

A History of the Manila Cathedral: 1571 to 1945

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A thing without a past is like a man without a memory. History not only invokes remembrance of things past, but also nourishes the spirit of the essence of what is and what has been.

The Manila cathedral's story is an interesting narrative that dates back to the beginning of the City of Manila, when the cathedral was a humble *camarin* of nipa and bamboo rendering church services to the pioneer Spanish residents of Manila. It then rose to become the seat of the diocese and, much later, the archdiocese of Manila. As the metropolitan seat, the Cathedral gained the singular honor of being the queen of churches in Manila.

The Manila cathedral was a landmark within the walled city. As the queen of churches in the colonial capital, it held the distinction of being located in the city's premier square or *plaza* beside the palace of the Governor General of the colony, the *Casas Consistoriales* or the seat of the *alcaldía de Manila*, and the Royal Audiencia, the highest court in the colony. For years, the cross at the top of the dome of the cathedral served as the nautical reference point for sailing ships in this part of the world.

Through major calamities like earthquakes, fires and wars, the cathedral stood either, or sometimes both, as victim and refuge. Many times, the cathedral would rise from its ruins, the painstaking work of major reconstructions by its bishops and commissioned builders. In periods of war and revolution, the cathedral would become a welcome refuge and a peaceful shelter in the midst of turmoil and chaos.

The Manila cathedral was also a silent witness to the growing discontent among the secular clergy and the filipinization movement

that would rock the church from within. It survived major church upheavals when the tide of Protestantism and Aglipayanism swept and washed through the shores of this colony.

Under the advocacy of the Most Pure and Immaculate Conception of Mary, the Manila cathedral has remained in the end as triumphant as the church which has staunchly weathered and survived the rigors and tests of time and fate.

This, then, is the story of the cathedral of Manila, of its major reconstructions and the events that would enrich and color its historic past.

THE FIRST CHURCH OF MANILA: 1571

On June 24, 1571, Feast of St John the Baptist, the Spanish conquistador Miguel López de Legaspi founded the city of Manila. He took possession of the native settlement of Rajah Sulayman and firmly established Spanish authority in the newly conquered and untrammelled turf. Armed with the Spanish sword and the Cross, Legaspi, in his role as *conquistador*, apportioned a parcel of land for the parochial church of the new settlement under the patronage of *La Purísima e Inmaculada Concepción*.¹

The Church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception was established by the secular Juan de Vivero. Vivero first arrived in these shores in 1566 as chaplain of the *nao* or galleon of San Geronimo which had come to support the colonization of the newly discovered islands.² He was given the special privilege and sole faculty by the Archbishop of Mexico to establish the spiritual administration of the new Philippine colony. Later, Vivero would become the first Vicar General and the first Ecclesiastical Judge of Manila.³

The church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception administered the religious affairs of Manila until such time the parish was created into a diocese. It was a simple structure of nipa and bamboo,

¹ Ruperto C. Santos, *Anales Ecclesiasticos de Philipinas 1574-1682* (Manila: The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Manila, 1994), p. 30.

² Francisco Moreno, *Historia de la Santa Iglesia Metropolitana de Filipinas* (Manila: Imp. de "El Oriente", 1877), p. 26.

³ R. Santos, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

materials, which were readily available during that time. It had for its first parish priest the secular Juan de Villanueva.⁴ The other religious who became the pillars of this parish were Juan de Vivaneta and Nicolas Riccio.⁵

This church was also a witness to the events that would threaten the city and its residents. On November 30, 1574, the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, the Spanish forces were able to quell Limahong's invasion. Because of such fortunate turn of events, the holy apostle was made patron saint of Manila. The victory was celebrated with fireworks and a Mass with sermon was held in the Church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception in Manila.⁶

THE FIRST CATHEDRAL OF NIPA AND BAMBOO: 581-1583

The First Church Raised into a Cathedral with the Creation of the Diocese of Manila: 1578

As Spain firmly established herself in the new colony through the succeeding years, so did the church, which witnessed the creation of the diocese of Manila. On February 6, 1578, Pope Gregory XIII issued in Rome the papal bull establishing the Diocese or Bishopric of Manila suffragan to the Archbishopric of Mexico. The town of Manila was created into a city and its parochial church raised to the rank of cathedral under the title of "the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary." The cathedral was to be under a bishop who would look after the appropriate enlargement of its building and restoration into a cathedral church.⁷

In the same year, Fray Domingo de Salazar, a Dominican religious from the Convent of San Esteban in Salamanca, Spain, was presented by King Philip II of Spain to the Pope for the position of Bishop of the Diocese of Manila. In 1579 Fray Salazar was consecrated solemnly in Madrid as the first bishop of Manila. A year after, in May of 1580, he left for his new assignment by way of Mexico, bringing with

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁷ Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson, *The Philippine Islands (1493-1898)*, Vol. 4 (Cleveland, Ohio: The A.H. Clark Co, 1903-1909), pp. 119-124.

him thirty fellow Dominicans, many of whom died or fell ill during and after the voyage to Mexico so that only one co-religious and six other secular priests were able to accompany him to Manila.⁸

Meanwhile, the Spanish monarchy was making preparations for the construction of the new cathedral in Manila. On May 13, 1579, a Royal Cedula from the Spanish King mandated the Governor General of the Philippines to construct a moderately ample cathedral in a convenient site, the expenses of which were to be divided among the natives, Royal Treasury and the *encomenderos*. Another Royal Cedula of the same date ordered the *Casa de Contratacion* or Office of Contracts and Agreements to give to the city of Manila 15 ducats, worth 187,000 maravedis, intended for ornaments, chalices and other essentials, which the cathedral would require. On May 22, 1579, parts of the tithes belonging to the King during a period of ten years were given for the construction of the Manila Cathedral.⁹ With such amount and support, the construction of the cathedral began. This support from the monarchy continued until the 18th century when the cathedral underwent repairs and reconstructions, a victim of natural disasters and time.

Bishop Domingo de Salazar and his surviving companions the Dominican Fray Christobal de Salvatierra and six secular priests, Don Diego Vasquez de Mercado, Francisco de Morales, Francisco de Pareja, Geronimo Vasquez, Santiago de Castro and Martin de Ribera, left Acapulco, on March 29, 1581 aboard the *nao* or galleon San Martín. They were accompanied by six Franciscan friars under Fr. Antonio de Villanueva, a good number of Augustinians under Fr. Juan Pimentel, and three Jesuits with their rector Fr. Antonio Sedeño. In August of 1581, they finally reached the Ladrones islands, and days after reached Samar and then the Bicol peninsula, where the San Martín took refuge in the Ibalon bay, due to very bad weather. From here, Salazar went by land crossing the Bicol area and reached Laguna de Bay after trekking the Sierra Madre mountains. By boat, he finally reached Manila by way of the river Pasig on the following month of September 17, 1581.¹⁰

⁸ Santos, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

⁹ Maria Lourdes Diaz-Trechuelo, *Arquitectura Española en Filipinas (1565-1800)* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americano de Sevilla, 1959), pp. 185-186.

