

THE VOICE OF THEOLOGY (A Word of Welcome)

Most Rev. Leonardo Y. Medroso, J.C.D., DD

In the name of my clergy, may I have the pleasure to welcome you all to the Diocese of Tagbilaran. Truth to tell, it is an honor to host in our little way the gathering of the theological society of our country that aims to address the theme of religion and politics.

The globalized world of today needs badly the voice of theology. As people are brought closer to each other, the interaction that it generates, the social behavior that it spawns, the humane and human values that it develops, the ethical standard of human actions that it presses on our minds and consciences goes beyond the proportion of what we have learned in schools and universities. The whirl of the world has become so complicated that we in the Church are dizzily panting to catch up with what we are going to offer to our people in order for them to pursue development goals that, in the words of Benedict XVI in his encyclical *Caritas in veritate*, “possess a more humane and humanizing value”.

As observed keenly by the Holy Father, the Church does not have technical solutions to offer and does not claim to interfere in any way in the politics of States. But it does possess the truth about society and the mission to teach this truth in every time and circumstance. It is this truth that shields our society from an empiricist and skeptical view of life.

Theology is for the service of this social truth which the Church believes can set us free from the clutches of the nihilistic and myopic view of life. Commitment, therefore, to the study of theology is not only a noble task but also a priority in our globalized world. It is along this line that I welcome you, theologians, to our local Church.

The Voice of Theology

Our diocese is not co-terminus with the province of Bohol. Our ecclesiastical jurisdiction straddles just one half of the entire island-province, the other half is occupied and administered by the Diocese of Talibon. Hence, we are a small diocese of some 57 parish communities, one hundred and eleven priests. With us in our apostolic ministry and mission are some twenty-five women religious.

Meantime, it might be of interest to you that our diocese is deep in its formation of Basic Ecclesial Communities and their corresponding clusters. Lately, we launched on the apostolate of offering tourists the opportunity to become at the same time pilgrims of faith. Yesterday, our Commission of the Cultural Heritage called for a meeting where some tourist agencies join in or, perhaps, facilitate the visitations of some of our very historical churches. Truth to tell, they are beautiful churches too besides the noble history within them. So, aside from the leisure of the sea and the beauty of nature, we will be offering to guests and visitors like you the opportunity to commune with our Creator.

Good day and enjoy!

Most Rev. Leonardo Y. Medroso, J.C.D., DD
Bishop of Tagbilaran
23 October 2009