

Editorial Notes

Dear Readers,

I would like to introduce the new journal, *Asia Pacific Mission Studies (APMS)*, of the East Asian Pastoral Institute (EAPI) in Quezon City, Philippines.

The *APMS* is an electronic open-access online journal (e-journal). Its content may be read and downloaded via internet for free. The new journal is similar to but also different from its predecessor, the *East Asian Pastoral Review (EAPR)* which ended its publication in printed form with the final issue, volume 53 (2016) no. 1. Like the *EAPR*, the new *APMS* intends to publish articles of good quality that may be of interest to our readers.

The EAPI is an institute for pastoral studies within the campus of the Ateneo de Manila University which is run by the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits). The EAPI specializes in organizing pastoral renewal and leadership programs for pastoral agents, church workers, and missionaries from the Asia-Pacific region, but not exclusively. Participants from Europe, Australia, Africa, and Latin America have followed the programs and found them very relevant as well. The modular courses given at the Institute focus on biblical and theological updating, spirituality, processing of pastoral and missionary experiences, and training in pastoral skills—particularly church leadership and development of ministry. The Institute, although strictly speaking not a part of the University, offers graduate programs in Pastoral Studies (S.T.L. and M.A.) in collaboration with the Loyola School of Theology and the Ateneo de Manila University which confer the degrees.

In line with the thrust of the EAPI, the *APMS* wants to promote knowledge and research that bridge theology and ministry in the Asia-Pacific context, so as to facilitate informed praxis and effective witnessing

by the Church. Although the journal is not an academic or peer-reviewed publication dealing with theoretical questions or research, it endeavors to maintain a high level of theological and pastoral standards.

The focus of the journal is on practical theology, that is, the application of biblical and theological insights to different forms of pastoral and missionary praxis, and the critical reflection on pastoral experiences and contexts to draw implications for theology and ministry. In doing so, the journal hopes to facilitate discernment, critical thinking, creativity, and the exchange of ideas and experiences. The focus is, furthermore, on Asia and the Pacific. Indeed, the contexts of mission, including the new challenges and opportunities they present, are changing at a rapid pace today. Hence, the journal aims at publishing articles that

- offer relevant theological, biblical, pastoral, or missiological insights;
- give information about contexts, cultures, religions, and the churches of the Asia-Pacific region;
- discuss global and regional Church documents and initiatives (such as those of the Vatican, FABC, FCBCO, episcopal synods) and their pastoral implications;
- promote greater awareness of issues and developments that affect Church life and ministry;
- promote ecumenical, interreligious, intercultural, and interdisciplinary dialogue;
- reflect on pastoral or missionary experiences or initiatives;
- foster liturgical creativity and other ministerial skills.

The contributors to the journal will include staff members of the Institute, guest lecturers, visiting professors—among them renowned scholars—and EAPI students and alumni. Other contributors from the Asia-Pacific region as well as from other parts of the world are most welcome to contribute articles. The writing should be accessible; i.e., not too technical or specialized, nor too long. Like its predecessor, the *EAPR*, it is envisaged that the *APMS* will be widely read by pastoral workers and ecclesial leaders of local churches and religious organizations, as well as by staff and students of universities, theological schools, and pastoral centers.

Two groups of persons will take care of the editorial process. First, the Editorial Committee, composed of members of the EAPI Staff: Greg Soetomo, S.J. (Editor), Luc Mees, M.D.J. (Assoc. Editor), Jojo Fung, S.J., Dr. Christina Kheng, and Peter Pojol, S.J. Second, the Editorial Board: José Mario Francisco, S.J. (Loyola School of Theology, Quezon City, Philippines), Dr. Sharon A. Bong (School of Arts and Social Sciences, Monash University, Malaysia), Ignatius L. Madya Utama, S.J., (Yogyakarta Pastoral Center [PPY], Indonesia), and Mikaele Paunga, S.M. (Pacific Regional Seminary, Suva, Fiji).

To give an idea of the kind of contributions the *APMS* wants to offer, the first two issues will feature some of the articles that appeared in the *EAPR* since 2006. From among the many good articles, the members of the Editorial Committee have made a selection of 18 that will be republished in the first two online issues of *APMS* for a total of about 380 pages. Under the general theme “Theological Trends for Mission in Asia-Pacific: Fifty Years After Vatican II,” this first issue offers nine articles that deal with the history of Vatican II (articles 1 to 3), challenges and methods for doing theology in Asia-Pacific post-Vatican II (articles 4 to 5), and some case studies of evangelization in local churches (articles 6 to 8).

Readers, I hope you will enjoy this very first edition and gain some pastoral benefit from the reflections and insights of every author.

Greg Soetomo, S.J.