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I Am Sending You

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I AM SENDING YOU . . . Spirituality of the Missioner. By Yves Raguin, S.J. Translated from French by Sister Kathleen England, O.S.U. Manila: East Asian Pastoral Institute, 1973. v, 186 pages.

Fr. Yves Raguin, in this book, publishes the course on Missionary Spirituality which he has given several times in recent years at the East Asian Pastoral Institute in Manila. It is a timely, tested and developed series of insights that he offers us.

The book is directly intended to help EAPI students integrate their theology and prayer, their apostolic experiences and challenges, quietly and in depth. In passing, various questions of principle and technique which arise in the minds of Christian apostles, foreign or native-born, anywhere today are given honest and solid answers.

I am Sending You will surely be a valuable manual for the many who hear Fr. Raguin's lectures. But it deserves, and will well reward, wider readership. Often, however, the reader must go through its pages prayerfully, giving "total attention, the gift of mind and heart," in order to profit from the text. It is unrelieved by anecdotes or light comment.

Fr. Raguin has spent thirty perceptive and reflective years in China and Vietnam; his familiarity with the writings and religious practices of Buddhism, Taoism, and Hinduism enables him to write with authority on their doctrines and forms of prayer.

Some of the merits of his book can best be appreciated, perhaps, by letting the author speak for himself:

Not the Homeland's Spirituality. "Unfortunately, there are many people who in a missionary situation only cling the more to their old mentality and the spirituality of their homeland. Contact with non-Christians peaceful of conscience, with Buddhists perfectly happy though not knowing God, appears to raise no problem for them. The prayer-life of the people they live with, their religious practices, stir up no questions. The apparent failure of the Gospel does not seem to bring them face-to-face with the mystery of the cross any more than do their own little personal troubles."

"Theirs is not a missionary spirituality, because, being where they are, in the heart of a pagan country, has apparently made no difference to them. Questions that should arise naturally out of a missionary environment leave them cold. Their mass-produced spirituality is in no way enriched. Such a position sounds impossible, yet appears to exist still in some places" (p. 27).

"It is a fact that many missionaries do not possess a missionary spirituality. Not that these men lack a deep, inward life; but their spirituality is not adapted to their special vocation; it has remained what it was on the day of their arrival in the country. And the same is true of many native apostles who have adopted a spirituality imposed on them from without" (p. 31).

Retracing Age-old Steps in the Dark. "Man for probably more than a

million years has been seeking to understand the mystery of things, and within this mystery the Mystery of mysteries we name God. Religions such as Animism, Hinduism and Buddhism are living witnesses to this search, and a cursory study suffices to show how painful an experience the effort to reach God has been and still is."

"Missionaries have to be aware of this. On the pretext that they possess Christ they may not ignore this obscure approach to God in the dark. Indeed it belongs to true missionary spirituality to deliberately revive the search for God by way of darkness, in the night, which is proper to looking for God outside the radiance of Christ. It is not a question of endangering one's faith, but of retracing one's footsteps through the basic experience of the divine ineffability."

Active Conversion. "The missionary knows he cannot cause a conversion; he can only enlighten, encourage, support, and guide . . . An act of faith is too deep to be effected by outward pressure . . . , the missionary can only adopt God's attitude of deep respect for the human person. Yet his own faith may be of great weight in influencing Christ's approach to this man. The missionary longs for the non-Christian to share his own knowledge of Christ, but it must be in perfect freedom. All this can help to the growth of the missionary's spirituality of witness, mediation, and intercession . . ."

"If we suppose people to be converted when they have been baptized and placed on our register, we are in for some unpleasant awakenings. Each one, in fact, leads his converts to a level of conversion intimately bound up with his own Christian life. A man who has a deep experience of God will lead all his faithful towards that depth through liturgy, prayer, etc., and with them he will try and form small groups to research together for a deeper life and more complete conversion."

"Some people, not content with respecting the liberty of those to whom they bring the Christian message, think it should not be brought at all. The aim of mission, they say, would simply be to help non-Christians live their own religion better, with no thought of conversion or any particular opening to Christ. This is what, in fact, has happened ever since Christianity was brought to Asia. In contact with missionary preaching the Hindus and Buddhists have become conscious of the greatness of their religion. But this is only an indirect result of missionary activity. If a missionary thinks the best thing to do is to help non-Christians live their own religions better, he has certainly not grasped the outstanding place Christ occupies in the history of salvation, nor has he found in Christ the overwhelming light and life He came to bring us. Christ himself wants us to bear witness to His life and resurrection."

