

A REPORT ON

A Consultation on Asian Pacific Catholic Pastoral Concerns

TO CELEBRATE THE RICHES OF A
MULTICULTURAL CHURCH
AND TO ADDRESS ITS PASTORAL CHALLENGES



CONVENED BY
THE INSTITUTE FOR CHURCH LIFE
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

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THE MCKENNA CENTER FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

A NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON THE PASTORAL CONCERNS OF
ASIAN PACIFIC CATHOLICS IN THE DIOCESES OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 26-28, 1999

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OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

On Friday, February 26, twenty-five key leaders of the Asian Pacific Catholic communities of the United States convened at the University of Notre Dame along with the staff of Notre Dame's Institute for Church Life and other faculty of the university. Their goal was to assess the pastoral practices and needs of the several million Catholics of Asian descent in U.S. parishes and Catholic institutions. Bishop John Cummins of Oakland presented a paper on "The Role and Responsibilities of the Diocesan Bishop in the Evolution of Asian Catholic Pastoral Life." Bishop Cummins represented the bishops of the United States at the Vatican Synod of Asian Bishops and he is very familiar with Asian pastoral life in this country. Also participating in this consultation was Bishop Stephen Blaire of Stockton, California, who is Chairman of the NCCB Committee on Pastoral Practices.

The growing number of Asian Catholics in the U.S. is significant. There are older communities of Chinese, Japanese, Asian Indian, and Filipino Catholics, more recent Korean immigrants, and very large numbers of Vietnamese Catholics who have become the most recent influx of Asian Catholics from abroad. There are other Asian groups, including Pacific Islanders and Hmong Catholics. Each of these communities has distinctive contributions to make to U.S. pastoral life. In addition, they have some pastoral problems and contributions in common, despite their great differences of language, culture, and circumstances.

The Asian Synod of Spring 1998 heightened worldwide awareness of issues concerning Catholics in Asia. This consultation at Notre Dame reflected on the available documentation concerning the Asian Synod, considered its applicability and implications for U.S. Asian Catholic communities, and raised and addressed the distinctive pastoral questions of the U.S. Asian Catholic churches.

Asian American Catholics experience popular religiosity as a much stronger force for Christian and cultural identity than do Catholics in the dominant Anglo-American culture. We were concerned to inquire how the church most faithfully and gracefully proceeds from that reality of popular religiosity to catechesis, liturgy, and Christian service. One document of reference for the discussions of this consultation was *The Multicultural Church: A New Landscape in U.S. Theologies*, W. Cenkner, ed. (Paulist, 1996). In addition, we studied Bishop Cummins' article, "Synods in Contrast," in *America* (Aug. 29, 1998).

In addition to assessing the pastoral care of Asian Pacific Catholics in the U.S., a diverse group that includes Filipino, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, other Indochinese and Pacific Island peoples, the consultation also discussed the issue of "mutual inculturation." Asian peoples bring with them rich traditions of spirituality and religious practice from their native lands, and they are eager to maintain their cultural identity while entering the national church here. Mutual inculturation means that both the host country and the incoming peoples give and take, bless and are blessed, by learning to share a common church life and Christian mission. Rev. Peter Phan, professor of Religion and Religious Education at the Catholic University of America, explored this question in a paper on "East Asian Adaptation and Inculturation in North America."

The goal of this consultation was to provide a listening post for leaders from these communities to share insights and success stories, clarify their pastoral needs, dialogue with concerned bishops, and set out relevant pastoral priorities for the church. The consultation had been designed to allow for active and effective participation of all the Asian leaders in such a dialogue. The report that follows is designed to allow readers to benefit from the exchanges and expressions of concern that came forth in the consultation dialogue. As will be noted, a great deal of common interest and experience were discovered among the representatives of peoples with very distinct languages, cultures, and ecclesiastical histories, leading to a growing sense that there is need for more exchange and mutual support among Catholics in the U.S. who share the common perspectives of their Asian Pacific origins.

Notre Dame's consultation on Asian Pacific Catholic Pastoral Concerns concluded on Sunday, February 28, with Eucharist celebrated in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. In that liturgy where the gospel of the Transfiguration was proclaimed, Bishop Cummins in his preaching reminded us that the mount of Transfiguration was in Asia and that Jesus and the three disciples were Asians. He contrasted the obsession of our western technical thought for facts and ideas with the passion of eastern thought for experience--and noted how apt was the Transfiguration gospel, which tells (especially) about Peter's religious experience in this moment of transformation and faith. This closing liturgy, like much of what the participants in the consultation exchanged in their days together, allowed the group to meet one another in faith and mutual respect. The prayer sessions of the consultation, thanks to the contributions of Notre Dame University students of Asian heritage, drew from different musical, cultural, and linguistic traditions represented in the group.

