

Public Sphere: Church and State, Habermas and Ratzinger

Jesster B. Fonseca, M.A.
San Beda College

Introduction

The separation between Church and State had long been existing though in different modes. The concept has been adopted in a number of countries, to varying degrees depending on the applicable legal structures and prevalent views toward the proper role of religion in society. A similar principle of *laïcité* has been applied in France and Turkey, while some socially secularized countries such as Norway have maintained constitutional recognition of an official state religion.

Here in the Philippines presently, the setup we have regarding this separation of Church and State jurisdiction is rather hazy. CBCP (Catholic Bishop's Conference of the Philippines) was observed vacillating in its stance regarding the true concept of this separation. This was seen when they did not support the deposition of the then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo when people from different sectors of society were clamouring for her voluntary resignation due to alleged rigging of electoral results. On the other hand, such act of the Church hierarchy polarized the involvement of the Church (lay and clergy) with socio-political affairs, when in the past the hierarchy united itself to the rest of people in ousting Ferdinand Marcos in EDSA People Power Revolution. While the CBCP hitherto speaks of the "evil culture" which modernity has been bringing to the Filipino people, Congress and President Noynoy Aquino passed the RH law.

Filipinos are divided regarding how the Church hierarchy should involve herself in the socio-political affairs of the State, or in other words, the role of religion in the public sphere. Many Filipino laity likewise feels that the hierarchy's stand is not representing the majority of its flock, thus there is a question whether the dialogue between religion and the State can also be brought or translated to a possibility of dialogue between the Church's hierarchy and its laity. In other words, what is the role of the laity in policy-making within the Church?

This paper dwells on these concerns: Firstly, I will be presenting the Catholic Church's and Joseph Ratzinger's (Pope Benedict XVI's) understanding of the nature of the Church's participation in the socio-political affairs of the State; secondly, I will show the fruits of the dialogue that happened in Katholische Akademie of Bavaria between Jurgen Habermas and Joseph Ratzinger on the possibility of The Pre-political Moral Foundations of a Free State reflected in the papers, *The Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion*, and the encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*; thirdly, I will show Jurgen Habermas's position regarding the inevitable contribution or involvement of religion (Church) in the socio-political affairs of the State. Finally, I will propose the (im)possibility of Habermas' public sphere within the hierarchical institution of the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church and Its Relation to the Political Community

To understand the nature of the Church's involvement in the socio-political concerns of the State, the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* describes this relationship.

Accordingly, the purposes of each of the proper spheres – the political community and the Church are different and independent of each other, that is, the temporal common good is the responsibility of the State, whereas spiritual concern is for the Church. The dichotomy of spheres made between the body and spirit marks the way the Church differentiates the spiritual from the temporal. Furthermore, the Church teaches:

The duty to respect religious freedom requires that the political community guarantee the Church the space needed to carry out her mission. For her part, the Church has no particular area of competence concerning the structures of the political community: "The Church respects the legitimate autonomy of the democratic order and is not entitled to express preferences for this or that institutional or constitutional solution", nor does it belong to her to enter into questions of the merit of political programmes, except as concerns their religious or moral implications. (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004)

The Church respects the institutional structures and the political programmes of the State, as she likewise expects that

the political community to respect religious freedom, and that the political community guarantees that she be able to practice her function to arrive at her goal. This is further articulated in the Church's statement:

The Church has the right to the legal recognition of her proper identity. Precisely because her mission embraces all of human reality, the Church, sensing that she is "truly and intimately linked with mankind and its history", claims the freedom to express her moral judgment on this reality, whenever it may be required to defend the fundamental rights of the person or for the salvation of souls.

The Church therefore seeks: freedom of expression, teaching and evangelization; freedom of public worship; freedom of organization and of her own internal government; freedom of selecting, educating, naming and transferring her ministers; freedom for constructing religious buildings; freedom to acquire and possess sufficient goods for her activity; and freedom to form associations not only for religious purposes but also for educational, cultural, health care and charitable purposes. (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004)

The separation of the Church and the State, however, does not exclude cooperation. They both serve the personal and social vocation of the same human beings. However different in missions, they both intend to aid the citizenry exercise their rights and perform their endeavours.

