

## Editorial



**Dear Readers,**

At the beginning of this year 2021, we take the opportunity to celebrate 500 Years of the Roman Catholic Church's presence in the Philippines (1521-2021), with a selection of articles related to the Church and mission in the Philippines. Except for the first one, that SEDOS received from the author, we selected some articles from the different journals we receive at SEDOS, many from our Member Congregations. It is the moment to make these valuable journals better known.

The opening article is by *Fr. James Kroeger* briefly overviews the five centuries of Catholicism in the Philippines, its history from the arrival of the Spaniards, wars, the different presidents and the revolutions it has known, as well as the challenges to a “renewed evangelization” ahead.

The celebration of the 500 years of the Philippine Church cannot fail to recall all those Overseas Filipino Workers, mostly domestic workers, who give life to the churches they attend with their smiling faces, music, food, and above all their Christian faith. They are the modern-day apostles of evangelization. *Santosh Digal* highlights this contribution in the English magazine *World Mission*.

But the Philippine Church has also suffered a lot of injustices on the political level. We take here the example of the present President Duterte. He does not accept any criticism, criticizes the Christian faith, and expels the missionaries who stand up for a just social cause. *Margarida Santos Lopes* has written her article on this topic in the Spanish journal *Além-Mar perspectiva Missionária*.

So, we are taking the occasion to join in the celebration of the different missionary Congregations that are active in the field. Already the last article concluded with a little note on the 30 years of Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus, MCCJ, in the Philippines, which they celebrated in 2018.

Then we come to the PIME missionaries (Pontifical Foreign Missionary Institute) who celebrated 50 years in the Philippines in 2018. *Gerolamo Fazzini* gives us a rapid overview of their pastoral contributions as well as their martyrs. The article appeared in their Italian journal, *Mondo e Missione – La Rivista dei Missionari del PIME*.

We add by way of conclusion the *Prayer for the Centennial Celebration CICM* (Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary) in 2007. It summarizes the genuine feelings of the missionaries present in the Philippines today very well.

For our last article, we have chosen the document on Church and Ecology in the Philippines that appeared in the French journal of the Spiritans: *Pentecôte sur le monde* in 2016. The ecological problem is still urgent in the Philippines and becomes more and more a recurring issue in the Philippine Church. The Document is made up of different short contributions.

We close with some words about the important role *Radio Veritas Asia* (RVA) has played: “sustaining and nurturing a sense of Catholic identity and spreading knowledge of Catholic moral principles” (EA, 48).

***A Happy Celebration to all Philippine Missionaries, to all Missionaries in the Philippines, and to all the Catholic faithful!***