¹⁰ Jose Luis Porras Camuñez, *Sinodo de Manila de 1582* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Historicos del Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas, 1988), p.61; Morenó, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

On September 21, 1581, with full pontifical and royal authority, Bishop Salazar created the act to erect and found the new Cathedral of Manila under the advocacy of the Immaculate Conception, the original titular patroness of the old parochial church.¹¹ He then proceeded to build a cathedral to replace the old parish church.

The first Cathedral of Manila was constructed by Bishop Salazar out of wood, nipa and bamboo — materials which were used in all houses and other basic community services in the city. It was on December 21, 1581 that the parish church of Manila was raised formally into a cathedral.¹²

The Establishment of Cathedral Prebends

As Bishop of Manila, Fray Salazar possessed the exclusive right to erect and establish dignities, canonries, Prebends, and other ecclesiastical benefices. Twenty-seven Prebends were made in the service of the cathedral. The positions were: 5 Dignitaries — Dean, Archdeacon, School Master, and Treasurer, 10 Canons, 6 full Prebends and 6 half prebends, 2 pastors and 2 assistants, one porter, acolytes and chaplains. When the cathedral was erected, Bishop Salazar created four Prebends: Don Diego Vazquez de Mercado as Dean, Don Francisco de Morales as Precentor, and Don Francisco de Pareja and Don Gonzalo del Castillo as Canons. Diego Vazquez de Mercado later became the Bishop of Yucatan and the fourth archbishop of Manila.¹³ In 1583, Don Juan de Vivero was appointed as its first Treasurer and later, in 1585, was promoted as its first Archdeacon. Its first Schoolmaster was Gabriel de la Cruz who was appointed in 1583.¹⁴

The First Synod of Manila: 1582

Under Bishop Domingo de Salazar, the first synod of Manila was held in 1582 where 90 ecclesiastical and religious persons and 6 cap-

¹¹ Joaquin Fonseca, *La Catedral de Manila. Reseña Cronologica de su Origen y Restauraciones sucesivas desde su primitiva fundación hasta su reconstrucción actual* (Manila: Establecimiento Tipográfico del Colegio de Santo Tomas, 1880), p. 6.

¹² Santos, *loc. cit.*

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

tains or heads who were the oldest and most eminent attended. The sessions of this *concilio* lasted until 1586 holding duration of four years. *The Sínodo de Manila* of 1582 was the first Provincial Council ever held in the Philippines. In this synod, matters relating to the governance of the new colonial territory were discussed. Among the subjects deliberated upon were the teaching of catechism in the native dialect and the declaration of human rights of both native Christians and non-Christians.¹⁵

The Fire of 1583

The Cathedral church was destroyed in 1583 by fire, which razed the city. During the funeral mass for the deceased Governor Diego de Ronquillo at San Agustin Church, a candle fell on the catafalque, burning it and the church. The flames spread all over Manila, destroying many houses and structures of the same simple materials. Along with the Cathedral of Manila, the Bishop's Palace was destroyed including all important church papers and records, and the proceedings of the First Synod or Provincial Council held in the Philippines. The cathedral was rebuilt using the same materials of nipa, bamboo and wood.¹⁶

In the Junta Universal de Manila of 1586, the Manila cathedral was severely criticized as very unbecoming of a structure of its stature. It was described to be ...

“... of wood and thatch, so poor, so disorganized and deprived, a dishonor and an impairment to our faith and Christian religion and to our Republic and leaders who govern it.”¹⁷

The cathedral was described to be in a deplorable and pitiful state, inducing the Spanish monarch to issue a Royal Decree on January 20, 1587 ordering Governor General Santiago de Vera to construct a new edifice for the cathedral. However, this simple structure lasted only until June 15, 1588 when a hurricane came and destroyed it with the majority of the houses in Manila.¹⁸

¹⁵ Moreno, *op. cit.*, p. 32; Santos, *op. cit.*, p. 36; Araceli Altmann Linsangan, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines* (Manila: CBCP, 1995), p. 71.

¹⁶ Santos, *loc. cit.*

¹⁷ Diaz-Trechuelo, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

On June 31, 1588, a letter dated from the city of Manila provided for 3,000 pesos, divided between the local residents, natives and the Royal Hacienda, to be spent for the wall foundations of the cathedral church which, by that time, were already 2 *brazas* in height. Although this sum was considered to be insufficient to bring the walls to the necessary height, it was a welcome support for the church.¹⁹

Meantime, Gomez Perez Dasmariñas was appointed as the new Governor General of the Philippine colony. Upon arrival in the islands in May of 1590, Dasmariñas immediately set upon to fulfill the orders of the letter. He divided 12,000 ducats in three parts, as was the custom, at the rate of 3,000 annuities for a period of 4 years. Upon passing by Nueva España, as he was ordered, he obtained 2,000 ducats from the Royal Treasury there as advanced contribution of the *Real Hacienda*.²⁰ With such capital, the construction of a stone cathedral was to take effect.

THE SECOND CATHEDRAL OF STONE AND MORTAR: 1591

In 1591, at the age of 76 years, Bishop Salazar sailed from Manila to Spain, accompanied by the Dominican Fray Miguel de Benavides, to work for the erection of Manila into an archdiocese. He left the cathedral building in a state of near completion enough for Mass to be celebrated in it. The first stone cathedral had a central nave and two collateral ones.²¹

The succeeding years saw the continuous efforts made to complete the cathedral structure. A Royal Cedula dated June 11, 1594, ordered Governor General Dasmariñas to allocate 12,000 ducats for the ornaments, retablos, organs, bells, lamps and other materials the cathedral would require.²²

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 186. Bishop Salazar was advised by Fr. Antonio Sedeño, the Jesuit priest who introduced stone construction in the Philippines, to build the episcopal house in stone after the disastrous fire of 1583. Thus the episcopal house became the first stone structure in Manila. Bishop Salazar can be credited for helping promote stone construction in the colony. With some Chinese laborers, he sailed upstream to Guadalupe where he discovered stone adequately suitable for building. See Horacio de la Costa's *Jesuits in the Philippines*.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 188.

While in the court of Madrid in Spain, Bishop Salazar had a slight accident, which greatly weakened him. Fatigued by his travels, work and age, Bishop Salazar died on December 4, 1594. He died without returning to Manila to reign as its first archbishop and without ever seeing his beloved cathedral completed.

The Elevation of Manila as Archdiocese: 1595

On August 14, 1595, Pope Clement VIII issued a Brief erecting Manila into a Metropolitan Archdiocese and its three suffragan dioceses of Nueva Segovia (Vigan), Nueva Caceres (Naga) and Santissimo Nombre de Jesus (Cebu).