As overlapping or intrusion of respective proper spheres are inevitable, the Compendium states:

In order to prevent or attenuate possible conflicts between the Church and the political community, the juridical experience of the Church and the State have variously defined stable forms of contact and suitable instruments for guaranteeing harmonious relations. This experience is an essential reference point for all cases in which the State has the presumption to invade the Church's area of action, impairing the freedom of her activity to the point of openly persecuting her or, vice versa, for cases in which church organizations do not act properly with respect to the State. (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004, 424-427)

The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church clearly delineates the identity and character, mission and goal, as well as the jurisdiction of each organization.

Ratzinger's Ecclesial Theology and Stance in Politics¹

In confirmation of the “qualitative” difference of the Church with respect to any other human organization whatsoever, Ratzinger recalls that:

Only the church, in this world, goes beyond even the radically impassable frontier: the frontier of death. Living or dead, the members of the church live in association with the same life that proceeds from the incorporation of all in the body of Christ.

...it is precisely this mysterious yet real bond, this union in Life that is also the reason why the church is not our church, which we could dispose of as we please. She is, rather, his church. All that which is only our church is not church in the deep sense; it belongs to her human – hence secondary, transitory – aspect. (1985)

With regards to what consequences in relation with the ecclesial hierarchy the rejection of this Catholic concept of the church, Ratzinger added:

... here lies the origin of the decline of the authentic concept of ‘obedience... if her structures are not willed by Christ, then it is no longer possible to conceive of the existence of a hierarchy as a service to the baptized established by the Lord himself...Her deep and permanent structure is not democratic but sacramental, consequently hierarchical.(1985)

In this light, Ratzinger clearly distinguishes the Catholic Church as a divine organization, reflecting the thought that this Church is the Lord Jesus’, implying that everything in it, including the very structural component of it, is divinely bestowed.

With regard to one of the theological concepts that prevailed in Vatican Council II – ‘People of God’, and how this clarifies the seeming contradiction with the hierarchical structure in the Church, Ratzinger, quoting Werner Berg, an exegete of Boccaccio, stated:

The phrase expresses ‘kinship’ with God, a relationship with God, the link between God and what is designated as ‘People of God’, hence a ‘vertical orientation’. The expression does not describe the

¹While there is an academic practice to differentiate authorship based on the period one’s body of works was published, like in the case of Joseph Ratzinger (the theologian) and Pope Benedict XVI (his Papal name), the author deemed it sufficient to use the name Ratzinger as his position on such subject matters remain the same, if not coherent.

hierarchical structure of the community (emphasis supplied)... Nor does the expression lend itself to a cry of protest against the ministers: 'We are the People of God.' (Thornton, Varenne, 2007)

While Werner Berg did not bring about an interpretation of the hierarchy's distinctive character in its functionality, Ratzinger in his book, *Salt of the Earth: The Church at the End of the Millennium*, on the other hand, gave a practical interpretation of the hierarchy, however ontological in sense, is not different from the rest of the Church as members of God's People. The hierarchy as a decision-making group, who represents the "we", is an institution that really represents the whole, but only insofar as it lives in the whole. (Thornton, Varenne, 2007) Thus, its role is important and needed. Ratzinger adds, "...a true understanding of the term "People of God" in its biblical usage is needed lest we make extra-Christian construction that misses its real core." (Thornton, Varenne, 2007)

The Hierarchy and its Essence

With regard to the meaning of the term hierarchy, Ratzinger corrects its etymological meaning and explains his understanding about it. He said:

"From its common understanding 'sacred rule', arche is more likely to mean "sacred origin". Hierarchy communicates itself in the virtue of an origin, its power, which is sacred. As it were, it is the ever-new beginning of every generation in the church that does not live by the mere continuum of generations, but by the presence of the ever-new source itself. This is communicated unceasingly through the sacraments. When priesthood, episcopacy, and papacy are understood essentially in terms of rule, things are truly wrong and distorted. Its true meaning is not to construct a structure of domination but to keep something present that does not come from the individual – no one in his initiative can perform forgiveness of sins, communicate the Holy Spirit, or transform bread into the presence of Christ. In this sense one has to perform a service in which the church does not become a self-governing business but draws her life again and anew from her origin." (Cf. Thornton, Varenne, 2007)

Ratzinger, likewise, puts this understanding of the hierarchical structure in the Church into its practicability.

