

## **ADDRESS OF FR. PETER-HANS KOLVENBACH FOR THE 140TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ATENEO DE MANILA AND JESUIT EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES**

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Fr. Horacio de la Costa in his book Light Cavalry tells the story of the beginning of the Ateneo de Manila and of Jesuit schools in the Philippines 140 years ago. In that story, he dwells long on an image, that of the bridge over Anda Street connecting the Jesuit Residence with the Ateneo Municipal. To quote him [Light Cavalry, p. 39]:

The Ayuntamiento grants the first Rector, Father Cuevas, the singular privilege of building a bridge over the street by which the professors will be able to pass from their living quarters to the school.' There was something symbolic in that bridge when it was built, something almost sacramental in its air of being at once aloof from, and in the midst of, the ever increasing swirl and eddy of traffic that roared and rumbled beneath it for close upon eighty years."

Times would change, but "the bridge itself did not change, nor did the stream of learning that ran through it ... in the line of Jesuit teachers passing and repassing ... Spanish, American, Filipino, but taught, and teaching - in the same tradition; the tradition of Stonyhurst, of Coimbra, of La Fleche; the tradition that trained Francis of Sales the saint, Bossuet, the orator and that also trained Jose Rizal, who died for his country."

Today that physical bridge is gone. The Ateneo de Manila has moved several times in its history, arriving at present at its present campuses in Loyola Heights and Makati. But the image and symbolism of the bridge endures.

You also used the image of a bridge in the important "Ignatian Spirituality in Education" workshop you held for all the Ateneos in 1998. You then went back across the bridge of memory and time to the beginnings of Jesuit schools in Master Ignatius and the first Jesuits. The workshop also strengthened the bridges across mountains and seas between the five Ateneos, in Manila, Naga, Cagayan de Oro, Davao, and Zamboanga. It was a bridge as well between Jesuits and lay coworkers and co-leaders in the mission of the Ateneos and between different generations of leaders. I am told that your exercise in the communal history of each of the Ateneos gave you a deep sense of and pride in the spiritual and educational tradition of which we are all heirs. That single bridge over Anda Street in 1859 has become, in our increasingly interconnected world, a network of bridges across time and space and cultures.

It is good then to begin this celebration of the 140 years of Jesuit education in the Philippines by going back over time to important events and people. First, Father Jose Cuevas who was the first rector of the Ateneo Municipal de Manila and the founder of both the Ateneo and the Escuela Normal de Maestros. These institutions embodied the long Jesuit tradition of education of the young and the preparation of teachers. Next, Father Federico Faura, the key leader in the early years of the Manila Observatory, exemplifying our commitment to science and learning in

the service of the nation. In 1996 and 1998 you held symposia and other events to commemorate distinguished alumni, who had showed exemplary leadership and courage in the Philippine Revolution. Above all, you memorialized Dr. Jose Rizal, your national hero. In remembering them, we remember also the Jesuits of the old Ateneo, such as Father Sanchez, who were beloved mentors and friends of this earlier generation of alumni and leaders.

With the shift of the Philippines' colonial history from Spain to the United States, came also the courageous decision of the Spanish Jesuits in the Philippines. These men, "finding themselves working continually at a disadvantage in a country rapidly being Americanized in language and institutions. . . pleaded for Americans to whom they might entrust the Mission and the people that they loved so well." In 1921 twenty American Jesuits arrived, among them Father Francis X. Byrne, Superior, Father Henry Irwin, distinguished dramatist after whom this theater is named, and Father John Pollock, beloved missionary and confessor to thousands.

The American period would see the growth of the Ateneo de Manila along the model of the Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States. You remember its distinguished tradition in language, literature and drama and, in later years, in the natural and social sciences. We remember, too, the work of Father Joseph Mulry, Father Walter Hogan and others in pushing for social reform along the lines of Catholic Social Teaching. This work would flower in later years into Ateneans taking leadership for the cause of workers through the Federation of Free Workers, of farmers through the Federation of Free Farmers, and of principled political parties through the Christian Social Movement.

