customs of each church.

### **Certificate of Consent for the Marriage of Minors**

Province of \_\_

City or town of \_\_

The undersigned, a resident of \_\_, province of \_\_, the parent, guardian or person responsible for \_\_, a minor and resident of \_\_, hereby certifies that they freely consent to this marriage with \_\_, a resident of \_\_, and that they have no information of any legal impediment to the celebration of said marriage.

[Signature]

[Signatures of witnesses]

### **Sworn Declaration of Witnesses for the Certificate of Consent**

Province of \_\_

City or town \_\_

Before me appeared in person \_\_, one of the witnesses who signed the above consent certificate, signed by \_\_, who, under oath before me, says that they know the aforementioned \_\_, and that they know that they are indeed the same person who signed said certificate, having witnessed the signing thereof by said \_\_.

In witness whereof, I sign [my name] this \_\_ day of \_\_, 191\_\_.

[Signature]

Apostle, Judge or Public Notary, etc.

### **Rules for the Committees of the Philippine Independent Church**

Complying with *Epistle 4* of our holy Church, I hereby decree that the Men's Committees be governed from now on by the following rules for their organization and procedure:



1. In each parish, a Men's Committee will be organized to meet the needs of the church, the cemetery, the Parish Priest, and his assistants.

2. The Men's Committee will have the purpose of: (1) building a church and cemetery; (2) attending to the maintenance of their Pastor and assistants, helping them in everything, (3) collecting, under the direction and custody of the Pastor, donations for these purposes.

3. The Committee of each parish will be composed of a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Vice-Treasurer, Secretary, Vice-Secretary, and 24 or more members.

4. The Committee will be subdivided into the following six commissions: (1) President and four members, (2) Vice-President and four members, (3) four members chaired by the Treasurer, (4) four members chaired by the Secretary, (5) four members chaired by the Vice-Treasurer, and (6) four members chaired by the Vice-Secretary.

5. The first Commission will be in charge of building the church. The second Commission will acquire land for the church, by donation, if possible, and deeding the perpetual assignment [of the land] to the Philippine Independent Church. The third Commission will be in charge of collecting donations in cash, wood, tile, galvanized iron, nipa, reeds, etc. for the church. The fourth Commission will be in charge of the altars and gather the necessary priestly vestments. The fifth Commission will collect funds for the cemetery, and will acquire, if possible, by donation in perpetuity an appropriate plot of land for it, taking care to notarize the donation. The sixth Commission will be in charge of enclosing and decorating the cemetery with flowering plants and well-aligned trees, building niches, and taking care of its fence.

6. The Committees will not build a church or cemetery, except on land purchased or donated in perpetuity to the Philippine Independent Church with a notarized document, and the Parish Priests will not accept any church or cemetery, except through a notarized assignment in perpetuity.

7. To unify the progress of the Committee, the six Commissions will meet frequently, and these meetings will be called "full sessions" of the Committee.

Manila, August 5, 1903

+Gregorio Aglípay  
Supreme Bishop of the Philippines

Secretary General  
Isidoro C. Perez  
Bishop of Cagayán

**According to the *Constitutional Rules*  
of the Philippine Independent Church**

**XII. Men's Committees**

The faithful people of each parish will annually elect from among them those who will comprise a Men's Committee of the Philippine Independent Church, which will help the Parish Priest and the Bishop with the needs of our Church.

Said Committee will not assume ecclesiastical or parochial powers, since they report to the Parish Priests, as we have already stated in paragraph 7 of this chapter, and it will limit itself to helping the Parish Priest to acquire or build a church worthy of God, within what their resources will allow, and a cemetery that, although poor, is arranged and kept with neatness and care, in such a way that it is adequate for the holiness of their destiny.

The Men's Committee will also steward resources with which to support its Bishop, the Parish Priest, and other needs of worship. For this matter, the Committees will be governed by the Regulation decreed by our Supreme Bishop dated August 5, 1903, without the Treasurers saving more amounts than those that the individuals of each Committee contribute for the attention of the same.