Accordingly, the office (of the priesthood) in the first place, is by nature to be of service, sacraments are celebrated and the Word of God is communicated. And in the second place, he (office holder) ought to be the one who serves, who is available to the people and who, following Christ, keeps himself ready to wash their feet. When this is lived correctly, it cannot mean finally getting one's hands on the levers of power but rather renouncing one's own life project in order to give oneself over to service. As Christ suffered, the church must also. She becomes most credible where she has martyrs and confessors. And where things go comfortably, she loses her credibility. (Cf. ibid)

From the aforementioned, Ratzinger clarifies the threefold role of the hierarchy: priestly, as they preside over the celebration of sacraments; prophetic, as they bring about the Word of God through its teaching; and kingly, as they bring about the Word of God by its doing and service.

The Concept of the Church's Political Stance

In Joseph Ratzinger's *Church, Ecumenism and Politics*, he clarifies the role and relation of the Church with the State's affairs. Accordingly, he says:

The general rule then is that politics itself was sacral. The state was recognized as the bearer of a supreme sacrality, safeguarding the ethical binding force of its laws and with this the human guarantee of its cohesion by these laws. Because they are divine they must continue unquestionably and unconditionally to bind men and women. Until, the words of Christ remain a fundamental reference in looking at the relationship of the Church to the political sphere: 'Render, therefore, to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's' (Mt. 22:21).

It is precisely this separation of the authority of the state and sacral authority, the new dualism that this contains, that represents the origin and the permanent foundation of the western idea of freedom. The state is no longer itself the bearer of a religious authority that reaches into the ultimate depths of conscience, but for its moral basis refers beyond itself to another community. This community in its turn, the Church, understands itself as a final moral authority which however depends on voluntary adherence and is entitled only to spiritual but not to civil penalties, precisely because it does not have the status the state has of being accepted by all as something given in advance. Thus each of these communities is circumscribed in its radius, and on the balance of this relation, depends freedom.

With this the fundamental task of the Church's political stance has been defined; its aim must be to maintain this balance of a dual system as the foundation of freedom. Hence, the Church must make claims and demands on public law and cannot simply retreat into the private sphere. Hence, it must also take care on the other hand that Church and state remain separated and that belonging to the Church clearly retains its voluntary character.

This also defines in its fundamental outlines the relationship of the Church's political stance and theology. The Church's political stance must not be directed simply at the Church's power. Rather, the Church understands itself as the actual environment of reason in its search for meaning. It must, on one hand, warn reason against an abstract independence that becomes fictitious, but, on the other hand, it must respect the proper responsibility of reason asking questions within the environment of faith. Just as in the field of the relationship of Church and state it is here also a question of safeguarding the duality as a fruitful functional relationship.

Of its essence this relationship of tension will always be critical. But as long as it is critical it is also alive. (Ratzinger, 1988)

To elaborate this stance regarding the relationship existing between the Church and the political community, the encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est* gave us some¹ enlightening principles.

Ratzinger's *Deus Caritas Est*²

Even if the encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* covered only a small portion in discussing the issue of Church relation to the State, it is still noteworthy to say that the former Pope introduced something revolutionary. What follows discusses this essential insight.

Firstly, on the question, "How Can a Society Achieve Justice?"

In a rare opportune moment, two German intellectuals, in the person of Jurgen Habermas, a philosopher and his holiness Pope Benedict XVI (Joseph Ratzinger), a theologian, met and had a dialogue at the Katholische Akademie of Bavaria in Munich on January 19, 2004.

²To better understand the context and coherence of Ratzinger's position on the issue of the Church's involvement in State's socio-political affairs, the encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* is juxtaposed with other published works by the author and about the author.

During the dialogue in Bavaria with the philosopher Jurgen Habermas, Joseph Ratzinger articulated a novel idea of the impracticability of insisting the principle of natural law, which is the basis of an a priori template of a just society on a secular discussion on values, for the surprising reason that the principle of natural law itself has been rendered questionable due to the theory of evolution (Nemoianu, 29). The Holy Father in the encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est*, is not suggesting any a priori model of society that Christians should strive for. This he consistently expressed also in the Munich paper, *That Which Holds the World Together: The Pre-political Moral Foundations of a Free State* in Habermas, and Ratzinger then later on published in the book, *Dialektik der Säkularisierung. Über Vernunft und Religion*:

Today, we ought perhaps to amplify the doctrine of human rights with a doctrine of human obligations and of human limitations. This could help us to grasp anew the relevance of the question of whether there might exist a rationality of nature and, hence, a rational law for man and for his existence in the world. And this dialogue would necessarily be intercultural today, both in its structure and in its interpretation.

