

Ang Sirkulong Pastoral sa Pagtuturo ng Th 141¹

(The Pastoral Circle in Teaching and Studying Th 141)

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Ang sirkulong pastoral ang saligang kasangkapan na ginagamit ng mga guro at mag-aaral ng Th 141 sa Mga Paaralan ng Loyola sa Ateneo de Manila University. Tinagurian din itong *Sirkulo ng Praxis*¹ at naglalaman ito ng iisang kilos-karanasan na may apat na magkasunodsunod, magkaugnay, at magkabigkis na mga mukha na walang tigid na nakikipagtalaban sa isa't-isa. Hiniram ang metodolohiyang ito mula sa mga kabatiran at aklat nina Paolo Freire², Juan Luis Segundo, S.J.,³ at ang kilalang trilohiya: “see (pagmasdan), judge (humusga), act (kumilos)” ni Canon Joseph Cardijn. Mababanaagan din ang apat na mukha ng sirkulong pastoral sa mga kilalang kabatirang nagmula sa mga sulatin ng Epistemolohistang Hesuita, si Bernard Lonergan, S.J.

Pinaliwanag niyang may apat na magkaugnay na hakbangin pangmetodolohiya na dapat bigyan pansin ng isang nagteteolohiya: “experience (pagdanas), understanding (pag-unawa), judgment (paghuhusga), and decision (kilos-pagpapasya)”⁴.

¹ Joe Holland and Peter Henriot, S.J., *Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice*, (Washington D.C. Orbis Books, 1983), pp.7-44.

² Paulo Freire, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970).

³ Juan Luis Segundo, S.J., *The Liberation of Theology* (New York: Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1976).

⁴The two well-known works of Bernard Lonergan, S.J. are *Insight: A Theory of Human Understanding* and *Method in Theology*.

(The Pastoral Cycle is a basic paradigm-tool used by teachers and their students in the study of Th 141 at the Ateneo de Manila Loyola Schools. It is also known as the Circle of Praxis, and it refers to a single practical experience with four consecutive, inter-related, and unified moments, which constantly interact with each other. This methodology was borrowed from the insights of Paolo Freire, Juan Luis Segundo, S.J., and the famous trilogy (see, judge, act pattern) of Canon Joseph Cardijn. This pastoral circle is also discernible in the writings of the Jesuit Epistemologist, Bernard Lonergan, S.J. There are four interrelated methodological steps in the task of doing theology, according to him: “experience, understanding, judgment, and decision.”)

Ang Unang Mukha: Pagbababad sa Erya. Pagbababad sa, at pagdanas ng, buhay ng dukhang mag-anak at ng mga walang-wala at api sa lipunang Filipino, na nauuwi sa pakikisama at pakiki-isa sa kanila. Dito, katulong ng mga guro at mag-aaral ng Th 141, ang *Office of Social Concern and Involvement (OSCI)* ng mga Paaralan ng Loyola, na naghahanda ng mga *immersion sites* para sa estudyante kung saan mararanasan nila ang katalagahan ng pagiging dukha (la realidad de pobreza) at mga anak-pawis. Sa una at mahalagang mukhang ito ng sirkulong pastoral, iiwan ng mag-aaral ang kanilang nakagisnang mundo at “comfort zones” at makikisalamuha sa buhay ng mga dukha upang makita nila si Kristo sa kanila at maranasan nila ang kakaibang mundong ginagalawan ng angaw-angaw na kapwa-Pilipino sa panahon natin ngayon.

(First Moment: Insertion. This refers to the students’ actual immersion into the lives of a poor Filipino family, experiencing with them the deprivations of material poverty and oppression. The OSCI help Th 141 teachers and their students seek these foster homes from among the poor with whom they will experience the reality of poverty among humble workers. In this first and important moment of the pastoral circle, students leave their comfort zones and enter the lives of the poor in order to see Christ in them

and experience a different world where the vast majority of Filipinos thrive today.)

Ang Pangalawang Mukha: Pagsusuring Panlipunan.