The executive presidents of the Men's Committee of each diocese will vote for an elector who, representing the people, takes part in the vote to elect the Supreme Bishop. Each Committee will also have the right, if warranted, to respectfully communicate to its Bishop that the Parish Priest assigned to the people is not *persona grata* to them, so that another may be elected.

The Men's Committee will be made up of an Executive President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-Treasurer, Vice-Secretary and 24 or more members or representatives.

The members of each Committee or Commission will be the representatives and foremen of a district, neighborhood, block, street or group of about 50 to 100 associates or families, as was practiced in the time of Moses (Ex. 18:21-22). These representatives will be elected by their constituents.

The representative will procure everything that leads to the moral and material good of those whom they represent. He will be sure to act in accord with Christian conduct and customs, fleeing from games, drunkenness, licentiousness, and other vices and ugly customs. He will be interested in the education of children and young people, helping them to have Catholic schools. He will be responsible for listening to and sharing the aspirations of those whom they represent, as well as collecting their donations, to deliver them, in turn, directly and with receipt, to the Pastor, so that he may keep them for the purposes agreed upon by the Committee, with permission of the Bishop. Vice-versa, the Bishop may dispose of said donations for the needs of the Church, with the prior consent of the Committee, noting that the donations collected for a specific purpose may not be used for another purpose, unless expressly stated and consented to by donors.

The discrepancies between the Bishop and the Committee will be resolved without appeal to the Supreme Bishop.

All donations that do not have a specific purpose will be used for the needs of the Church, which, without incurring any obligation, will attempt, as Committee resources allow, to assist donors in their ailments and the poor in their needs, providing for all, if possible, equitable health care, alms to those in need, and cash relief for burials and graves.

All Men's Committee members will have the moral obligation to help each other in all aspects of social life, always giving preference to their brothers in the provision of jobs or trades, in buying and selling, in elections, in alms, and in all possible benefits.

The Committees will also help Apostles in the effective propaganda of the Gospel and of civilization, providing them with cash relief, which is always sorely needed in any undertaking.

### **XIII. Women's Commissions**

Christianity is the purest religion of charity: Jesus Christ, in effect, pointed out to us, as a means of perfection, that we should give part of what we possess to the poor. There is nothing that exalts women more than the exercise of charity. In Europe, America, and other civilized countries, Associations of Christian Women carry out the greatest and most beautiful charitable enterprises, such as founding and supporting solely with alms asylums for orphans, maternity homes, hospitals for the poor and disabled, assistance for the sick, houses where those who lack bread can eat, and a bed for those who cannot pay for it, etc.

The Filipino people, who have always been distinguished by their generous and Christian sentiments, should not lag behind civilized nations.

To this end, a Women's Commission of the Philippine Independent Church will be formed in each parish, made up of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-Treasurer, Vice-Secretary and 24 or more members, who will also be representatives of the district, neighborhood, block, street or group of 50 to 100 associates.

Its purpose will be to help our Church within the women's sphere, and to practice charity, such as collecting funds and donations to establish hospitals; asylums for beggars, orphans, and invalids; visiting, consoling and helping the sick and imprisoned; distributing alms; helping victims of fires, floods, epidemics and earthquakes; and other works of mercy.

For the internal ordering, the Women's Commissions will be governed by the following Decree of our Supreme Bishop of August 7, 1903.

#### **Rules for Women's Commissions of the Philippine Independent Church**

Art. 1. The Women's Commissions are established with the following duties: (1) assist the respective Pastor and the Men's Committee with the progress of our Church, and with the arrangement of the church and cemetery; (2) collect donations for the needs of the Church and for charitable works; (3) establish a hospital and asylum for the poor, orphans, and others who suffer misfortunes

such as those whose homes burn, etc.; (4) distribute alms to the needy and assist the sick.

Art. 2. The Women's Commission will be made up of a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Vice-Treasurer, Secretary, Vice-Secretary and 24 members.