The 20th century saw the deeper insertion of the Jesuit educational apostolate into the life of a growing nation through the building and development of other Ateneos: Zamboanga in 1916, Cagayan de Oro in 1933, Naga in 1940, Tuguegarao in 1945, San Pablo in 1947 and Davao in 1948. Each of them grew to be a center of learning and religious and secular culture, deeply immersed in the life and hopes of the community and region where they are located. Today, the four that remain, Zamboanga, Cagayan de Oro, Naga and Davao are considered the outstanding educational institutions in their regions and continue to form new generations of leaders for the nation. Among the many pioneers to whom we owe these outstanding institutions, we should cite Fr. William Masterson, whose vision, which was far ahead of his time, was so decisive for the future of the Ateneo de Manila and Xavier University.

The expulsion of the Jesuit missionaries from China 50 years ago created new bridges and relationships. These great missionaries built Jesuit schools with a special focus on the Filipino-Chinese community: Sacred Heart School in 1954, Xavier School in 1956 and Santa Maria in 1958. Their goal in building these schools was evangelization and integration. They wished to help the Chinese Filipinos discover their link to Christ and to build a bridge between them and the Filipinos. Their success may be measured by remembering that, for example, only 30% of the students of Xavier School in the early years were Catholic. Today 90% are Catholic. A look at their student population today shows that they are indeed a bridge between Chinese Filipinos and the Philippines, their present home. This vision and this apostolate are a gift to the Philippines in this time of globalization and the interweaving of nations, religions and cultures in Asia and

the world.

I invite you to travel today through the eyes of our imagination across time and across the Philippines to the eight Jesuit schools, colleges and universities and to the many alumni and alumnae here and in many countries of the world. We can marvel at how the bridge over Anda Street has grown into a great network spanning islands, cities, faith and cultures. We may also recall, as part of the Society's educational apostolate, the great work of forming and educating future priests for the Philippines in San Jose and St. John Vianney seminaries. Today this Jesuit educational network brings the same educational and spiritual tradition that gave birth to the Ateneo Municipal 140 years ago to over 60,000 students across the archipelago.

The last 30 years have seen much change in the Philippines, and the Jesuit schools have experienced and been part of this change. You have seen the transition from American Jesuits to Filipino Jesuits. We remember Father Horacio de la Costa who, as provincial during this time of change, gave so much of himself to bridge this transition. That task was not without its share of difficulties and pain. You have seen also the transition ten years ago from the missionaries from China to Filipino Jesuits. You have seen the transition, too, to the increasing leadership role of lay co-workers and to the realization of Jesuit-lay partnership in the leadership of our schools. Through the years of martial law and the intense processes of social and political reform, our schools have been more deeply immersed in the struggles of the nation, in its trials and victories, its pains and its joys. In all of these transitions you have not only grown, but you have grown much more closely together.

Today then we celebrate the 140th anniversary of the Ateneo de Manila and Jesuit education in the Philippines. We not only have many reasons to be grateful and to celebrate, but above all we are asked to reflect on the challenges of the next millennium and how we might face them together. In the spirit of the Spiritual Exercises, we ask ourselves: "What more might we do for Christ?" What more? Quid magis?

This "magis" in Jesuit spirituality has always emerged from a vision of the needs of the world in the spirit of the contemplation on the Incarnation. Our response to the needs of the world of our time continues, in the words of the 34th General Congregation, to be that of servants of Christ's mission. What is the world of our time? It is a world in which the globalization of the economy has brought about undeniable advantages, but in which also it has widened the gap between the winners and the losers. You know this better than I through your experience of the Asian boom and the Asian crisis of the last decade. You know what this means in the successes and pains of many of your friends and acquaintances. You know this, too, through the so many Filipino migrant workers and through their children studying in your schools.

In this globalizing world, the role of the educational apostolate, which has always been so important for the Society of Jesus in the Philippines and in the world, is ever more crucial. For one of the defining directions of this world is the move from the industrial to the knowledge

society. In that emerging society, the future of individuals and nations depends most crucially on the quality of their education.

The response that is asked of us in this newly globalizing world begins with a renewed fidelity to core values in our educational mission. In 1973 Father Pedro Arrupe issued to us an enduring call: "Today our prime educational objective must be to form men and women for others; men and women who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ." We are invited to ask how well we have helped our students to grow as Father Arrupe asked them: to live simply, not to profit from injustice, to help change the structures of injustice.