We imagined the consultation as an experience of fact-finding, networking, dialogue, and agenda-setting. Ms. Amalia Mamaed, herself a Filipino and director of the *Encuentro 2000* project of the NCCB, acted as facilitator for the consultation. The interests and responses of the participants were carefully monitored and recorded during the proceedings.

This consultation was the third in a series of pastoral inquiries convened in the 1998-99 academic year by Notre Dame's Institute for Church Life. In October, 1998, the Institute convened a consultation on Hispanic/Latino Pastoral Concerns and in January, 1999, the Institute, in cooperation with the Center for Spirituality of Saint Mary's College, convened a consultation on Spirituality in the Culture and in the Academy.

The report that follows has the goal of recording the findings of the consultation, informing those with a pastoral interest in this domain of church life, and inviting creative responses in theology and pastoral life to the needs and possibilities identified here.

It is a great pleasure to be able to express my deep appreciation and thanks for the participation of the great and devoted pastoral leaders who came to Notre Dame to engage in this dialogue. Those of us at Notre Dame who were privileged to be involved in this meeting continue to cherish the rich experience of communion and the passion for pastoral service that we experienced with our guests.

Rev. Paul Philibert, O. P.
Director
Institute for Church Life

Asian Pacific Catholic Consultation Session One

Expectations for the Consultation

In this first session, the participants were asked to reflect on their hopes for the consultation. Initial introductions had already been made. People spoke about where they came from and what their pastoral ministry is. We thought it good to identify what the participants most wanted to get from working together. Their responses fell together into six general topic areas, and so we here re-group the verbatim statements of the participants under the following six concerns:

1960 To be able to listen and learn from one another how different groups linked by their Asian Pacific origins are similar and have similar pastoral needs.

1961 To recognize and provide a voice for the millions of Asian Pacific Catholics in the U.S. who are largely invisible to the mainstream Anglo church communities.

1962 To share resources for pastoral service with one another, hear about success stories, and identify methods that assist the pastoral service of the Asian Catholic communities.

1963To assess pastoral responses to the needs of Asian Pacific Catholics and clarify what needs to be made better.

1964To create an agenda to address the future pastoral needs of these communities--with concrete proposals for pastoral action.

1965To understand the experience of recent immigrants, learning from their problems and their creative responses.

Asian Pacific Catholic Consultation Session Two

Priority Pastoral Interests

Participants in the consultation responded in the weeks before the gathering to a questionnaire asking for them to choose priorities concerning the most serious pastoral needs of their communities and to describe helpful concrete suggestions for pastoral action. At this point in the consultation, we worked in groups to share the groups' vision of what are the most important areas that need attention. Once again, we have organized these verbatim responses into clusters that indicate a great deal of common concern in some key areas. Using the following six summary statements, we report out here the priority pastoral interests of the consultation participants:

1960 Broad concern for pastoral education for ministers and for other educational priorities that include cultural formation for clergy, theological and pastoral education for lay ministers, and needed structures to assure pastoral formation of various kinds.

2. New or adapted structures to respond to particular pastoral needs: this includes being able to address issues of "inculturation" and "mutual inculturation."

3. Diocesan and national representation of Asian Pacific Catholics in ecclesiastical structures, plus the establishment of new networks that will provide solidarity and support among different Asian Pacific groups.

1960Address critical pastoral problems and issues, including generational differences, adequate facilities for worship, education, and community, and planning for lay leadership.

1961Research issues and the dissemination of solid information about the Asian Pacific communities, their strengths, and their needs.

1962Liturgical and catechetical materials needed for pastoral life.

Asian Pacific Catholic Consultation

Session Three

East Asian Adaptation and Inculturation

Rev. Dr. Peter Phan, professor of systematic theology in the Department of Religion and Religious Education in the School of Religious Studies at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., is a Vietnamese priest who has gained recognition in the last decade for great erudition and sensitive insight in the study of Catholic theology in the framework of inculturation. He addressed the consultation on the following topic:

“Asian Catholics in the United States:
Challenges and Opportunities for the Church.”

He addressed the following points:

Encounter between Two Cultures: A Dream Fulfilled or a Horrible Nightmare?