Art. 3. The President will direct the entire Commission, listening to the good advice or indications of the respective Bishop and Pastor. She will convene and preside over the meetings, will be the authorizing officer for payments, etc.

Art. 4. The Vice-President will be the substitute for and constant assistant of the President.

Art. 5. The Treasurer will keep the funds, gather donations and subscriptions, and will not make any payment that is not previously agreed by the Board, and without the authorization of the President and the *intervine* [approval] of the Secretary.

Art. 6. The Secretary will be responsible for the correspondence and accounting books, and will be the principal assistant of the President, whom she will obey. The Secretary, however, will not affix her *intervine* and signature to expenses not authorized by the Board.

Art. 7. The Vice-Treasurer will be the substitute for and assistant of the Treasurer, and will keep the special funds entrusted to her by the Commission.

Art. 8. The Vice-Secretary will be the one who relieves and helps the Secretary.

### **Sub-commissions**

Art. 9. For the distribution and greater efficiency of the work, the Commission will be divided into six sub-commissions: (1) one [comprised] of four members, directed by the President; (2) another four under the direction of the Vice-President; (3) another four chaired by the Treasurer; (4) another four directed by the Secretary; (5) another four under the leadership of the Vice-Treasurer; (6) and another four chaired by the Vice-Secretary.

Art. 10. The first sub-commission will help the Pastor or the Men's Committee in the arrangement of the church and cemetery.

Art. 11. The second will look for land for an asylum/hospital.

Art. 12. The third will collect donations for the asylum/hospital.

Art. 13. The fourth will be in charge of the interior of the asylum/hospital, teaching, cleaning, cooking, and the admission of asylum seekers. Except for the latter, prior agreement from the Commission will be required, and this will be fulfilled by the fourth sub-commission. This sub-commission will not admit asylum seekers or make expenses that are not previously authorized by the Board of the Women's Commission.

Art. 14. The fifth sub-commission will request alms for the support and clothing of asylum seekers.

Art. 15. The sixth sub-committee will organize sub-committees in the neighborhoods and arrange for their needs.

Art. 16. Even if the work is distributed, mutual help is encouraged among all the women of the Commission.

Art. 17. In each neighborhood, a women's sub-committee will be established, comprised of the President, Secretary, Treasurer and some members.

### **The Preeminence and Advantages of Our Women**

Art. 18. The Bishops, Parish Priests, Men's Committees and other brothers will honor with special distinctions the virtuous women who selflessly help our Church; when they marry, die or have their children baptized, it will be done solemnly and free of charge, except if they are members of the Women's Commission in name only and have not helped. Inside the church, decorated seats will be prepared for members of the Women's Commission in the women's room.

Art. 19. Similarly, seats of distinction will be prepared for them at neighborhood gatherings.

Art. 20. In processions, the Women's Commission will occupy a preferential place in front of the last car or float of the procession.

Manila, August 7, 1903.

Gregorio Aglipay  
Supreme Bishop

Endorsed:

Isidoro C. Pérez  
Bishop & Secretary General

## **The Governance of the Philippine Church according to its *Constitutional Rules***

The government of our Church rests on the purest Christian democracy and those immortal words of Jesus: “You are all brothers, with one Father, who is God, and one teacher and guide, Jesus: The greatest among you will be your servant” (Mt. 23:8-11).

Thus, all those who belong to the Philippine Church will be absolutely equal. But, our Church chooses able, God-fearing, truthful men of virtue, who hate greed (Ex. 18:21), to whom it entrusts the mission of studying, procuring and executing everything that leads to the greatest glory of the Supreme Maker and the good of our Congregation. Naturally, we must obey them, so that they can duly carry out their duties, and so that our efforts might be unified for the good of all.

Power comes from God, and in part from the gifts with which God distinguishes those who are designated by God’s Providence to guide us. This power passes directly from God to the people, and the people transmit it to their representatives, whom they choose. Within our Church, they are the Bishops, Ecclesiastical Governors, Vicars, Parish Priests, etc., who come to be our guides and superiors.