We are asked to reflect as well on our pursuit of excellence, in the development of the fullest human and spiritual potential of our students. As Jesuit schools, colleges and universities you are asked to be centers of excellence in the major tasks of teaching, research and service. In the actual context of inequality and injustice in which we live, you have to take special care that such excellence not be for the benefit of a few only. Rather let it be at the service of the integral development of the entire society. In a world where the bar of excellence continues to be raised ever higher and where the costs of schooling continue to escalate, this is an increasingly difficult challenge.

Moreover, the forces of globalization are carried forward by developments in technology, communications, and business. Our colleges and universities, therefore, are challenged to develop and expand schools and programs in these fields, in which expertise and leadership are crucial for the Philippines. But these are precisely the fields where there is most intense competition for expertise and resources.

At the same time, teaching and research in Jesuit schools must look to the whole and to the greater good for the human person and society. It is thus of the utmost importance that you preserve the humanistic tradition so central to our Ignatian educational heritage.

The Society of Jesus has always been international in vision, mission, and organization. The early Jesuits established what was the first school system in the world. You already have international linkages through the East Asian Jesuit Educational Conference, through the Association of Southeast and East Asian Catholic Colleges and Universities, and through bilateral links with many schools and colleges. You have also been responding to our mission in Cambodia by contributing programs to the building up of their universities and schools. Our globalizing world invites us to renew and strengthen our commitment to this international dimension of our apostolate.

I invite you to reflect on the challenges to Jesuit schools in the Philippines in the context of the mission of the Society of Jesus today. The 34th General Congregation demands an integrated approach to all our apostolates. Proclamation of faith, promotion of justice, encountering cultures with the Gospel and dialogue with people of other faiths form essential elements of the one integral movement in our evangelizing mission. This defines our call to answer the needs of the world of our time.

It is faith that allows us to see goodness and hope in a world filled with so much evil and suffering. You have the gift of a great majority of students who have already been blessed by faith through baptism and through sacramental life. But you know well that that is not enough. We continue to ask ourselves how can it be that in the only Christian country in Asia there is so much corruption, dishonesty, insufficient concern for the poor and the needy. How can the Jesuit schools in the Philippines help students grow into the mature and authentic faith that finds God in this sinful world and then lives by the Gospel in all its implications?

You have done much already to help students grow in faith: through religion and theology classes, through the new Catholic Catechism for Filipinos, through liturgy, retreats, Days with the Lord. You have also begun more intensely to develop programs for sharing our Ignatian spirituality with students, faculty and staff. You are working to let these programs flower into programs in ethics, in formation in character and discipline. But you are challenged to continue to ask: What more are we called to do to form our students and one another in faith?

This faith must issue into the promotion of justice. Father Arrupe had already said in 1973 that we must form "men and women completely convinced that love of God which does not issue in justice for people is a farce". This is a particular challenge for the Philippines where so many families live in desperate and degrading poverty and where the gap between rich and poor is so great. It is a special challenge for Jesuit schools. So many of our alumni and alumnae hold key positions of leadership. Many of our students are both among the privileged elite and likely to be important leaders in the future. As the Gospel of Luke reminds us, "To whom much is given, much also will be demanded. More will be asked of him to whom more has been entrusted." This is true of our students and alumni. It is true also of our schools.

Much, of course, is already being done. Many of our students in the provinces already come from the poor and the less privileged. The Ateneo de Manila has a large scholarship program and seeks to expand this even further. You have developed programs to form students towards a life of service, and the Jesuit Volunteer Program is a beacon of hope and challenge to many. You have programs to help strengthen teachers in the public schools. You have also developed programs to form government leaders, particularly at the local level in both the needed competence and skills and in values and ethics. But the face of Christ in the millions of families who remain desperately poor must continue to haunt us and to invite us to ask what more can we do?

The rhetoric of globalization invites a picture of the global village and a homogenizing world culture. But that is the view from the mountaintops. In the end, life is lived in the valleys, and from that viewpoint we find that the world is actually a patchwork of a multitude of cultures. As the wars and ethnic cleansing in Africa and the Balkans daily have reminded us, harmony and dialogue across this multitude of cultures is a major endeavor yet to be achieved. In less dramatic ways, we see this fragmentation of cultures among our youth. Commentators tell us that a medium such as television in the 1950s and 1960s contributed to the unifying of national culture. Whole families and even neighbors sat together to watch the same shows. Today the world is

filled with isolated individuals living in their own internet world. Parents hardly know what shows their children watch or what may be their favorite internet sites.