"What we have to realize is that many people are deeply dissatisfied with their own religions. It is a duty to help these people bring the spirit of Christ into their lives, to enlarge their spiritual horizons by contact with Christianity. Some non-Christian religions are extremely formalistic, and it would be diffi-

cult to find in them the inward freedom that religious belief should bring. There are religions which keep their faithful in fear of the vengeance of gods and spirits. In either case, Christ should liberate" (pp. 74-76; 93; cf. pp. 84-85, 89).

Missionary not Simply a Human Development Expert. "Should missionary activity be, may it be, so human that it is no longer the sign of God's presence and activity? Love expresses itself in deeds . . . Numbers of people today desire to devote themselves to human development, but they do not want it to look as if they were trying to draw people to Christ through fraternal help. Their ideal would be to serve others in tasks that manifest Christian love but do not reveal where this love comes from.

"The missionary brought up in an atmosphere of triumphalism is at a loss before such an outlook . . . People speak to him of nothing but human actions, human influence, human development, but the specific character of Christian action is no longer apparent."

"We can go as far as the Marxists in working for human development; we can exalt man and humanism as much as anyone, but what matters is to recognize that the human in all its autonomy fully depends on God . . . To think that the human as we understand it leads quite naturally to the divine is an illusion . . ."

"In a situation where the only seemingly valuable things are action and human relationships, we have to look a little more closely into our position. Certainly we can give ourselves up to total human activity, but it has to be in view of the deep reaches of divine reality that permeate everything. True enough, God created the world in such a way that it possesses its own life, which makes it seem as though this world is totally independent of God. But Christ has come to enlighten us on the inward structure of creation and the life by which it lives (pp. 131-134)."

"For the Marxist there is no ideal of man but the human community. In their universe, the individual exists solely for the mass; relationships are never from person to person, because they are conditioned by the final aim of society."

Giving the Human a Dimension Divine. "Devotedness to human tasks, though in itself perfectly Christian, does not reveal the whole Christian message. The service of men, for the Christian, will never mean the idolatry of men, for its final aim is humanity transformed in Christ. Giving himself to human tasks because they concern man, the Christian will be perfectly conscious that these tasks are also divine."

"By laying emphasis on human problems, in fact, the practical effect of Vatican II has been to release a tremendous amount of energy in us. All we have of human in ourselves is struggling for freedom and wanting to affirm itself. This is good as long as we are prepared to accept the full Christian vision, clearly described in the very structure of the first part of *Gaudium et*

Spes, the Church in the Modern World. Each separate chapter in that document draws a picture of the situation of man in the world of today but ends with a section showing how Christ is the super-human solution of all human problems" (pp. 135-142).

Charles J. McCarthy

PHILIPPINE STUDIES: GEOGRAPHY, ARCHAEOLOGY, PSYCHOLOGY AND LITERATURE: Present Knowledge and Research Trends. By Frederick L. Wernstedt, Wilhelm Solheim II, Lee Sechrest and George H. Guthrie, Leonard Casper. (Special Report no. 10). De Kalb, Illinois: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Northern Illinois University, 1974. viii, 104 pages.

As Donn Hart, who edited these papers, explains in his preface, they are revised and augmented versions of papers originally presented at the 1973 meeting of the Association for Asian Studies. They are, therefore, the work of well-known American experts in selected areas of Philippine studies, written primarily for other American scholars. Nonetheless, they all have, in varying degrees, value to Filipino scholars as well. Each paper follows a general format: a survey of the general state of knowledge of their discipline as regards the Philippines, the authors' recommendations for future research projects to fill the existing gaps noted in their surveys, and an annotated basic bibliography for their discipline. Fred Eggan, Director of the Philippine Studies Program at the University of Chicago, contributes an introductory essay providing perspective for the papers that follow.

Wernstedt's paper, the briefest, as might be expected from the relatively undeveloped state of geographical studies in the Philippines, is thorough in its coverage of the existing studies. It emphasizes the need of geographic input into government planning, lamenting the lack of professionally-trained Filipino geographers, especially for those areas of public policy which are too sensitive for other than Filipino geographers. Solheim's survey is a detailed and informative history of Philippine archaeology from H. Otley Beyer to the present, emphasizing the work being done by Filipino institutions and scholars. His view of the future in archaeology is optimistic, and he sees an increasing trend towards paleoanthropology, the study not only of prehistory, but of the culture of prehistoric man.

The other two papers, by the fact they express their personal views on the directions future research should take in their respective disciplines, open themselves more to controversy, though they too follow the basic format outlined above. The Guthrie-Sechrest article is strong in its advocacy of the experimental methodology in the study of Filipino psychology, which it asserts to be "value free except for its commitment to the ultimate value of