Every soul, then, submits to these superior powers, because there is no power that is not from God, and those who are ordained are from God. The person who resists power, resists God’s command and attract condemnation (Rom. 8:1-2).

Jesus himself commanded: “May those who do not listen to the Church be like Gentiles and tax collectors to you” (Mt. 28:30).

### **On the Faithful**

Because the people belong to Jehovah (Deut. 32:9), and because power passes directly from God to the people, the Philippine Independent Church recognizes all the participation that people should have in our Church, in consideration of the eminently democratic principles established in paragraph 1 of this chapter, and also considering that the people are the vast majority of our Congregation and are the ones who pay for its needs.

The faithful people of each parish within the Philippine Independent Church will be represented by their Pastor *ex officio* and by the Presidents of their Men's Committee and Women's Commission. The people will be consulted in everything that refers to them and their customs, the conduct of Parish Priests<sup>24</sup> and their assistants, and other matters of a secular character.

Within our Church, the faithful people have all the rights of children to their parents' patrimony. Therefore, they possess the right to be ordained as Apostles, and to all the dignities, according to their merits and abilities: to participate in all sacraments and teachings, to receive assistance in times of illness and need. In a word, they possess a right to effective help in everything, since our national Church differs from foreign churches: They simply impose duties on people without recognizing their rights, but we, as a truly Filipino church, grant Filipinos all the rights of associates in our Corporation, without all the hateful favoritism, systematic preteritions, irritating inequalities and scandalous spoils of other churches.

### **The Duties of the Human Person**

The duties of the human person are to:

**1. Love God.** May we worship our heavenly Father through our good sentiments and philanthropic actions, contributing, to the extent we are able, to the fervor and expenses of religious practices. We must remember and worship God in our hearts, not only on Sunday, but at all possible times, fleeing from bad thoughts and deeds, and considering that we are always in the presence of our loving Father, who, in exchange for inexhaustible favors, only demands that we not commit sin, since sin is very repugnant to God. All evil thought and action is sin. Thus, an action is not a sin if it does not involve bad intention, bad will, or an evil end.

**2. Love neighbor.** Do not wish for or commit harm against anyone. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Practice all the good that you can, especially to the poor and unfortunate. Jesus commands us, as an unavoidable duty, to share our belongings with

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<sup>24</sup> Naturally, the Pastor will recuse himself from any investigation into his own conduct.



the destitute. According to the sacred book of Proverbs 28:27: "Those who avert their eyes from the poor will incur many curses."

**3. Always be good and fair, and do not commit any excess.**

**4. Be an honest person.** Honor dignifies and ennobles us. It is better to die than to be a person without honor. Honor, philanthropy and justice are the hallmarks distinguishing us from other animals, revealing our superior moral status.

**5. Be industrious.** We must love and always seek after work, which is the only source of well-being that honestly satisfies our needs.

**6. Study useful knowledge.** The sciences provide us understanding of necessary ideas and are invaluable factors for our progress in all disciplines. God created us to strive for our own and others' improvement, and there is nothing more pitiful than people who do not care to enrich their intelligence and improve their luck and that of their children with honest work.

**7. We must also work for our people,** procuring and defending their well-being, their independence, freedom, rights and interests with ardor, dignity and disinterest, and not with shameful abdications or sales of conscience.

Freedom and the noble ambitions that it arouses are powerful drivers of our exalted status, progress, science, civilization, and, in a word, our general improvement.

Freedom is one of the most precious gifts with which the Maker has favored us. In no way will we limit it beyond the confines that informed conscience and the purest morality have placed on all things.

We do not prohibit the reading of any book, other than obscene ones, which should not be in the hands of any person who is esteemed in any field (Philippine Church, *Epistle 6*).