Its new territory now extended "...100 leagues north and south, the villages were distant from its capital, being 40 leagues to the North, and about 60 to the south. It is bounded on the north by the Diocese of Nueva Segovia and on the south by that of Cebu. Its western boundaries are maritime."²³

Progress in Construction: 1597

In 1595, sacred relics were given by the Holy See and brought to Manila by the Jesuit Fray Alonso Sánchez. The relics were from 155 martyrs, 20 Popes, St. Polycarp, and Sta. Potenciana. A structure was built specifically to house the relics at the side of the Cathedral. When the structure was completed, the relics were formally deposited there in 1597. Governor Juan Niño de Tabora and his wife Dona Magdalena Saldivar y Mendoza built another collateral structure to shelter subsequent relics.²⁴

The First Archbishop: Fray Ignacio de Santibañez

The second bishop assigned to Manila to serve as the first archbishop of the newly erected archdiocese was Fray Ignacio de Santibañez of the Order of San Francisco.

²³ Blair and Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. 28, pp. 266-267. With the creation of the archdiocese of Manila, Bishop Salazar was named as its first archbishop. However, the appointment was made without knowledge of Bishop Salazar's death. It was Fray Ignacio de Santibañez who was eventually named as Manila's archbishop.

²⁴ Santos, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

Archbishop Santibañez gained fame as a very good preacher and speaker. However his administration of the archdiocese was short-lived. He died on August 14, 1598 only two months and four days since he took over the Archdiocese of Manila.

The Earthquakes of 1599 and 1600

In 1597, the Ecclesiastical Chapter or Cathedral Chapter wrote to the King that the buildings for the cathedral were not yet finished. There was still neither chapter hall, baptistry, belltower nor cloister yet. The principal altar, two auxiliary ones and the choir were built solely from alms.²⁵ This cathedral suffered during an earthquake in 1599 and, still unfinished, experienced another strong earthquake the following year. At midnight of December 31, 1600, 29 years after Manila was established, a very strong earthquake hit the colonial capital, which almost completely destroyed the cathedral.²⁶

The Jesuit Pedro Chirino described the Manila Cathedral in 1600 to be built with solid wooden posts, so big and thick that two men were not enough to fully embrace each post. Although the cathedral seemed to be strong with its solid posts, it was not sturdy enough to resist the typhoon that devastated it.

And yet, for all that it was new and recently constructed, one of those heavy typhoons demolished it in a quarter of an hour, leaving only the tabernacle of the Most Blessed Sacrament standing among four upright posts.²⁷

By the beginning of the 17th century, the cathedral was still unfinished, although Governor Francisco Tello wrote of it in a letter addressed to the King on July 6, 1601 that the cathedral of Manila was in fine condition with a tower and a sacristy.²⁸ Yet, much were still to be accomplished. The process of completion was slow since the Royal Treasury lacked funds to subsidize the project. Still, a glimmer of hope was seen with the incumbency of the third archbishop of Manila, Fray Miguel de Benavides, who became Manila's vicar in August of 1603.

²⁵ Diaz-Trechuelo, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

²⁶ Fonseca, *op. cit.*, p. 5; Santos, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

²⁷ Regalado Trota Jose, *Simbahan Church Art in Colonial Philippines 1565-1898* (Ayala Museum, 1991), pp. 30-31.

²⁸ Trechuelo, *loc. cit.*

THE THIRD CATHEDRAL: 1604-1645

Archbishop Benavides initiated rebuilding the Manila Cathedral in stone but he did not live long enough to see it finished. He passed away on July 26, 1605, two years after his ascension to the archbishopric. The cathedral project was left in the hands of his successor, Diego Vasquez de Mercado, who became archbishop on June 1, 1610.

By 1607, the Manila Cathedral was in such a sorry condition that it became necessary to abandon it and transfer cathedral services to San Andres Chapel of Santa Potenciana College. This condition continued for the next seven years until a new one of stone was built.

Archbishop Mercado continued the late prelate's project. He expanded, beautified and completed the cathedral building. In 1614, a new Manila Cathedral of three naves, seven chapels and ten altars rose. It was built largely from funds donated by the licentiate Don Francisco Gomez de Arellano, fourth Dean of the Cathedral, from the alms solicited by the good archbishop from the residents of Manila, and from the Royal Treasury.

The seven chapels of the Manila Cathedral were built from donations given by generous patrons of the Cathedral. The *Capilla Mayor* or largest chapel of the cathedral was dedicated to Don Francisco Gomez de Arellano, dean of the cathedral chapter and most generous donor of the Cathedral. For his kind and magnanimous deed, Don Francisco was assigned, upon his death, a special niche with bronze letterings and border, at the *Capilla Mayor*. Francisco Gomez de Arellano had served as *cura en propiedad* in the Villa de Arevalo in Panay. He was also *capellán mayor* and rector of the Royal College of Santa Potenciana in 1598 and was a canon of the church and the curate for the *Hospital Real de los Españoles*.²⁹

Captain Juan Sarmiento and his wife Isabel de Paredes of Manila founded a chapel and masses amounting to 200 pesos every year. Captain Antonio de Espinosa and his wife Maria de Aciaza, descendants of one of the oldest families of Manila, founded a chapel under the patronage of San Bartolome and a chaplaincy of 180 pesos. The beautiful chapel *del Sagrario*, or Tabernacle chapel, was founded by Captain Alonso Tarancon, from the property of the late Father Miguel

²⁹ Moreno, *op. cit.*, pp. 168-169.

Simon, a devout and pious man. A chaplaincy was also founded for the *Curato de Españoles* amounting to 210 pesos each year, with 140 pesos for the lamp of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Archbishop Vasquez de Mercado founded on the left side of the *Capilla Mayor* a chapel for his sepulcher and all the Prebends who desired to be interred there. In his designated niche was a large slab measuring one *vara* in height and two and a half in width, with his portrait etched in wood over the slab. He also founded a chaplaincy of 1000 pesos every year at the disposal of the Chapter. The next Chapel was founded by the Accountant Alonso de Espinosa Saravia with a chaplaincy of 150 pesos every year for the service of the Chapter. The last Chapel was founded by Don Rodrigo de la Barrera with a chaplaincy of 150 pesos every year.³⁰

The remains of the late Archbishop Benavides were interred at the Gospel side of the principal altar. Archbishop Vasquez de Mercado, who died in an accident on June 12, 1616, was himself interred in the mortuary chapel he founded in the cathedral.³¹

The Earthquakes of 1621 and 1645

It was not long after when an earthquake on August 1, 1621 caused serious damages on the cathedral's walls, columns and roof. The cathedral became so structurally weak and unsafe that it posed danger to anyone going inside the building. It was imperative to rebuild it since repairs would not improve its miserable condition. At this period, the cathedral did not even have a main retablo and only had a canopy with an image of Christ. Men were even employed just to guard and keep watch over the ornaments and other precious objects within the cathedral.³²

Between July 1, 1641, the date of Archbishop Hernando Guerrero's death, and July 1645, the date when Archbishop Fernando Montero took possession of the archdiocese, the cathedral underwent reconstruction. However, the cathedral fell victim again to nature's devastation when an earthquake destroyed it on November 30, 1645, feastday of

³⁰ Fonseca, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8; Santos, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

³² Trechuelo, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

St. Andrew.³³

The earthquake was one of the strongest to hit Manila, with tremors repeatedly shaking the city days after. The earthquake hit the city at 8:00 in the evening with the bells of the cathedral and the convent of Santo Domingo pealing loudly with the intensity of the quake, joining the tremors that shook the buildings and the residents of Manila. Six hundred residents of the city were buried beneath rubble and debris, with the religious going around to administer confession and the last rites to the dying victims.