Asian-American Catholics: Between Post-Tridentine Catholicism and Post-Vatican II Reforms

Dwelling in the Interstices between Two Cultures and Two Churches

Fr. Phan concludes: Asian Americans and Asian-American Catholics: We are at an interesting, if not historic encounter between two cultures and two churches. The interstice in which they stand allows them neither to imitate the host culture and church nor merely to retrieve their indigenous history and native characteristics. Rather it makes them into “people in the middle,” though not “people of the center,” and it is from there that they can contribute to the shaping of a new society and a new church.

First Response

Ms. Irma Isip from the Office of Religious Education of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles responded to Fr. Phan as follows:

Fr. Phan’s paper provides a basis for raising important questions about the nature of the Catholic Church in a changing United States. A first observation is that we must learn how to claim our place as historic presences in this country. For example, the first Filipino settlement in Louisiana was made in 1763: that means that Filipino Catholics have been present and praying in this country for over two hundred years. Other Asian Pacific Catholic communities need to clarify their historic insertion into the life of the United States and open our eyes to the reality of their long presence and contributions.

A more sensitive appreciation for our biblical tradition would make us aware that Jesus and his disciples were Asians. Israel is in Asia Minor. This should have significance for us as we reflect on the question of the inculturation of Asian Pacific Catholics into the religious life of the U.S. Catholic Church.

Fr. Phan helps us say No to the question, “Do we need to be western in order to be Christian?” While we can say No with him, many of our people—particularly our youth and young adults—do not understand the basis for our answer. Further, most Anglo Catholics have never asked such a question—and must be brought to do so for their own good. This is the question that opens one of the most important doors upon the work of mutual inculturation. Inculturation can only happen from below, that is, spontaneously and out of the felt needs and interests of those who are entering into a tradition.

Second Response

Reverend Dr. Robert Schreiter, C.P.P.S., is director of the Bernardin Center at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago and professor of systematic theology and missiology there. He responded to Fr. Phan as follows:

There are certain factors that contextualize the process of inculturation. Four in particular have an influence upon the way in which people who come into our North American context receive and are received culturally.

1970	Some people remain “transnationals,” i.e., because of the regularity and frequency of return visits to their home countries, they may settle in here only tentatively or with a cultural center of gravity that is more Asian than American;
1971	the missionary histories of Asian countries have shaped their Catholicism in distinctive ways. Things may look the same in different locales but in fact represent very different experience because of the historical or ecclesiastical background;
1972	with the exception of the Philippines, Christians in Asia were a minority (often linked to a colonizing power), and this colors the sense and feeling of being Christian that endures even as peoples come into this country and its culture; and
1973	racism is a factor that poses limits to the assimilation of immigrants into the cultural mainstream.

These reflections on contextualizing factors need to be nuanced by observing different processes of interaction between immigrant and receiving cultures:

- there are cycles of encounter, meaning reaching out and then drawing back. This can be true of the individual person and true in a different way from the perspective of generations;
- a reshaping of identity occurs as people learn to speak of themselves with reference to their cultural orientation. Naming Jesus as an Asian (as Irma Isip did in her response) helps an Asian American Catholic to own with pride his or her cultural identity;
- attending to the perspective from which we speak can enhance good communication, clarifying for others where we come from and helping us to be conscious of what needs to be said.

In theologizing, we must choose carefully images that honestly engage our real predicaments—images that will help people “imagine” the full dimensions of religious and pastoral life. To make this happen, we have to create possibilities for all Catholics to become familiar with Asian traditions, to create spaces where people can flourish as cooperative partners in ecclesial work, and to identify and develop leadership that comes from the pastoral situations where Asian experience is strong and fruitful.

Responses from the Participants

Questions arose from the table groups who had been in discussion following the presentations just summarized. These responses were recorded in terms of two processes: the

first asked, “what did I learn?” while the second requested a listing of “questions I still have.” What follows is a record of what emerged in both of these processes.

What Did I Learn?

- The plurality of loyalties of immigrant Catholics lived out faithfully is going to lead to a new culture
- All Catholics need to develop a critical perspective on their own culture—to be able to identify what is positive from what is paralyzing
- There is power in the distinction between an essentialist culture and an integrated culture
- We are observing the development of a distinctive and genuine Asian theology
- Many key issues are very complex: our speakers identified a tension between the institutional church and syncretism, and a tension between ecclesial life and openness to the world
- We see with greater awareness the need for dialogue with other disciplines, especially anthropology, but also sociology, history, and politics
- A key question for the church: can it recognize fully the ecclesial life of Asian Pacific Catholics with all their contributions and particular needs?

