

From the Editor

The current volume's four articles are dealing with problems that, for centuries, have brought trouble and suffering to people: group rivalries, exploitative traditions, male domination, and social exclusion. These are problems that constantly challenge the task of spreading the Gospel. The articles, in some ways, may help us to face our own entanglements with those oppressive conflicts.

The work of Thomas Mooren ("Prophecy and Holiness: From the Deathbed of Muhammad *Rasul Allah* to the Peaceful Valley of Ibrahim *Khalil Allah*") grapples with the identity of an ideal Muslim who must be a 'synthesis' between the two poles of 'prophecy and holiness'. While the death of the prophet Muhammad has divided the followers of Islam into two communities—the Shi'ites and the Sunnites—this split has reached its deepest level in the choice between prophecy and holiness. Mooren, claims that one cannot stand without the other. Prophecy cannot be deprived of the aspect of holiness; and holiness as imbued too with true prophecy. This prophecy-holiness synthesis is found in the person of Abraham (*Khalil Allah* [God's Friend]). Mooren's work gives much thought on Abraham's role as God's friend as an inspiration for interreligious dialogue, between Muslims, Jews, and Christians—a task that may involve encounters with group ascendancies and deadly rivalries.

"Midya: Imbakan at Daluyan ng mga Tradisyon" / "Media: Vessel and Channel of Traditions" is Ferdinand D. Dagmang's discussion on some issues raised through the process of correlating the various "then" and "now" media. He does this by 1) looking into the type of media in St. Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians (2 Thess 2: 15) and 2) by comparing this with today's more

advanced-modern types of media. It is a process of analysis that leads to the discovery of interests and traditions fastened to every type of media that bridges every type of social interaction. Through this exercise, the study is able to bring into surface implicit information about media, society, and traditions—especially those exploitative and colonizing business traditions that stifle the flourishing of the Christian Tradition in urbanized communities.

Rica delos Reyes-Ancheta's "Interpreting Masculine Domination in Two Abortion Films: *4 Months, 3 Weeks, 2 Days* and *Vera Drake*" is a hard look at masculine domination. Using the two films, *4 Months, 3 Weeks, 2 Days* and *Vera Drake* as launching pads for analysis, her paper shows how a background check on society and culture's attachment to patriarchy could shed light on the different modes of masculine domination in the two films. It concludes with the re-imaging of female/male identities through a critical reading of the biblical Creation Story.

"The Pedicab Drivers' Daily Transgressions: Struggles for Provision and Care" by Ferdinand D. Dagmang and Dalmacito A. Cordero Jr. makes use of a series of interviews and direct observation of behavioral patterns and geographical settings to present three selected pedicab drivers' personal struggles and other experiences in life. The gathered data/narratives were 1) analyzed through the concepts of agency/motivation and structure and 2) further read in the light of some insights from *Gaudium et spes*. Learning about the pedicab drivers' narratives gave a more informed view not only about what they do (transgressions in order to survive), but also about social exclusion brought about by pre-established structures.

Ferdinand D. Dagmang