Perhaps more than any other institution, a school is a privileged place for the dialogue of cultures. As Catholic and Jesuit schools, we are asked to reflect how we may be a privileged place for the dialogue between the Gospel and culture. Again, you have the gift of a nation where the Gospel has already been planted in the heart of Filipino culture. But that culture today is under immense pressure: from the diversity of islands, languages and cultures in the nation; from the tensions across socio-economic cultures; from the influences and pressures from foreign cultures coming through migrant workers, through media and a globalizing economy. How can we bring the liberating power of the Gospel to exercise its transformative power on individuals and institutions, first in our schools and then in the larger Philippine society?

Lastly, we are asked to respond to the challenge of inter-religious dialogue. The Philippines is the only Christian nation in Asia, which is the home of the world's great religions. While cultures in Europe and North America may be dominantly secular or secularizing, nations and cultures in Asia retain a deep-seated religiosity, not only in the individual sphere, but also in institutional and national life. Within the Philippines, our schools particularly in Mindanao are asked how we contribute to Christian-Muslim dialogue, in the four-fold dialogue of life, of action, of religious experience and theological exchange. The future world of our students will be more and more that of religious pluralism. We are asked to reflect on how we help our students understand and even experience that inter-religious dialogue is indeed our participation in what John Paul II calls "the age-long dialogue which God maintains with humanity".

The challenges are immense. They have always been from the very roots of Jesuit mission in Ignatius' vision of the Trinity, looking down at the "whole circuit of the globe". How will we get there? Who will bring us there?

We need new leadership teams, and these teams will be partnerships between Jesuits and lay. Such cooperation of Jesuit and laity is a theme of major importance for the Society. In all Jesuit schools there is already de facto sharing of leadership between Jesuits and lay academic and administrative leaders. You have taken many important steps to make this a true partnership and to build teams in the spirit of our First Fathers, who called themselves "Friends in the Lord". We are called not only to share mission and responsibility, but to share vision as well and to share spirituality and life. This is so crucial for the future vitality of our schools that I invite you to give highest priority to continuing reflection on it and on the concrete changes and challenges it brings to us.

We need resources and support from our alumni and friends. The mission of building up the Jesuit schools in the Philippines to be the centers of teaching, learning, and research for Church and nation cannot be carried out by just some of you. It demands the friendship, dedication and support of all of you, particularly our alumni and alumnae and friends. The demands of excellence today require ever increasing resources. Our commitment to make Jesuit education accessible to the greater majority of the country is based on the openness and generosity of those

of you who have been more blessed in life. On our part, our task is to make you a genuine participant and partner in our educational mission. It is to build with you a community committed to the strengthening of Jesuit schools of excellence in the service of Church and nation.

We need to build bridges to the next generation and prepare the new teams of Jesuit and lay leaders. The experience of the last decades teaches us that we cannot easily see the challenges for this next generation. But we also know that they are almost sure to be even greater and more complex. We owe it, therefore, to our institutions, to the Church and to the country, to begin even now with preparing the next generation of leaders for our Jesuit schools.

Finally, perhaps the time has come to bring into full fruition and reality the creation of a true Jesuit school system in the Philippines. I know that you have discussed this several times over the last few years and that many difficulties and obstacles remain. But in a world defined more and more by globalization and networking, it is time to bring these schools bound by a common Jesuit spiritual heritage and tradition into an effective institutional system. This may be a great part of the "more", the magis that is asked of you as you enter the new millennium.

This network of Jesuit schools, bridging time, distance, and cultures, may then be the gift that you bring to Church and nation as the Philippines faces the challenges of the new millennium. A hundred and forty years ago the first Jesuits, with the bridge over Anda Street began symbolically to build bridges between the Ateneo and the dynamic Filipino society about it. A hundred and forty years later I end with the confident hope that the Ateneo will be able to continue building such bridges through time and space toward a new millennium in which there will flourish development, the justice of the Kingdom, and peace for all in the Philippines and in the entire world.