Questions I Still Have

- What is the “Asian Theme” in theology: is there a parallel to the “Liberation Theology” theme of Latin America? What is the unifying and dominant theme?
- How do we incorporate and encourage the scholarship of Asian theologians and other Asian scholars? (Note the sensitive repercussions of ecclesiastical sanctions on Asian theology and theologians!)
- How can we emphasize the similarities more than the differences among the Asian Pacific Catholic peoples now in the U.S.?
- How do we live as communities together? Can the resources of globalization and technology allow us to accompany people in the Asian Pacific homelands in a way that will enrich the life of Asian Pacific peoples here?
- What is best in our culture, and how do we bring that to the larger community?
- Are we sufficiently aware of the tensions that have been described—what would a church look like that negotiated those tensions honestly?
- Can we raise consciousness about social justice issues regarding Asian Pacific communities? How do social concerns inform our theology?
- Can we avoid the two traps of “essentialism” (being locked into a closed understanding of church as it existed culturally in previous generations) and “alienation of the other” (failure to be open to the possibilities and interests of potential collaborators)?

Reflection:

This very fruitful session provided valuable categories to focus reflection upon the significant development in the U.S. Church of the growth of Asian Pacific Catholic communities and their fuller consciousness of their own significance and desire for appropriate recognition. Fr. Phan's description of the "in between"-ness of Asian Pacific Catholics was potent, making it clear that such people have a potential not only to think through their own cultural predicament, but also to think prophetically about the North American Church's cultural situation.

Two dominant strains flowed from this extended reflection upon culture and church: first, the creative potential of the theology and cultural reflection of Asian American theorists (like Fr. Phan and Dr. Min) to help us re-think our situation in the world, and second, an urgency to address the needs of immigrants who still are bound by poverty, inadequate material facilities for their communities, and cultural and social isolation from the dominant Anglo church.

Asian Pacific Catholic Consultation Session Four

The Evolution of Asian Pacific Pastoral Life

The Most Reverend John S. Cummins, Bishop of Oakland California, represented the National Conference of Catholic Bishops at the Asian Synod of Bishops in Rome and has frequently visited the churches of the Asian Pacific world. He has offered leadership for many years in support of the developing Asian Pacific churches of the United States. He addressed the consultation on the following topic:

"Responsibilities and Concerns of a Diocesan Ordinary
for the Evolution of Asian Pastoral Life"

Some key points of Bishop Cummins' presentation follow here:

Introduction

I begin with the description of what I call "inculturating minds," that is, raising people's awareness that there is one family to which God calls all of us

The Vision and Understanding

This vision of creating a communion of faith and life is where we begin and end when we speak of diocesan care of the 2.8 million Asian and Pacific Island Catholics in our midst. The diocese has to become aware of all its peoples

Historical Context and Inherited Attitudes

"The Church in America today rapidly is becoming more alert, more attentive to those among its members whose roots are in Asia. Nonetheless it appears to be a discussion in its infancy."

Pastoral Response

One area of most effective response on the diocesan level is the welcome and care of refugees. The diocese can also join in mobilizing the wider community toward alleviating the loss these people suffer in their dislocation. A Vatican document in 1992 reminded us, "These are not an object of assistance, but rather a subject of rights and duties."

Conclusion but not a Summary

As we move to the new millennium, we can think of one of its great themes, evangelization. Asian churches are very old and also very young. Catholic leadership is distinctive and strong. I think of the churches in Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia, so deeply touched by overseas Chinese participation compared to our very different American experience with perhaps only 80 to 90,000 Catholic Chinese in a population of 2 million. Filipino bishops speak of their own people now dispersed around the globe as witnessing to the Gospel in so many non-Christian areas.

Pope John Paul in his 1995 address in the Philippines remarked that evangelization in the first millennium belonged to Europe and Africa, the second to the Americas. The third, he hoped, would belong to Asia. Through our steady efforts to inculturate minds and become truly catholic in promoting a “communion of love” among our people, the Holy Father’s hope could find similar fruitfulness for the United States.

First Response

Dr. Sueng A. Yang is a Korean lay woman theologian who teaches Old Testament at the Saint Paul School of Divinity of the University of Saint Thomas in Saint Paul, MN. She responded to Bishop Cummins as follows:

Asians are close to the biblical world

Many settings of the biblical world are familiar to Asians. The importance of genealogy, the importance of land, the right of the first son, the roles of ancestors, the roles of male offspring, the curse of barrenness, the concept of tribes and extended families, the importance of table fellowship, the importance of hospitality, the concern for purity, the role of elders as leaders, etc., are so familiar to Asians that they even find the Western scholars’ sociological analysis of those aspects awkward. They would ask, “Isn’t it too obvious? Why do we need to make note of these things?”

