“DOING THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION”

Binhi sang Pagtuo

August 20, 2012

Dear Friends,

Greetings!

We have a long weekend in the Philippines. Monday and Tuesday are Philippine holidays in honor of the end of the Muslim Feast of Ramadan, and the Death Anniversary of a modern Filipino Hero – Benigno “Ninoy” Aquino, respectively.

The long weekend has given us time to rest and to reflect. Let me share some of my notes that can help you in doing theological reflection.

My teacher, Rev. Dr. Johnny V. Gumban, in his article, The Emerging Theology (1983), wrote, “Theology is man’s way of talking about God. In the Christian perspective, it is our way of talking about God who revealed himself in Jesus Christ as testified faithfully in the Scriptures. Talking about God should not imply that God is a static object of thought. He is not a concept or an idea. He is an active God who is known by us through His acts in history. His action in Jesus Christ was a unique, special and fulfilling in whom and through whom all God’s acts in history are to be understood.”

David J. Wolpe, in his book Teaching your children about God (1993), teaches us that theological reflection is an avenue “to wrestle with God, with the idea of God, with the traditions taught in God’s Name Faith is about trust, but it is also about struggle…Learners of all ages should be taught to wrestle.”

The book Theological Reflection in Ministry and Mission (2004) reminds us that “Theological reflection begins with the lived experience of a person or group, correlates it with the sources of the Christian tradition and wrestles with the practical implications.”

Indeed to engage in theological reflection is to do practical theology – a theology consciously places itself in the middle of practical concerns. Because of this, I am reminded of Pastor Rodolfo Acosta, my Homiletics teacher, who taught us that, “when you start in Iloilo be sure to end in Jerusalem. When you start in Jerusalem, be sure to end in Iloilo.” We should know how to make the context interact with the text, and vice versa.

As we do theological reflection, let us be reminded by the words of one my mentors, Rev. Dr. Domingo J. Diel, Jr., “The Gospel of Jesus Christ must be spoken meaningfully to all kinds of people in their respective circumstances and conditions.”

May God bless us all!

Sincerely,

Rev. Francis Neil G. Jalando-on