## Pastors

The Pastor will be like a father to the entire parish. He must treat the faithful with fraternal affection, solicitously providing them with all spiritual aid, and giving special distinction to the selfless people who make up the Men's Committee and the Women's Commission. In return, the faithful will see in the Pastor an Apostle of Jesus, and they will venerate him as a true brother, assisting him with his needs.

The Men's Committee and Women's Commission must take into account that one of the main reasons for the formation of this Church has been to reconquer the rights and prerogatives of Filipino priests. Thus, in no way could they deserve less consideration from us, their compatriots, than from their former tyrants. Previously, Filipino priests had a single master: their pastor. If we made them depend on our Committees, they would now have more masters than before. Furthermore, our Committees are of a secular nature, and the Church has never subordinated the religious to the secular.

Nonetheless, to thank Committees for their selfless assistance and to prevent our pastors from adopting the bad customs of the friars, the prelate, when he sees fit, will entrust the Committees with the inspection of parish financial records and cash receipts. The only administrator, treasurer, and authorizer of payment in the Church, though, will be the Pastor, and no one else. To claim otherwise would, as we have said, invert the natural order of things and go against the very purpose of the Church: to dignify our Apostles.

To restore the harmony that should always reign between the Pastor and his faithful, a Pastor who deserves the animosity of the Men's Committee and the Women's Commission due to his intemperance will be transferred to another parish—unless he deserves greater punishment for his misconduct. In that case, an appropriate penalty will be applied, which may include suspension, fines, imprisonment, etc., or expulsion, in the event of treason or other very serious cause.

### **Seminaries**

The first duty of our Bishops consists in establishing in their respective dioceses a good seminary that will serve as a campus for new Apostles, educated according to the new doctrines of the Philippine Independent Church.

Bishops will make every effort to find a suitable location, albeit modest, and to catechize the largest possible number of young people suitable for the high ministry of God. We want Bishops to know the great need for these seminaries, not only by our Church, but above all by our Most Reverend Bishops themselves. For this reason, their negligence in this matter, which is fatal, will deserve censure.

Efforts will be made to give young people a complete, concise and more wholesome instruction than the endless courses of unnecessary dissertations and fruitless “ergotisms” with which the Romanist friars entertained the most fruitful years of our young people.

The course of study will be based on the principle that we must begin to learn what is most necessary, followed by what is very useful, and thirdly, the sciences that should always adorn the worthy Apostles of God. The plan recommended in *Epistle 4* of our Church will be followed.

An Apostle’s knowledge will be vain and useless if it is not adorned with the Christian virtues of holiness, altruism, obedience and zeal for the greater glory of God. Therefore, young people will be instructed in the practice of a disciplined, ascetic life, with frequent prayer, sacraments, studies, and exercises in evangelization.

In addition to the seminaries, efforts will be made to create Catholic schools and colleges for both sexes, thus facilitating the selection of Apostles, but also because we are very interested in instructing children in the divine teachings of Jesus and the redemptive doctrines of our Church.

### **Use of Understood Language**

It is impossible to pray with devotion if we address our God in a language that we do not understand. As Saint Paul said, all prayer in a language not understood is fruitless.

We must, therefore, always pray and preach in the language of the people to whom we direct ourselves.

### **Purposes of the Philippine Church**

The purpose of the foundation of the Philippine Independent Church largely follows the urgent need to:

1. Restore in all its splendor the worship of the one true God, in the purity of truth that has been diminished and disfigured in the most heartbreaking way for all moderately-enlightened Christians by an empire of obscurantism (*Epistle 3*, Supreme Council of the Philippine Independent Church).

2. Free consciences from all error, exaggeration, anti-scientific scruple, and everything that is against the laws of Nature and sound, free judgment (*Ep. 6*).

3. Form and dignify Filipino clergy, reconquering all their rights and prerogatives, which they lost due to the plunder and preterition of which they have been and still are the object.

### **Our Catholicism**

Our Church is Catholic or universal, and it considers everyone as children of God, without distinction. Therefore, we do not prohibit the study of other religions; on the contrary, we must learn and adopt the best of what they teach us about our doctrines and practices.