Asians are close to the Christian mind

According to the Gospel of Mark, Jesus begins his public ministry by calling people to repent and believe the good news that God’s reign is upon us. Then he continuously teaches about the discipleship that we need to lead a life fitting our repentance and to believe, that is to feed the hungry and to give clothes to the naked, thus serving others and society. Repentance (*metanoia*) as turning back toward God is an experience of self-transformation from self-centeredness to God-centeredness, which leads one to do God’s will: to love others and serve others. This correlation between repentance and doing God’s will, serving and loving others, is easily grasped and accepted by Asians.

Asians are close to the Catholic Spirit

One of the greatest beauties of our Roman Catholic Church is its continuous emphasis on both continuity and adaptation. The church never replaced the Old Testament by the New Testament. It never replaced the Scriptures by church fathers. It never replaced the Scriptures and church fathers by later church teachings. The church has always emphasized the continuous value of the Old Testament alongside the New Testament, as well as the continuous value of the Scriptures alongside traditions. Asians are so familiar with this “both and,” which I call “inclusive dualism,” which is contrasted with “either or,” which I call “exclusive dualism.” In the inclusive dualism, both A and B are necessary, since neither A nor B alone is absolute; both A and B together make one whole of harmonious relations. The Taegeuk fan, the Yin-Yang symbol, which is also adopted in the Korean National flag, powerfully reveals this aspect of inclusive dualism. In this inclusive dualism of Yin-Yang, nothing is unchangeably either Yin or Yang. When the “Yangness” of a certain “Yin” gets increasingly stronger, then it may become “Yang.”

Second Response

Rev. Dr. Anthony Chinh Quang Dao, O.P., is the Vicar for Vietnamese Catholics in the Diocese of Galveston-Houston and the pastor of the flourishing parish of Our Lady of Lavang in Houston, Texas. His doctorate is from the University of Houston in the area of cross-cultural education. He responded to Bishop Cummins as follows:

Relationships between the Vietnamese Catholic community and their American pastors

Vietnamese, like other Asians influenced by Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, look at their pastor, clergy, and religious as the chosen people of God. By their vows, ordination, and ways of living, these dedicated people of God become holy and distinctive. Vietnamese people still look at the priest, especially the bishop, as their father. However, after a while in this country, Vietnamese have also come to recognize that their pastors, bishops and priests, are not unique in having their preference in *food*: some prefer salads and some love soup. In their view of society, the American clergy also expresses these preferences. Some believe that the salad bowl philosophy is appropriate, and some think that the soup philosophy should be the favorite. Those who like soup want all ethnic groups to be merged into the mainstream. Those who love salad look at varieties of different cultures and ethnicities as a blessing from God.

From that perspective, Vietnamese people see their pastors in 3 different categories:

1970	pastors who strongly support ethnic groups,
1971	pastors who support some ethnic groups and do not support other
groups, and	
1972	pastors who want ethnic groups to be completely submerged into the
mainstream.	

Many pastors, though they love the minorities, do not know what to do with the minorities, and thus become indifferent. More than 70% of the bishops and priests in different dioceses and parishes welcome the Asians, specifically Vietnamese immigrants, because these immigrants come to their diocese or parish. This welcoming does not mean that the pastors are ready to minister to these people. In consequence, most, if not all the *dioceses* and parishes let the Vietnamese clergy take care of their own people and solve their own problems. In other words, these Vietnamese clergy become bishops of their community without adequate training, preparation and of course, any power for this role.

Many Vietnamese priests received formation in Vietnam and they are not familiar with the American system. Meanwhile, the American pastors expect them to be good leaders who are able to solve all problems in all aspects.

On the national level, there are two Vietnamese offices representing the Vietnamese Catholics in the U. S. We wish that these two offices were united because we do not need two, but one strong, effective and united office. Even though we have two offices, most of the Vietnamese Catholics do not know what are the job descriptions for these offices, although the leaders are truly nice and talented people who are willing to help. "Do the American bishops know who the Vietnamese leaders are? And do the Bishops listen to them?"

Tensions among Vietnamese Catholic community

Pastorally, the Vietnamese in the United States are configured as follows:

1970 Vietnamese have not totally integrated themselves as Americans.

Many teenagers are fluent in English, but are not comfortable with the preaching style and liturgical rites of American priests. They still choose to attend Vietnamese parishes and communities.

1971 Vietnamese who have been living in America for a time are no longer totally identified with other Vietnamese in Vietnam. Their way of thinking, of acting, their gestures, customs, and needs contain many influences of the local culture. Because of that, they are not totally satisfied with the activities and role of religion in their homeland exercised in this new land.