The Manila Cathedral easily fell in ruins. Its belltower crumbled to the ground and its walls reduced to its foundations. Only the *capilla mayor* and a wall remained of the stone cathedral. The archives kept in the Chapter Hall were irretrievably buried. Books and papers regarding the early history of the colony were forever lost in the rubble.³⁴

The tremors continued for the next few days, and on the fifth day, a quake of a stronger intensity destroyed whatever structures and ruins were left standing. In less than an hour, many people died. Killed were more than 450 people, with 150 houses leveled to the ground. The Spanish residents of Manila, in fear of their lives because of the continuous tremors, left the city and rented the simple huts of the natives lying in the outlying *arrabales* of Manila. It was a sight to see the most finicky and delicate Spaniards, who before lived luxuriously in their ample salons, living in the humble huts of the *indios*.³⁵

The Manila Cathedral was so devastated that a *camarin* made of wood with bamboo and nipa for a roof was built to temporarily house the flock in the plaza facing the Governor General's Palace.³⁶ The cathedral was reduced to a memory with all the structures in the city. The earthquake impoverished the Cathedral so much with its sources of income lost.³⁷

In 1645, after the earthquake, a generous donor, Doña Luisa de Cosar, widow of the former Governor of Formosa, Sergeant Major Fran-

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 192.

³⁴ *Ibid.*; Santos, *op.cit.*, p. 106; Fonseca, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

³⁵ Fonseca, *loc. cit.*

³⁶ Diaz-Trechuelo, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

³⁷ Santos, *loc. cit.*

cisco Suarez de Figueroa, offered to establish an endowment to have the *Sagrario de los Curas*, or Priests' Tabernacle, rebuilt. This was her way of thanksgiving for being spared from the earthquakes of November 30 and December 4, 1645 and a means to express her love and devotion to the Most Blessed Sacrament. The Cathedral Chapter accepted the endowment with all its stipulations for the reconstruction, upkeep and maintenance of the Cathedral's Sanctuary Chapel.³⁸

Reconstruction Under Archbishop Poblete

Yet, the process of reconstruction of the whole cathedral was to start only after some years upon the arrival in the archdiocese of Miguel de Poblete in 1653. On July 24, 1653, the new archbishop Miguel de Poblete entered the city of Manila after arriving in the Port of Cavite from Acapulco and sadly viewed the ruins of the old cathedral and the temporary *camarin* of a cathedral in the middle of the plaza. He had the ugly *camarin* removed and cathedral services were temporarily installed in the Church of the Confraternity of *La Santa Mesa de Misericordia*. For the next six years, the *Misericordia* church would function as the *interim* cathedral. Immediately, the new archbishop planned to reconstruct the stone cathedral.³⁹

THE FOURTH CATHEDRAL: 1654-1662

On April 20, 1654, the cornerstone of the new cathedral was laid by Archbishop Poblete with the Governor General, the Royal Audiencia, the Cabildos and the religious communities in attendance. Archbishop Poblete personally went on foot around Manila, soliciting donations for the cathedral project. In spite of the relative poverty of the city denizens at the time, the good archbishop was able to collect P3,000 in contributions. To this initial fund, he added whatever little money he had. He even made a beautiful wooden scale model of the proposed edifice which would have three naves and be of the Roman Doric order.⁴⁰

From 1658 to 1659, work on the Cathedral was hastened. At this stage, contributions began pouring in. The Spanish monarch donated

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-112.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 123-124.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

P 22,000 from the Royal Treasury of Mexico. Supporting the completion of the project were the products of the vacancies of the archbishopric. When all the donations were spent, the Archbishop sold his silverware, his pastoral cross and ring just to keep construction going.⁴¹

By 1659, the cathedral's naves were already enclosed and the *Sagrario de las Curas*, choir and the chapter hall were almost finished. At this time, Archbishop Poblete decided to hold Holy Mass in it. The *Misericordia* church, which had served as *interim* cathedral, was asked to transfer all the ornaments of the cathedral to the new cathedral's sacristy for this event. On December 5, 1659, the archbishop consecrated the big bell and blessed the belfry of the new Manila cathedral.⁴²

On December 7, 1659, eve of the feast of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, the Archbishop celebrated low Mass in the Sanctuary of the new cathedral. The following day, the feast itself, a Pontifical Sung Mass was celebrated in the cathedral with the Governor General, the Royal Audiencia, the religious and other dignitaries in attendance. From then on, the divine functions were performed by the Archbishop in the Cathedral.⁴³

More support came for the cathedral so that by 1662, religious services were held there more conveniently. That year, the main altar of the cathedral was built out of molave, a native hardwood, whereas an artist painted and decorated the silken cover of this altar. Contributing greatly to this cathedral building were Governor Sabiniano Manrique de Lara and the residents of Manila.

The Archbishop planned to have the cathedral formally dedicated on August 31, 1662, with much festivity; but the several revolts in the Parian as well as in the provinces of Pampanga, Pangasinan and Ilocos made it impossible. Although only partially completed, with some finishing works still to be executed, the cathedral was blessed on June 7, 1662.⁴⁴

The new cathedral was a beautiful structure of stone, with many altars and several chapels:

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

The Cathedral was beautifully built of quarried stone, lime and gravel. It was forty *brazas* long, 15 *brazas* wide and 9 *brazas* high. It had three naves, one at the center and one each on both sides. Each side had seven beautiful columns. The main portal or entrance was adorned with three doors. Each door corresponded to the naves opening out to the plaza. At approximately the middle of the edifice were side doors each leading to the City streets. It had two Sanctuaries —one for Spaniards and another, for natives. There were 8 windows, 4 on each side. Chapels lined the sides with a one *braza* elevation from the side streets. The woodwork was all of molave. It had a splendid presbytery the table of which was 5 steps elevated. The Choir was 3 steps higher than the floor with 52 carved wooden chairs. There were two Pontifical thrones —one on each side of the choir.