For Christians, this dialogue would speak of the creation and the Creator. In the Indian world, this would correspond to the concept of “dharma”, the inner law that regulates all Being; in the Chinese tradition, it would correspond to the idea of the structures ordained by heaven (2005).

Habermas, on the other hand, radicalized the processes of dialogue and consensus building in his discourse ethics, where truths and values are formed from rigorous and sustained communicative negotiations between the stakeholders. In discourse ethics, the consensual truths and values that come out from the dialogue are taken as momentary configurations that are always open to the possibility of further dialogues. In the dialogue in Bavaria, Ratzinger emphasized “the need for religion and secular thoughts to engage in serious consensus building to protect humanity and the world from the dark effects of modernity” (Nemoianu, 28).

The encyclical echoes this thought, when Ratzinger explains that the existing social doctrine of the Church should serve only as the Church’s premises for such dialogues. “These guidelines need to be addressed in the context of dialogue with all those seriously

concerned for humanity and for the world in which we live” (Deus Caritas Est, 27).

Secondly, on the question, “Who should be responsible in achieving/establishing Justice?”

Ratzinger returns to the biblical distinction between “what belongs to Caesar and what belongs to God” (Deus Caritas Est, 28). The encyclical states that the attainment of justice is the primary concern of the state and not of the Church. Politics, or the transaction between the state and the people, should be founded in justice and should work for justice. However, Ratzinger qualified this by pointing out that because there is an immediate connection between justice and ethics/morals, the Church also should not just stand back and watch whatever political actions the state and the people transact. Just as the prophetic figure of Jesus speaks when it comes to ethical and moral questions, the Church also has to speak when it comes to the question of justice.

The encyclical suggests that the Church should form the faithful into enlightened, ethical, moral and charitable statesmen and people who will then be responsible in establishing the just and humane society.

“How Should the Church Work in Order to Promote Justice?”

It must be noted that the encyclical hitches its answer on the distinction between the ministers and the laity, and not on the Church and its individual members. The encyclical states that the ministers should participate in striving for a just and humane society only in theory, and never in the actual practice; while the lay faithful should participate both in theory and in practice.

The ministers should instead educate the faithful on their political responsibility; educate the faithful on what Christian justice is; and energize justice with charity. These would actually bring us to one of the wellsprings of democracy. In their dialogue in Bavaria, Habermas pointed out that although modern democratic states are autonomous from religion, democracy’s foundational virtues are derived from religion (Nemoianu, 27).

In Habermas’ major work *Theory of Communicative Action*, he uses the term *Versprachlichung des Sakrals* (linguistification of the sacred), where he asserts that modern justice is a derivation from

Judeo-Christian concepts, such as the Mosaic covenant, equality of men and women, unconditional respect for human life, and the care for the poor and the marginalized.

The other two tasks the Ministers of the Church should do are: to energize justice with charity as justice demands self-sacrifice; and enlighten reason's self-centeredness. This could be articulated further using Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action. For instance, for him, there are two basic ways of participating in a dialogue: strategic action and communicative action. Strategic action is dialoguing with the intention of imposing one's will on the other to control and dominate that other. Communicative action is dialoguing with the intention of reaching real consensus with the other at all costs. Definitely, the Church should advocate the latter.

But how do we transcend our natural and human inclinations to be self-centered? For Habermas, this can be done with a determined and persistent will. Ratzinger, however, unburdens the will with the power of faith. He counts on faith to liberate "reason from its blind spots," to enable "reason to do its work more effectively," and to make reason "see its proper object more clearly" (*Deus Caritas Est*, 28). In the Munich paper, likewise, Ratzinger rejects the idea that science and reason alone can be a sufficient basis of ethical foundation of society. He further adds that science and reason have not been able to offer adequate protection for the weakest in the society.