1972 Most Vietnamese still retain their cultural characteristics. Their culture is re-inforced by the arrival of the newcomers. These newcomers bring with them new strength, new energy, and new inspiration that help their compatriots to choose, to select and to live the values of their culture.

From these situations the following issues arise:

- 1970a) Conflict between new and old,
- 1971b) Conflict between young and old generations, and
- c) Conflict between conservatives and liberals concerning the cultural and religious atmosphere.

We are facing a big issue: Should we follow the American style or the Vietnamese style in governing the parish? Some issues that Americans would consider simple, such as selection of the pastoral council or selection of the finance committee, become big issues for the Vietnamese. In the American parishes, the staff, with the pastor, carry out parish activities. Meanwhile, for Vietnamese, whenever we have any selection for the pastoral council, we have problems. We do not have enough support to hire full time staff members. Most parishes have only a secretary who answers the phone. That means that the pastoral council is also the government that functions both as the council and the staff. However, we have abundant volunteers who are friends of the pastoral council members. These volunteers spend time and energy to assist the pastor, the parish and the council to complete many big projects. In that sense, a project in a Vietnamese community is a collaboration of many parishioners.

To serve people more effectively in the new Millennium, we need to pay close attention to the following points

1990 On the national level, instead of having two offices, there should be only one effective office for Vietnamese Catholics throughout the country. This office will be a consultant for the NCCB or the local bishop to advise concerning cultural or pastoral problems.

1991 Local pastors, including American bishops and clergy, and Vietnamese clergy should have a better relationship, not only during the difficult times but also on a regular basis. Some workshops, conferences, and talks would be very helpful. Many American and Vietnamese experts would be willing to do the workshops.

1992 This regular communication also means regular reporting from the Vietnamese clergy to the local bishop. This reporting is not a sign of being controlled but rather indicates support from the bishop and good rapport between the bishop and his priests.

4. Pastorally and theologically, there should be more Bible, theology, social justice, liturgy and even education and psychology classes for the lay people. The fact is that many Vietnamese Catholics--including clergy and laity in the diaspora--are not familiar with English and do not have good resources in Vietnamese. Newcomers say that in Vietnam, although the situation is more difficult, they have more resources to help them to understand and to update their knowledge of liturgy, theology, and Bible than what they have in this country.

5. Then, periodically, there should be more training programs for Vietnamese ministers. Love for God and for the church is not enough. Vietnamese ministers should know why they love God and how to serve the church more effectively. If possible there should be workshops on the diocesan level where preparation and energy would be more visible.

6. If possible, there should be workshops for those who want to serve in the Vietnamese community. People can learn by studying or even by sharing their own experience. We need to communicate with each other more effectively. Once again, communication is still the best way.

Questions Remaining

The participants discussed this presentation in table groups after engaging the speakers in question and answer dialogue. Once again we used the strategy of asking, “what questions remain” once the dialogue came to its close. The following items were among those articulated by the groups:

- Is there a role for the bishops of the U.S. to play in addressing the bishops of Asia concerning North American parish pastoral concerns? We have noted the importance of the issues of clergy formation, relationships with the laity, collaborative attitudes, etc. Are these areas where fruitful dialogue could be begun conference to conference among the bishops?
- Where do we begin in addressing the problem of the vacuum of episcopal supervision among those priests who are loaned from the Asian homelands and who operate here as almost independent pastoral agents?
- Participants noted the respect for and power of references by the speakers to the Buddhist and Confucian traditions made by the speakers. Some asked: What eastern writings can we draw upon to enhance our own study of the eastern religious substratum of Asian culture?
- Reference was made repeatedly to the need for theological, catechetical, and pastoral materials in native languages. This led to the question: What do we translate? Who is going to do the translating/catechizing? How do we train people to do this work? What parts of it could be done collaboratively across cultural and linguistic traditions?

Asian Pacific Catholic Consultation Session Five

Concluding Session: Action Steps

On Sunday morning, the group reconvened before its closing Eucharist to try to sort out and summarize its top priorities for follow-up action to deal with the issues and possibilities raised by the consultation. Because of the discussion of the days together, we decided to divide action steps into two categories: “macro”—dealing with a national agenda and larger cultural issues and “micro” –dealing with issues touching the local level and individual responses.

In this case (as in a few other cases) we asked the group to “vote” on their priorities by assigning check marks on the newsprint reports that lined the wall of the consultation room. So the action steps that are reported here are thus reported in order of priority support assigned by the participants.