The Cathedral had an imposing tower with a huge bell in it. Near the tower base were located the various offices of the Cathedral. At the top of the tower there was a clock.⁴⁵

Archbishop Poblete died on December 7, 1667 bequeathing his wealth for the maintenance and upkeep of the cathedral. In his lifetime, the late archbishop spent P25,000 for the construction of his beloved cathedral. He also donated ornaments, vestments and vessels for the cathedral church for decoration and use during divine services.⁴⁶ He was also able to obtain sacred relics, which he donated to the cathedral church: an arm of San Marcial, an arm of San Jocundo, and an arm of one of the 1,000 virgins and a piece of the Holy Cross of Christ. The relics were encased in special silver and golden reliquaries.⁴⁷

He entrusted the completion of the cathedral project to his nephew and executor, Don Jose Millan de Poblete, Dean of the Cathedral Chapter of Manila. Cathedral building continued with funds generated by the income of vacant *encomiendas* and from the residents of Manila. In less than two years, the arches, entrances and collateral naves were finished. On August 31, 1671, the principal chapel of *capilla mayor* was completed and dedication rites were celebrated on September 8, 1671, although construction was not yet fully completed.⁴⁸ Work in

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 157-158.

⁴⁸ Diaz-Trechuelo, *op. cit.*, p. 194; Santos, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

the cathedral continued until 1681 when the sacristy and other offices of the Cathedral were finally built.

Additional Restoration Works under Diego Camacho y Avila

During the term of Archbishop Diego Camacho y Avila, 1697-1706, the cathedral project received so much attention. Archbishop Camacho solicited funds to perfect the Cathedral and finish the belltower. He was able to raise 40,000 pesos for the ornamentation of the cathedral.⁴⁹ The periods of building and refurbishing were interrupted by natural calamities, like typhoons and earthquakes, and what was completed had to be repaired and restored again.⁵⁰

Archbishop Camacho is credited to have completed the sacristy, which was painted and covered with a gilded roof, the chapter hall, offices, and the choir with its *tribunas* and grilleworks. He was also responsible for fabricating a lovely pulpit made out of ivory, ebony and *tindalo*, which the cathedral chapter reported to the King as the best in the colony. In the center of the pulpit there was an image of the Immaculate Conception, whose body, hands and feet were of the same material.⁵¹

It was also during Camacho's term that the belltower was completed, in 1706. Hired to build the six-tiered belltower was the Sangley master mason, Dionisio Saplan. The Cabildo Eclesiastico wrote praises about the tower, which could compete in beauty and structure with those in Mexico and Peru.⁵² When Archbishop Camacho left for his new assignment in Guadalajara, he left the cathedral fully repaired and complete with belltower and ornamentations.

Repairs under Archbishop Juan Angel Rodríguez

Fray Juan Angel Rodríguez ascended to the archbishopric of Manila in 1736 and imposed repairs and renovations on the cathedral. In

⁴⁹ Amando Doronila and Fr. Francisco Muñoz, "Manila's Imperishable Cathedral," *Panorama* (May, 1958), p. 20.

⁵⁰ Diaz-Trechuelo, *op. cit.*, 196.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

1737, the *media naranja* of the belltower was demolished and rebuilt in brick with a cupola much prettier than its antecedent.⁵³ The cathedral church itself was in a ruinous condition. Its hardwood flooring was deplorable, the wooden arched ceiling so damaged, and the roof, especially the areas over the collateral naves had fallen down. The retablos, which were poorly treated, suffered from the effects of water that continuously leaked from the ceiling and ran over it. The choir area was intolerably humid and filthy — a condition brought about by bats that inhabited the space. As a whole, the cathedral was quite unserviceable except for its walls.⁵⁴

Such miserable condition of the cathedral spurred Archbishop Rodríguez to improve the edifice. He replaced the deteriorated wooden parts of the structure and was himself able to obtain thirteen large bells for the cathedral.⁵⁵ The lack of money to support the project prompted him to solicit from the government unused stones, bricks and lime originally intended for royal works. In 1740, the archbishop reiterated the request but he did not live long enough to realize his dream.⁵⁶

The Cathedral by Arch. Poblete and his successors until 1751

Prior to the cathedral's reconstruction by Juan de Uguccioni, the structure was a simple and long quadrilateral church annexed with auxiliary services and spaces to complement and support the main congregation or worship area. To its left side, near the main portal, were the cathedral Chapter hall and an octagonal bell tower. The cathedral was divided into three naves — a principal nave and two collateral ones — separated by colonnades. Seven chapels founded by the generous faithful flanked the side naves. At the back of the main altar were the sacristy, a small parlor and the stairs leading to the private rooms above.

To the left of the nave and separated by a patio from the Chapter hall, was the *Parroquia del Sagrario*, which was the chapel serving as parish church for the Spaniards. It had its own sacristy located immediately behind it. In a small patio contiguous to the *Sagrario* and the

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

⁵⁵ Doronila, *loc. cit.*

⁵⁶ Diaz-Trechuelo, *loc. cit.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 202-203.

left wall of the cathedral, were 12 houses or *casitas*, where poor sacristans dwelt. A small *pozo* or well and a *camarin* for storage were also located in this courtyard.⁵⁷ The cathedral had hardwood flooring, a wooden ceiling, and a height not in proportion to its length. This was the cathedral of Archbishop Poblete and his successors who repaired and improved on it. This was also the same cathedral that Archbishop Trinidad, who was Poblete's successor, deemed wise to be reconstructed in 1751.

THE FIFTH CATHEDRAL: 1751–1853

Under Archbishop Pedro de la Santísima Trinidad

Archbishop Pedro de la Santísima Trinidad Martínez de Arizala became Manila's vicar in 1747. He saw the dilapidated state of the cathedral and decided to have it reconstructed by a fine architect to avoid any future defects in the edifice every time natural disasters would strike the city. The archbishop requested Nueva España to send a good *maestro* who could handle the work and in 1748 informed the Spanish monarch that a new cathedral should replace the present one.

The following year, Archbishop Trinidad asked for financial assistance enclosing the report of the Jesuit architect Father Joaquín Mezquita, the military engineer Don Tomás de Castro y Andrade and Don Antonio González de Quijano. The report stated that the length of the Cathedral was unproportional to its width and, thus, the structure necessitated rebuilding according to the norms of architecture. In response, a Royal Cedula was dispatched, ordering the Archbishop and the Royal Audiencia to submit the design for a new cathedral church and the cost estimates for the said project.⁵⁸

Before the Royal Cedula could reach Manila, a Florentine architect and engineer, in the person of Juan de Uguccioni, passed by Manila, during the latter end of the year 1750. A missionary of the *Sagrada Congregación de Propaganda Fide*, Fray Uguccioni was on his way to Goa, India after serving the British in a technical capacity in the Malavar coast.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

Upon the request of Archbishop Trinidad, Uguccioni made an assessment of the cathedral, which he submitted on December 9, 1750. His findings confirmed the previous reports on the structure. Uguccioni remarked that the rectangular structure had a height unproportional to its length...