Layunin ng pagsusuring ito na unawain ang kalagayan ng dukhang pamayanan at mag-anak na nakaniig sa imersiyon erya. Ito marahil ang pinakamahalagang mukha ng sirkulong pastoral. Ito ang ilan sa mga dapat itanong ng mag-aaral sa sarili sa pagsusuring panlipunang ito: Bakit nagkaganito ang mga taong kapiling natin dito? Saan nagbuhat ang kawalan ng katarungang panlipunang dinaranas nila? Sinu-sino ang nakikinabang sa pang-aaping dinadanas nila bilang mga dukha? Ano ang mga estrukturang panlipunan na nagtulak sa kanilang mga dukha na magkaganito? Anu-ano ang mga estrukturang pampulitika, pankultura, at kahit panrelihiyong maaaring may kinalaman sa kalagayan nilang ito bilang mga dukha? Ano-anong mga dibisyon (kasarian, gulang, rehiyong pinanggalingan, relihiyong kinagisnan, atbp.) at nibel ng pagsusuri (local, pambansa, at pandaigdigang) sa mundo ng mga dukhang ito, ang umiiral at dapat pagtuonan ng pansin?

Ang tugon sa mga tanong na ito, at iba pang katulad nito, ang tinaguriang sinkroniko at diakronikong pagsusuri ng lipunan.) Hangga't makakaya, sisikapin ng mga nagbababad ang makita ang kabuuang kalagayan ng mga dukhang kaisa na nila sa imersiyon erya. At dahil walang pagsusuring panlipunan na “value-free,” kailangan nilang liwanagin at ilantad ang kani-kanilang pinanghahawakang mga halagahin, na tiyak na magiging batayan ng kani-kanilang pagsusuring panlipunan.

(The Second Moment: Social Analysis. The purpose of this analysis is to understand, as fully as possible, the condition of the communities and the poor families with whom they stayed in the immersion sites. This is perhaps the most important moment of the pastoral circle. Here are some questions that students need to ask themselves: What happened to these poor people? What caused the poverty of this community and this family? What is the origin of this social injustice? Who benefits from this unjust social situation? What

societal structures led them to this condition of deprivation? What are the political, economic, cultural and even religious dimensions of this situation of poverty and oppression? What are the pertinent social divisions (sex, age, region where they came from, religion they grew up with, etc.) and levels (local, national, international), which they need to consider in this analysis? The answers to these, and other similar questions, refer to what experts call a synchronic and diachronic analysis of society. Since no social analysis is value-free, it is necessary for students to be clear about their own values, which will invariably influence their social analysis.)

Pangatlong Mukha: Pagninilay-nilay Teolohiko. Ito ang pag-unawa ng isinuring kalagayan ng mga naturang dukha, mula sa punto de vista ng Pagbubunyag ng Diyos at Pananampalatayang Kristiyano. Ano ang pinahihiwatig ng Salita ng Diyos at ng Aral ng Iglesia Katolika tungkol sa kalagayang ito? At ano naman ang pinahihiwatig ng kalagayang ito (ng kawalan ng katarungan) na lalo pang makapagbibigay liwanag sa Pagbubunyag at Pananampalatayang ito? Mula sa pakikipagtalabang ito (hermeniyutikong resiprosidad), mahihinuha ang diwa ng Teolohiya ng Pagpapalaya bilang mapanuring pagninilay-nilay sa praxis Kristiyano, ayon kay Gustavo Gutierrez. Hindi na sapat ang dating depinisyon ng teolohiya bilang *fides querens intellectum*: ang pananampalatayang naghahanap ng pag-unawa. Dapat nang unawain ang pagbubunyag-pananampalatayang ito sa kontekto ng nananampalataya: ang kinalalagyan niyang sitwasyon at mga dimensiyon nitong panlipunan, pangekonomiya, pampulitika, pangkultura, atbp.