Macro Action Steps

- There is a need for a national coordinating council for Asian Pacific Catholic Affairs that is capable of convening the leaders of these churches, assuring dialogue, promoting cooperation, and publicizing the accomplishments and needs of these churches on the national scene.

- The consultation participants recognized the need for an institute for education and formation concerning the dimensions of religious and ethnic culture of the Asian Pacific Catholic peoples that would assist clergy, educators, and the people themselves to appreciate and appropriate their cultural strengths. On a national basis, the group asks, could the U.S. create an East Asian Pastoral Institute here? On a more local level, what could universities, seminaries, and other educational systems do to address needs of this kind?
- Can the University of Notre Dame take leadership in gathering Asian American students for dialogue and mutual support? Could the University create a roster of Asian Pacific Catholic scholars and take initiatives to connect them to appropriate research and teaching activities?
- Confirm and extend the network that is represented by the consultation participants: keep contact with those who worked on this consultation and through them reach out to even more leaders in the national church. Plan future conventions of pastoral leaders like this one, perhaps focusing more precisely on specific issues for future sessions. See if regional gatherings, bringing together the strongest leaders from the regional dioceses, might help to develop the pastoral life of Asian Pacific Catholic centers across the country.

Micro Action Steps

- Request of diocesan ordinaries to initiate contact with the ethnic communities in their diocese to establish regular meetings and seminars to address the issues raised in this consultation.
- Seek some concrete continuation of the initiative that Notre Dame has undertaken to assure a network of scholars and pastoral leaders. Following upon the dissemination of consultation report, seek to enlarge the network of leaders and target a time and a place for follow-up work of this kind.
- Create means to bridge the conversation that we have had with local parish-based pastoral leaders. How do we let priests and people both know what we have learned and profit from the ideas? Can the message of the speakers at this meeting be brought to the NCCB and/or to other pastoral assemblies in our country?
- We will each go away with a new answer to the question, “What is the church of the future?” We need to keep talking to one another and to others about how that question has been shaped by our common work and dialogue.

APPENDIX A

ASIAN AND PACIFIC AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES A BRIEF PROFILE

Over 7 million in 1990

In 1990, the Asian Pacific American population was over seven million persons. This represents a growth of 107.8% since 1980 and one which is considerably faster than that of the Hispanic, African American or Native American groups during the same period. Asian Pacific Americans are projected to double by the year 2000.

Table 1
TOTAL ASIAN PACIFIC POPULATION 1900 - 1990

Census Year	Total
1900	204,462
1910	249,924
1920	332,432
1930	489,326
1940	489,984
1950	599,091
1960	988,934
1970	1,429,562
1980	3,466,421
1993	7,273,662

Six largest Asian groups comprise 84% of all Asians

The six largest Asian groups are Chinese and Filipino with over one million, Japanese, Indian and Korean with 800,000 or more and the Vietnamese with just over 600,000.

Table 2
LARGEST ASIAN PACIFIC GROUPS

	#	% of all Asians
Chinese	1,645,472	22.6
Filipino	1,406,770	19.3
Japanese	847,562	11.7
Indian	815,447	11.2
Korean	798,849	11.0
Vietnamese	614,547	8.5

Geographically Dispersed

While the general impression is that Asians and Pacific Islanders are on the west coast, this population is present throughout the United States. More than two-thirds live in five states: California, Hawaii, Illinois, New Jersey and New York. Twenty dioceses have almost 100,000 or more of which eleven are on the west coast and nine are in the central and south, and on the east coast. These dioceses are:

Los Angeles	Seattle
Honolulu	Sacramento
Brooklyn	Galveston-Houston
San Francisco	Newark
Oakland	Boston
San Jose	Fresno
Orange	Washington
New York	San Bernardino
Chicago	Arlington
San Diego	Philadelphia

The geographic dispersion of the Asian Pacific community is also reflected in the five states where the largest proportional population increase has taken place from 1980-1990:

Rhode Island
 New Hampshire
 Georgia
 Wisconsin
 Minnesota

How many are Catholic?

This is a difficult and complex question. Clearly in all but one, their homelands are predominantly Buddhist, Tao, Hindu, Muslim or of another religion. The Philippines is the only largely Catholic country.

A first step might be to take a brief look at the numbers of Catholics in their countries of origin.