Religion in the Public Sphere

Habermas has polarized the phenomenon in United States of America with Europe, where he describes the steady number of devout and religious Americans over the last six decades. Religious right, he said, has embraced a new character apart from its traditionalist form, a religious revivalism. Habermas had observed that Max Weber's Occidental Rationalism was far from happening. He explained further:

Let me explain this by reminding you of the change in the form of religious consciousness that we observe in our culture since the periods of Reformation and Enlightenment. Sociologists have described this "modernization of religious consciousness" as a response to three challenges religious traditions have been facing in

view of the fact of pluralism, the emergence of modern science, and the spread of positive law and a profane morality. In these three respects, traditional communities of faith must process cognitive dissonances that do not equally arise for secular citizens. (Habermas, 2006)

For this study, I will focus on how religious traditions can respond to the challenges arisen from modern science, and the spread of positive law and profane morality. First, Habermas suggests that religious traditions should develop an epistemic stance regarding its view with the state and events of the world. Furthermore, religious traditions must respect the autonomous progress in secular knowledge without being threatened that such development will challenge their faith-teaching. Religious citizens must, likewise, bring about an epistemic stance toward the priority that secular reasons enjoy in the political arena. Such success will only be met, in Habermas' view, if they connect the egalitarian individualism and universalism of modern law and morality with the premises of their doctrines. He goes on to say:

The new epistemic attitudes are 'acquired by learning' if they arise from a reconstruction of sacred truths that is compelling for people of faith in the light of modern living conditions for which no alternatives any longer exist (Habermas, 2006).

In the same light, Habermas states, "The secular citizens are not spared (from) a cognitive burden, because a secularist consciousness does not suffice for the required cooperation with fellow citizens who are religious." Habermas warns citizens who adopt a view that:

Religion no longer has any intrinsic justifications to exist. And the principle of the separation of state and church can for them only have the laicist meaning of sparing indifference. Citizens who adopt such an epistemic stance toward religion can obviously no longer be expected to take religious contributions to contentious political issues seriously or even to help to assess them for a substance that can possibly be expressed in a secular language and justified by secular arguments." Furthermore, "the admission of religious statements to the political public sphere makes only sense if all citizens can be expected not to deny from the outset the possible cognitive substance to these contributions – while at the same time respecting the precedence of secular reasons and the requirement for a translation of religious

reasons. *The secular citizens must grasp their conflict with religious opinions as a reasonably expected disagreement (Habermas, 2006).*

Habermas shows how prejudice against the other can become a major, if not a foremost hurdle in a dialogue and understanding, and ultimately in cooperation.

From this, Habermas introduces from how he sees in post-secular society sophisticated expression to which he calls a post-metaphysical thought, a counter-part of the self-reflective religious consciousness. He describes this Post-metaphysical thought as:

(It) draws, with no polemical intention, a strict line between faith and knowledge. But it rejects a narrow scientific concept of reason and the exclusion of religious doctrines from the genealogy of reason. Post-metaphysical thought certainly refrains from passing ontological statements on the constitution of the whole of beings. Yet at the same time it rejects a kind of scientism that reduces our knowledge to what is, at each time, represented by the "state of the art" in natural science. The borderline often becomes blurred between proper scientific information and a naturalist world-view that is only synthesized from various scientific sources. A naturalist position of this kind devalues the validity of all categories of knowledge that is not based on experimental evidence, natural laws, causal explanations etc., it devalues in other words moral, legal und evaluative propositions no less than religious statements...Post-metaphysical thought reflects on its own history. In so doing it refers, however, not only to the metaphysical heritage of Western philosophy. It discovers an internal relationship also to those world religions whose origins, like the origins of Classical Greek philosophy, date back to the middle of the first millennium before Christ – in other words to what Jaspers termed the "Axial Age"... Post-metaphysical thought is prepared to learn from religion while remaining strictly agnostic. It insists on the difference between certainties of faith and validity claims that can be publicly criticized; but it refrains from the rationalist temptation that it can itself decide which part of the religious doctrines is rational and which part is not. Now, this ambivalent attitude to religion expresses a similar epistemic attitude which secular citizens must adopt, if they are to be able and willing to learn something from religious contributions to public debates - provided it turns out to be something that can also be spelled out in a generally accessible language (Habermas, 2006).