“...without the least symmetry or ornamentation and, therefore, I consider [the cathedral] wholly as rough, formless and unproportional, to which can be added its great darkness, one reason why a multitude of filthy animals infest it, making it uninhabitable and totally indecent.”⁶⁰

Uguccioni proposed for a totally new edifice but budgetary considerations opted him to just restore the old structure with the introduction of the necessary modifications or renovations in conformity with aesthetics. The archbishop consulted the Governor General and the cathedral Chapter regarding the project. Ultimately, a consensus was reached to pursue with Uguccioni's proposal.

The 1751 Reconstruction of the Manila Cathedral

The Manila Cathedral underwent a major transformation under the hands of the Italian architect Juan de Uguccioni and the *obrero mayor* Don Estevan Roxas y Melo. Don Estevan was a native of Lima, Peru and was secretary to Archbishop Rodriguez since 1736. After the death of the archbishop, Melo opted to stay permanently in this colony and was appointed eventually as *Medio Racionero* and later as *Canónigo de Gracia* in the Cathedral. Because of his talent in the sciences and mathematics, as well as efficiency in his duties, Archbishop Trinidad appointed him as the *Obrero Mayor* of the cathedral reconstruction.⁶¹

The Cathedral Chapter sought the permission of the Governor General to start demolition work in the cathedral so that reconstruction could commence immediately, and for choir and other divine services to be held temporarily in the Church of San Andres of Santa Potenciana College. When cathedral services were installed in Santa Potenciana, in January of 1751, demolition work on the cathedral immediately began.⁶²

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

⁶² *Ibid.*

With Uguccioni's design, some old pillars were removed, portions added and improvements implemented. In the report of Uguccioni and Melo on the reconstruction, they cited the following:

"...all that have been done in the reconstruction of the Holy Cathedral Church, in its greater and better parts, whichever way considered, in its height, and width, or in its pavement, because the old cathedral being not in total proportion has been reduced to a temple to which has been added the transept, and the rear area, which are all new, as also in the rest of the old body of the church which has been enlarged, raising all areas above the key-stone of the arches for better clarity between the windows, which before was absent; its ceiling, which was a simple course of wooden planks has been vaulted as in the principal nave, and in the two side naves, and not to forget the *cimborrio* or *media naranja* [dome] which has been added for greater beauty; from the demolished wall of the old entrance which has been condemned as un-serviceable, the portal was reconstructed and widened as can be seen at present, the old flooring has been raised and built to be strong and serviceable; the choir has been relocated, and its appearance is totally different from the old one. The sacristy has been added, with all its adjacent rooms given their present location; the old sacristy, which occupied the area at the back of the cathedral, has been transferred to where it is now, the site of which used to be previously occupied by some poor sacristans. Without the least doubt, from all that has been mentioned, out of the four parts of the church, three are new; thus, its figure has been totally changed..."⁶³

The reconstructed cathedral was spatially more interesting, with its basic cruciform plan, semi-circular apse and additional offices annexed to the cathedral church. It retained its basic three-nave plan but this time, the chapels were reduced. A large chapel dedicated to St. Peter was built near the main altar while two smaller ones, dedicated to St. Joseph and Our Lady of Guadalupe were situated at the cathedral's left side. Wrought iron grilleworks served as screens and entrances to these chapels. Winding staircases dramatically led up to the Chapter Hall near the main entrance.

⁶³ Juan Uguccioni and Estevan Roxas y Melo, *Testimonio de lo que executado en la Apertura de la Santa Yglesia Catedral de Manila*, Año de 1761, Archives of the Archdiocese of Manila.

The lead and stained glass of the cathedral windows were imported from Java. Marble slabs for paving the cathedral's central nave and the front steps of the choir and presbytery were quarried from Bosoboso where twenty men were hired to cut and hew them. The remaining steps in the presbytery were paved with beautiful *piedra china* or Chinese granite which a generous patron donated. The cathedral organ was itself assigned to an expert organ *maestro*, who was the only one in the islands. A new cupola was built at the transept and nave crossing.⁶⁴

The choir area was installed with iron grilles. The central nave was lined with railings to separate it from the other areas. Hardwood flooring paved the lateral naves and rear areas. The windows with their stained glass were fixed with wire screens as a means of security. For the cathedral exterior, whitewash was applied all over.⁶⁵ By 1758, the Manila Cathedral's main body was complete with their interior vaultings, coffered ceilings and panelled walls.⁶⁶

The Manila cathedral was inaugurated on December 8, 1760. It was a pity that Arch. Trinidad could not witness the rebuilt cathedral, as he died in 1755. It was the new archbishop Don Manuel Antonio Rojo, who took possession of the archdiocese on July 22, 1759, who solemnly blessed and inaugurated the cathedral, on December 8, 1760.⁶⁷

The Bishop of Cebu, Miguel Lino de Ezpeleta, showered praises on Uguccioni's cathedral.

"...It was admired by everyone who saw it, and more, it is a marvel that all the fabric has been patched and the old has been united with the new, and at first sight, it seems that the work is new..."⁶⁸

Works in the cathedral were temporarily suspended until 1761, when a storm caused damages on the roof, forcing the archbishop to resume work in it.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Diaz-Trechuelo, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-208.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

The British Invasion of 1762

The British Invasion in 1762 scarcely caused any damages in the cathedral. However, it was deprived of its many treasures when, under threat of death, Archbishop Rojo was forced by the British to hand over its collection of silver and jewels valued at 31,309 pesos.

The structure, however, underwent repairs. Areas which were eaten by termites and other pests were repaired, and the cupola of the cathedral was given a new sheathing of lead in the shape of fish scales. All these works were supervised by Juan de Uguccioni.⁷⁰

Since the Manila Cathedral was reconstructed by Uguccioni and inaugurated in 1760, there had been no significant major alterations or modifications in it, except for some minor repairs and regilding, until another major reconstruction in the middle of the 19th century. In 1839, repairs were made in the cathedral. Commissioned to perform the repair works was Don Francisco de Ojeda, particularly in the dome or cupola of the structure. Gilding was made in many areas—in the lamps within the church, the *altar mayor* and other auxiliary altars of the cathedral. Such repair and renovation works were supervised by the architect Don Jose Ygnacio de Barinaga. Master carpenter for the works was Don Gaspar Pabalan and the *aparejeador* was Mariano Pabalan. In subsequent years, many repair works were made in the sacristy roof, cupola, windows and termite infested areas of the structure.⁷¹

The Earthquake of 1852

On the night of September 16, 1852, an earthquake shook, damaged and destroyed churches and other edifices in Manila leaving the main facade and other areas of the Manila cathedral in very severe condition. Upon the request of the cathedral Chapter, the *Arquitecto de Hacienda*, Juan Mendoza y Grajales, conducted an inspection of the cathedral. In his report of October 6, 1852, Architect Mendoza cited that the cathedral definitely suffered major damage. Previously unsuspected cracks borne by previous earthquakes and which before were unnoticeable manifested themselves in the principal nave. The front

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

⁷¹ *Manila Complex 1839-1898*, Records Management and Archives Office (hereinafter to be referred to as RMAO).