Nor do we accept excommunications, which are contrary to charity and to the repeated teachings of Jesus and his apostles (*Ep. 6*).

### **Prayer in Agony**

Oh, my most merciful God, into your hands I commend my spirit!

Oh, my heavenly Father, who understands our fragility, forgive my many sins. Do not forsake me in this sad state, oh my God. I acknowledge my absolute helplessness, at mercy of death and with no other hope than you, my omnipotent Savior. Nonetheless, I will not fear, because it is impossible for you to abandon your creature in such a painful moment. Lord, I accept with resignation the death with which you compassionately liquidate my many debts. In your mercy, forgive me. Forgive me, oh Lord!

As a servant longs for running waters, my soul yearns for you, oh God. My soul thirsts for the God who gives me life: When will I come and appear before the Lord? (Ps. 42:1-2). Here I am, oh my heavenly Father. I am not worthy for you to count me among your faithful children, but place me, oh merciful Lord, among your servants, who sincerely implore your kindness and forgiveness. Oh Father, do not consider the debts of your creatures, because no one could justify themselves before you. Do not look upon my sins, but alone consider that you are our compassionate, heavenly Father. My God, I am a great sinner, but your infinitely-greater kindness will absolve me from this tremendous torture to which my faults have brought me. Lord, my agony brings tears even to strangers, but it is impossible for

you, the sweetest of all parents, to look at me with anger, or even with indifference. As a prodigal child, I humbly throw myself at your feet, asking for compassion. Father! Do not deny to me your compassion. Open your loving arms to me, since, even though unworthy, I am your poor child. Father! I commend my sad cause to your infinite mercy. Do not deny me your parental absolution. Amen.

Oh my God, through the mouth of Jesus, you entrusted us: "If anyone sins against you seven times, but turns seven times and asks your forgiveness, forgive them." With greater clemency still, you will forgive this poor, dying sinner. Through your inexhaustible mercy, grant me, then, oh most merciful God, † your full absolution. Amen.

Merciful God, gracious God, oh God, who, according to your marvelous mercies, forgives the sins of those who repent and magnanimously forgets their past sins, look favorably on me, your child. I beg you, oh merciful Father: Allow your infinite mercy to make up for any lack of repentance in my anguish. Have mercy on me, O Lord. Have mercy on those who moan. Have mercy on our tears. We have no other hope than your mercy. Forgive me, † oh Lord. Amen.

### **Prayer at the Moment of Death**

Lord, receive your child, who awaits salvation through your mercy. As you saved your saints, Lord, safeguard the soul of your child from all danger. Amen.

We entrust to you, O Lord, the soul of your child, \_\_\_\_\_. Show [him/her/them] your unfathomable pity, O Lord, and receive [him/her/them] not as a creation of other gods, but of you, the one living and true God. There is no other god but you, and there is nothing like your creation. Remember not [his/her/their] past faults, and bring [his/her/their] soul rejoicing into your presence. Remember not the faults of [his/her/their] youth, O Lord, or the ways in which [he/she/they] went astray, but, in the greatness of your mercy, make [him/her/them] shine with the consolation of your grace. Open to [him/her/them], Lord, the doors of your heavenly Jerusalem, that [he/she/they] might enjoy your inexhaustible mercy. † Amen.

### Prayer for the Dead

Oh God, you are close to those who cry. Look compassionately at the tears that accompany the prayers of this poor family. Grant happiness and immortality, oh Father, to your child, \_\_\_\_, and console your Christian children in their orphanhood. O Lord, you do not desire the death of any sinner; instead, you give us life in abundance. Oh God, spread the protective mantle of your forgiveness over your child. From whom shall we expect mercy and forgiveness, but from you, our sweetest heavenly Father, who recommended unlimited forgiveness even for our enemies? O Lord, forgive your child † and grant [him/her/them] a better life. Amen.