(Third Moment: Theological Reflection. This moment of the Pastoral Circle refers to reflecting on the socially analyzed situation (second moment) from the point of view of God's self-revelation and the Christians' faith-response. What does God's Word and the Teachings of the Church say about this situation of social injustice, which, in turn, also sheds light on this Revelation-Faith? From this mutual interpretation (hermeneutic reciprocity) one can discern the meaning of a Theology of Liberation, which Gutierrez defines as

critical reflection on Christian praxis. The older definition of theology as faith seeking understanding (*fides quaerens intellectum*) is no longer enough. It is now also necessary to understand this Revelation–Faith within the total life context of believing Christians, i.e., their social, economic, political, cultural, etc. dimensions.)

Ika-apat na Mukha: Kilos-Pastoral. Naglalayon itong isakatuparan ang makakayanang pagbabago sa kalagayang ito na sinuri’t pinagnilayan na, upang makapagbabad muli, at maiwasan ang *paralysis of analysis*⁵. Dito, pinatotoo na hungkag ang pananampalatayang hindi gumagawa ng katarungan. Ang tunay na pananampalataya ay yaong may pinaninindigan, may pananalig sa Diyos, at may pagtataya’t mapagmahal na kilos para sa kapwa at mapagkiling na pagmamahal sa mga dukha at inaapi. Hindi tunay na Kristiyano ang nagmamahal lamang sa Diyos subali’t wala namang malasakit at pagmamahal sa kapwa. Hindi wagas ang pag-ibig natin sa Diyos kung hindi naman natin iniibig (sa isip, salita, at sa gawa) ang mga iniibig Niya. At hindi natin iniibig ang mga iniibig niya kung hindi tayo kumikilos alang-alang sa katarungan at nakikibahagi sa pagpapanibago ng lipunang Filipino. Ang mga ito ang Misyon ng Iglesya para sa Katubusan ng sangkatauhan⁶. Tungkulin ng bawat Katoliko at ng Santa Iglesya, na palayain ang lahat (sa abot ng ating makakaya) mula sa mga mapang-aping kalagayang panlipunan at pangalagaan ang kabutihan ng lahat at ng bawat isa, nang dahil sa Caridad.

⁵ Tungkulin ng mga sambayanang Kristiano ang suriin sa isang paraang aktibo, ang kalagayan ng sariling bansa, ipaliwanag ito sa pamamagitan ng mga di nagbabagong Salita ng Dios, at hugutin ang mga prinsipyong mapagninilayan, mga batayan sa paghuhusga ng tama o mali, at mga panuntunan ng pagkilos mula sa mga aral panlipunan ng Iglesya.” (It is the duty of Christian communities to analyze, in an active manner, the conditions of their own counties, explain these by means of the never-changing Word of God, and draw principles for reflection, basic insights for judging what is right or wrong, and guidelines for concrete action from Catholic social teaching.) *Octogesima Advieniens* no. 4, (1961)

⁶ Synod of Bishops, *Justitia in Mundo* (Justice in the World: 1971) Introduction, p. 8.

(Fourth Moment: Pastoral Action)⁷. The fourth moment (of the Pastoral Circle) aims to put into action what could be done to change the socially analyzed and theologically reflected situation of injustice and insert (immerse) themselves again in the community to avoid the “paralysis of analysis.” In this way, only a faith that does justice is a true one. Authentic faith is one that has conviction, trust in God, and commitment and love for one’s neighbor and a preferential love for the poor. One who loves God alone but has no sympathy and love for others is not a true believer. We do not truly love God if we do not love (in thought, word and deed) those whom God loves. We do not love those whom God loves if we do not act on behalf of justice and participate in the transformation of Philippine society. This is the Mission of the Church for the Redemption of Humankind. It is the duty of every Catholic and the Church to free people, as much as humanly possible from every oppressive social situation and promote the common good of each and everyone out of Charity.)

⁷ When Jesus was preaching one day, a woman cried out to Him: “Blessed is the womb that earned you, and the breasts at which you nursed!” (The woman was obviously praising the Blessed Virgin Mary.) Jesus replied (extolling Mary, even more), “Rather, blessed are those who hear the Word of God and observe it.” (Lk 11- 27-28). Theology 141 students perhaps need to see that Mary, more than any of Jesus’ Apostles and Disciples, lived out her faith in Jesus to the highest degree and that she, therefore, should be our model in this circle of praxis.