facade was likewise seriously damaged with its balance severely affected and lost. Out of the six pear-like ornaments that crowned the facade, two were destroyed, and so much danger was posed by the deteriorated facade that it had begun to crumble down.⁷²

THE SIXTH CATHEDRAL: 1858-1863

A year after Grajales' report, Governor General Antonio de Urbiztondo ordered the *Cuerpo de Yngenieros* or Corps of Engineers led by its commandant and chief Don Nicolás Valdés and commandant Fernando Fernández de Córdoba to conduct another inspection of the cathedral since Urbiztondo had lost confidence in Grajales. Grajales had made assurances earlier during a meeting with the cathedral Chapter that no contingencies were needed since the cathedral did not pose any threat to lives and property. In spite of such assurances, on March 6, 1853, a cornice from the *media naranja* or dome of the cathedral fell down destroying a part of the cathedral roof.⁷³

The *Cuerpo de Yngenieros* made its own examination and came up with an Estimate of Works or *Presupuesto de las Obras* to remedy and reconstruct the areas which suffered damages in the cathedral. Among their proposals were to demolish the facade, which suffered cracks, and have it replaced with a more appropriate, elegant and dignified form; to replace the dome with a new one partially due to its old decaying wooden frame; to restructure the principal nave for better stability and raise it by one meter; to repair the different ceilings of the interior rooms and to renovate the present ceiling of the principal nave with one more majestic with a lovely stone simulation. The crown or roof of the belltower was to be replaced with one *más gracioso* than the earlier. Likewise, the house or chapter hall located between the belltower and the cathedral would adopt a new facade, with better circulation and means of ventilation. The estimated cost of the work was 45,500 pesos.⁷⁴

⁷² Juan Mendoza y Grajales, *Obras de reparación que son necesarias hacer en la Sta. Yglesia Cathedral con motivo de los temblores experimentados*, 16 Septiembre 1852, Manila, 16 Octubre 1852. [Manila Complex 1839-1898], RMAO].

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Presupuesto de las obras que deben hacerse en la Yglesia Cathedral para remediar el mal estado en que se halla por causa de los temblores acaecidos en el año 1852*. [Manila Complex 1839-1898, RMAO].

By October 1854, bids for the project were submitted. Contractors who joined the bidding for the cathedral renovation and reworks were Don Manuel Asuncion, Don Luciano Oliver who was a renowned architect, Don Antonio Fua, Don Sixto Ejada Obispo, Don Esteban Trasfiguracion and Don Antonio Canals y Llinas, who was the director and owner of the *Establecimiento Artístico* in Arroceros. Don Sixto Ejada Obispo, who was then the *Gobernadorcillo de Mestizos* of Binondo and a practising contractor, won the bidding with the lowest bid price of 45,300 pesos.⁷⁵

The project pushed through with the churches of the archdiocese of Manila contributing half of their collected *sanctorum* for the work. Funds were also subsidized by the *Obras Pías* and the Royal Hacienda.⁷⁶

The New Cathedral by Nicolas Valdez

Upon completion, the Cathedral was opened to the public, on March 31, 1858. The restored cathedral possessed an entirely new facade. Removed were the pediments and columns framing the side portals and the baroque mouldings framing the high windows over these doorways. Left was a clearer visual space interrupted only by the coupled pilasters that marked each vertical bay. Introduced was a Neoclassic facade, with its architrave and triangular pediment over the main portal. Sculptured figures topped both ends of the main facade's first level and graced the semi-circular pediment of the upper storey. As a whole, the baroque facade of Uguccioni's cathedral was replaced with a Neoclassic motif.⁷⁷

The cathedral had a new dome. Uguccioni's truncated or boxlike cupola was dispensed with and replaced with a circular or hemispherical dome composed of brickwork. Raised on a drum, the dome had a balustraded lantern, made out of wood and iron, and a spire capped with a weather vane. Valdes' corps of engineers also replaced the bell tower's dome with a lanterned dome and spire.

Many defects were observed in the restored cathedral, among which were the leaks in the *cimborrio*, which dripped down the main

⁷⁵ *Proposición de licitación a las obras de la Catedral*. [Manila Complex 1839-1898, RMAO].

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*; Fonseca, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

⁷⁷ *Manila Complex 1839-1898*, RMAO.

altar and the old rotting wood of the roof frame. To correct these defects, the cathedral underwent another restoration, which amounted to P 9,000. In August of 1862, the cathedral Chapter transferred from the cathedral so that work could commence immediately. The restored cathedral was opened formally again to the flock on March 19, 1863.⁷⁸

A travel account of an English woman circa 1863, gave a detailed description of the Manila cathedral, one of the many sites she visited with her husband during their stay in Manila. In it she lucidly notes down her observations of the altar and ornaments in the cathedral.⁷⁹

On entering, the principal altar presents a most gorgeous spectacle, being apparently one mass of silver; but, on closer examination, we found the only portion that was really so was a thin plating which made a dazzling effect. In a frame above are a number of figures symbolical of our Savior's Crucifixion —the cross, dice, ladder, spears, and garments, &c.&c.— but at a first glance they all looked like hieroglyphics on a freemason's apron.

There are a number of small chapels, and a very fine dome; but beyond this nothing struck us much, except two very curious pictures. In one the Virgin Mary was represented standing on a tree in an arbour, with a priest, surrounded by Europeans on one side, and a number of natives on the other — all faces presenting an awe struck, wondering expression. The inscription below informed us that this was a miraculous appearance of the Virgin in this island, some hundred years ago, or more. Singular to relate, in the distance a steamer is seen on the sea, smoking and puffing. We thought this accorded strangely with the date — unless, indeed, its appearance there might be accounted for as the effect of another miracle!

The other picture represented a huge-looking man bearing a little child on his shoulders. Apparently he is sinking from fatigue, and clings for support to a tree in the middle of the river he is crossing. This is the Roman Catholic saint, Saint Christopher...

From such curious observation, it can be inferred that the Manila Cathedral was indeed sumptuously adorned with rich artistic treasures and that certain paintings presented an indigenization of forms which was common during the Spanish colonial period.

⁷⁸ Fonseca, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁷⁹ Anna D'Almeida, *A Lady's Visit to Manila & Japan* (London: Hurst and Blackett, Publishers, 1863), pp. 31-32.