Table 3
 CATHOLIC POPULATION IN ASIA

Country	Total Population	Catholics	% Catholic
China	1,214,000,000	8,700,000 (affiliated)	0.77

Asian and Pacific Americans in the United States - A Brief Profile

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Country	Total Population	Catholics	% Catholic
Taiwan	21,500,000	307,000	1.6
Hong Kong	6,000,000	280,000	4.8
Indian	905,000,000	15,000,000	1.76
Japan	126,000,000	413,800	0.34
Korea North	25,500,000	???	
South	45,000,000	2,400,000	6.0
Philippines	70,000,000	48,000,000	65.0
Vietnam	75,000,000	6,000,000	8.9

However, in applying this to the Asian Pacific community here in the United States, two points need to be considered. First, the proportion of Catholics will vary. Some of our Asian Pacific communities have fled communist dominated governments including earlier immigrants from China and some of our newest Chinese come from one of the most Catholic provinces of China.

While the numbers of Catholics may be small, many Asian and Pacific Islanders have attended Catholic schools, and many have been the recipients of services offered by the many and well-respected social programs conducted by Caritas and other international Catholic organizations. In Hong Kong for instance one third of the children went through Catholic schools at the request of the government, and in other countries, Catholic schools are well respected. The graduates of these educational systems carry a great deal of influence. It is important then for evangelization and outreach to continue the ties that have already been established. Our challenge in the United States is then to strengthen that Catholic connection.

Dr. Ruth Narita Doyle
Archdiocese of New York

Sources: 1990 U.S. Census
Operation World, 1995

APPENDIX B

HIGHLIGHTS OF NATIONAL ASIAN PACIFIC MINISTRIES

PCMR (1984-1994)

- 1984 - 86 - Establishment of National Pastoral Centers for Southeast Asian refugees and appointment of coordinators
 - Cambodian - Father Rogatien Rondineau, MEP (now retired)
 - Laotian - Father Louis Leduc, MEP (now deceased)
 - Hmong - Father Daniel Taillez, OMI
- 1987 - 88 - Establishment of National Pastoral Center for other Asians
 - Korean - Fr. Agustin Park (now changed)
 - Chinese - Father Joseph Chiang
 - Vietnamese - Monsignor Dominic Luong
- 1990 - First National Conference on Filipino Apostolate (Sandiwa I) in San Francisco, CA
 - First national meeting of Asian Pacific leaders in Washington, D.C., Resulting in the writing of a statement on Asian Pacific concerns which was submitted to the Bishops Conference
- 1991 - Second National Conference on Filipino Apostolate (Sandiwa II) in Chicago, Illinois
- 1992 - First Regional meeting of Ethnic Directors/Asian Pacific Directors
 - East Coast Region Hmong Conference in Philadelphia
 - Lao National Conference in Fort Worth, Texas

- Third National Conference on Filipino Apostolate (Sandiwa III) in Seattle, Washington
 - First national gathering of Vietnamese clergy in New Orleans
- 1993
- Regional Workshops on Filipino Faith and Culture
 - Southern California in San Diego
 - Northwest in Seattle
 - Midwest in Chicago
 - Northeast in New York
 - Midatlantic in Philadelphia
 - First National Asian Pacific Conference held in Menlo Park, California, participated in by diocesan directors and leaders/representatives from 3 Pacific Islands group and 11 Asian groups

Highlights of National Asian Pacific Ministries

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- 1984
- Fourth National Conference on Filipino Apostolate (Sandiwa IV) in Tysons Corner, Virginia

Annual Meetings

- Chinese clergy and sisters
- Korean priests
- HANCA (Hmong American National Catholic Association)

NCEA/PCMR/Archdiocese of New York

- 1989
- Published “The Catholic Response to the Asian Presence”

Bishop John Cummins as Chair of the Bishops’ Committee on Migration

- 1997
- Created a Task Force to assist him in conducting regional consultations on Asian Pacific Issues and Concerns in the following regions:
 - Northeast in New York
 - Midatlantic in Washington, D.C.
 - Midwest in Chicago
 - Mountain in Denver
 - Southern California in Los Angeles
 - Northern California in Oakland
 - Northwest in Seattle
 - the Texas region in Houston, Texas

Proposal for the creation of a national office for Asian Pacific was presented by Bishop Cummins to the Administrative Board of the Bishops’ Conference and to the Ad Hoc Committee on Structure.

Asian Pacific Ministries Consortium: A Network of Diocesan Directors

- 1996 - Asian Pastoral Experience Program in the Philippines and Hong Kong or Korea
- 1998 - Inter-diocesan Pilgrimage to Our Lady of Antipolo at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., in celebration of the Centennial of Philippine Independence
- 1999 - Asian Pastoral Experience Program in the Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand or Japan

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