Post-metaphysical thought, hence, speaks of truth that is not absolutizing like how naturalist worldview tends to be. For him, such claims of truth are triumphalist, devaluing other sources of truth and knowledge, which leads to how he describes in Strategic Action

domination and deception. In Communicative Action, however, one is always ready to scrutinize his thoughts and intention (epistemic attitude), to which secular citizens and religious believers must adopt in order to learn from each other and reach an agreement.

Public Sphere from with Out and with In

The mutual participation by cooperation of the Church and the political community as described above shows that however different the two offices are, their function in serving their subjects well is their foremost priority. (Cf. Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004).

To analyse this relationship between the Church (Catholic) and the State, distinctions were made: first, the distinction in concerns, where the State carries the socio-political responsibilities, whereas religion (Church) takes care of the spiritual responsibility; second, the distinction in the manner of responding to the social concerns of their subjects.

In the first distinction, difference in concerns comes to the fore specially when conflicts arise between the Church and State, such difference, however, can easily be averted if each sphere would just attest to its respective identities. This is the reason why State policies would always hold neutrality in any religion. Religions, on the other hand, expect freedom for them to practice their beliefs for as long as it is not contrary to laws.

The second sphere of distinction, where difference of roles members need to play, is more problematic. On the part of the secular establishment, the statesmen, for instance, are expected to construct programs and policies that will bring about order in the community. The citizens, on the other hand, are expected to comply and cooperate. Here, a vertical movement of relationship between the statesmen and the citizenry is shown. Performance of roles of each stakeholder is expected to achieve harmonious relationship. The movement of power working between the statesmen and the people, while obviously vertical, also has a horizontal flow, i.e., deposition of statesmen by their electors can be done, or expectations of electors from their elected officials should be met otherwise victory will not be given to this officials in the next election. Proof of such is

what Jurgen Habermas regards as the “public sphere”. Democracy, for certain, is a necessary requirement to hold dialogue in a public sphere.

The case of the (Catholic) Church, however, is different, as this “public sphere” is nowhere to be found. In this exposition, Joseph Ratzinger adheres, supports and, as expected, defends this vertical flow of power. The former pope legitimized this authority as sacramental in nature. For one, the faithful do not elect their leaders (clergy, hierarchy), unlike in the case of the State.

...if her structures are not willed by Christ, then it is no longer possible to conceive of the existence of a hierarchy as a service to the baptized established by the Lord himself...Her deep and permanent structure is not democratic but sacramental, consequently hierarchical (Ratzinger, 1985).

While several references support this position by the former pope, the dialogue he had with the philosopher Jurgen Habermas in the Catholic University of Bavaria depicted a desire also on his part to engage in a genuine dialogue with the secular world. Nowhere, however, can we find the former pope expressing this same desire, nor speak of the possibility of the “public sphere”, if it is within the institutional Church. Certainly, this is also expected, otherwise his epistemic stance will be polarized.

Ratzinger, like Habermas, encourages learning from different spheres of reality. However, the Catholic Church, the very cradle of Western concept of democracy, while she protects the value of freedom and its consequential virtues, is not ruled in a democratic way.

The effect on any organization or institution where democracy is not present is totalitarian ruling. Ratzinger, on his part, also condemns the same secular establishments. He, in fact, wanted the Church to counterbalance forms of totalitarianism. However, when he was asked how he views abuses of authority inside the Church, his claim that the Church is not primarily human in nature because it is God’s was again heard from him.

Ratzinger also adheres to the character of genuine humility in the context of discipleship, and self- sacrifice as a requirement to bring about authentic dialogue. Habermas, in the same vein, speaks of this in his Theory of Communicative Action.

Is it nil then to expect a public sphere within the Catholic Church?

Perhaps, it would be worthwhile to ask again what the political theologian, Johann-Baptist Metz once said: "...do we simply believe in compassion and remain under the cloak of a mere belief in compassion fixed within the apathy which accompanies life as domination? If we believe in something then we must live those beliefs consistently" (Metz, 1980). A theologian (and the clergy), for him, must connect with the suffering of those around him; feel the claim of the suffering of others, even in his technical theological discourse. He must run the race. Only in this way theologians can live up to the exhortation of I Peter 3:15: "Be prepared to give an account of the hope that is in you."

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