The Tragic 1863 Earthquake

On the night of June 3, 1863 at about half past seven, tragedy struck Manila when a strong earthquake shook its buildings and residents. Many *indios* and Chinese also died especially those who attended the night market of the day. Many were injured and buried in the tragic ruins that became of the Manila cathedral and the hospitals of Manila.⁸⁰

The Manila cathedral became a massive heap of rubbles burying members of the cathedral Chapter and choir boys who were chanting vespers during solemn rites on the eve of Corpus Christi, as well as an undetermined number of the faithful who attended the rites. It was fortunate that the Archbishop of Manila did not attend the said function. It took three days for workers to retrieve the bodies of victims beneath the cathedral ruins. Buried beneath the rubble were:⁸¹

Juan Irene Roxas	Maestrescuela
Pedro Pelaez	Tesorero
Felix Valenzuela	Magistral
Casimiro Revilla	Canonigo de Gracia
Ignacio Ponce de Leon	Racionero
Clemente Lizala	Medio Racionero
Feliciano Antonio	Medio Racionero
Hermogenes Dandan	Primer Sochantre
Bonifacio del Prado	Segundo Sochantre
3 Cantores	
4 Tiples	

An account from a correspondent of the Illustrated London News describes the Manila Cathedral during the disastrous earthquake:

"I send you also a sketch of the interior of the Cathedral, taken from a side door. All the priests connected with the Chapter, except the Archbishop and Dean were chanting the vespers of the Corpus when the shock took place. One escaped by the door which forms the foreground of my sketch; six others were saved under an arch, and made their way out afterwards; the rest of the Canons and choristers were buried under the ruins of the opposite side. Many of them were spoken to and recognised

⁸⁰ Fonseca, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

by their answers. Attempts were made to supply them with water by means of the broken organ pipes, but without effect, and before the masses of masonry could be removed which covered them they were dead. Under the ruins which you see in my sketch are buried, with a few exceptions, all the people who were in the church at the time of the service — how many is not known. The smell while I was drawing was very offensive, and has since become so strong that the labours which were going on in search of church property have had to be suspended. It seems that there is an enormous quantity of diamonds under the ruins of the sanctuary, besides gold and silver plate, which they are trying to get at. The cathedral was surmounted by a large dome of heavy masonry, and you may imagine what a fall that was. One of the priests said that the first shock opened the length of the roof, which as immediately closed up again. The transverse shock which succeeded brought the whole place down.”⁸²

Because of the ruined state of the Manila Cathedral, services were transferred temporarily to the small chapel of the *Venerable Orden Tercera de San Francisco*.⁸³ Many letters and petitions from different quarters, among which were the Archbishop and the *Arquitecto Civil* Don Antonio Moraleda, called for the demolition and clearing of the ruins of the cathedral. Moraleda even made an estimate for the demolition project, which he computed at 41,049 escudos. Moraleda’s call to level the ruins was repeated the following year. Yet, the proposal was put on hold in 1866 to be only reopened in 1868.⁸⁴

On May 12, 1868 Architect Vicente Serrano y Salaverri was commissioned to inspect and undertake a study of the ruins. Salaverri’s report dated July 31, 1868 repeated Moraleda’s findings that the cathedral ruins had to be demolished and cleared. On September 5, 1868, Manuel Ramirez y Bazan prepared an estimate for such work.⁸⁵ However, it was only in 1870 that a move to finally pursue demolition and clearing of the remaining walls and ruins of the cathedral was made.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Espediente sobre reconocimiento de los cimientos de la Yglesia Catedral, Año de 1866.* [Manila Complex, 1839-1898, RMAO].

⁸⁴ Vicente Serrano y Salaverri, *Espediente relativo el derribo de los muros de la catedral parcial.* [Manila Complex 1839-1898, RMAO].

⁸⁵ “The Earthquake of Manila,” *The Illustrated London News*, August 29, 1863, p. 214.

Consequently, the restoration of the Metropolitan Cathedral commenced.

THE SEVENTH CATHEDRAL: 1879-1945

The 1870 Restoration of the Manila Cathedral

On April 13, 1870, Governor General Carlos Maria de la Torre issued a directive giving the necessary authorization to begin the leveling of the cathedral ruins and empowering the Ecclesiastical Governor, Mateo Yague y Mateos, in the absence of Archbishop Gregorio Meliton Martinez who was attending the *Concilio Vaticano* in Rome, to designate the *Arquitecto de la Administración Local*, Don Luciano Oliver, to be the *Director de las Obras* or director of works for the cathedral reconstruction. Mateos was also authorized to arbitrate for the necessary funds for the project, to send out circulars calling on those who would want to donate and to open a subscription from persons willing to support the monthly salaries of workers to be hired in the cleaning and clearing of the ruins and in the reconstruction phase.⁸⁶

On April 18, 1870, during solemn rites in the Church of Santo Domingo, an eloquent discourse on the cathedral brought out the desired reaction from the faithful who pledged to pay for the daily wages of the laborers employed in the reconstruction. In the morning of the following day, April 19, work on the leveling of the ruined cathedral commenced. Present to witness the first phase of the cathedral project were Governor de la Torre, Yague y Mateos, cathedral canons, the Parroco de San Pedro Macati, Luciano Oliver, government officials and other guests.⁸⁷

For the proper disposal of the debris, Mateos coordinated with the *Cuerpo de Yngenieros* which decided to dump the debris in the site of the fortification called el *Pastel*, of Santa Lucia and in several points of the beach within the military zone of Manila. For such work, Mateos requested for 30 *carritones* to be available on hand at the gates of Santa Lucia and Postigo to carry the rubble, and another additional twenty

⁸⁶ Mateo Yague y Mateos, *Memoria sobre la restauración de la Nueva Catedral de Manila en las Islas Filipinas* (Madrid: Establecimiento Tipográfico de Segundo Martínez, Travesía de San Mateo, 1880), p. 6.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

more at a site which the Governor General pleases. Among the cathedral rubble were human remains and relics which were separated and turned over to the Archbishop's Palace upon Oliver's discretion.⁸⁸ Among such human relics were the mortal remains of Simon de Anda, gallant hero during the British invasion and occupation of Manila.⁸⁹

The clearing of debris and rubble lasted for 56 days at a total cost of 3,000 pesos. After this, Don Luciano Oliver presented his proposed plan for the cathedral. Oliver was chosen primarily because he was considered to be the best architect around, with his record of twenty-two years of designing and building structures in the colony, among which were the churches of Taal, Tayabas, Malolos, Navotas, Caloocan and Malate, and other houses which he built to specially withstand earthquakes.⁹⁰

On June 15, 1870, Governor de la Torre issued an ordinance creating the *Junta Consultativa para los Restauraciones de las Yglesias* or Consultative Committee for the Restoration of Churches. Formed specifically to restore Intramuros churches, the committee would assist in the restoration of the Manila Cathedral. The *Junta* had the Governor General for its president, the Dean of the Cathedral for vice-president and the Penitenciario, Magistral, Doctoral and a Racionero, and a Secretary as members.⁹¹

The *Inspección General de Obras Públicas* also proposed to the Governor General the creation of a facultative commission, as ordered by the Royal Orders of August 10 and October 19, 1863, that will take charge of the reconstruction of buildings destroyed by the earthquake. It was composed of Luciano Oliver as head with two others as members. Its aim was to meet with the Ecclesiastical Governor and obtain from him the program of the cathedral regarding the necessary requirements for the new edifice; to assess and examine the cathedral and to determine which areas needed to be demolished and preserved and to propose the most scientific, artistic and economical method of construc-

⁸⁸ Mateo Yague y Mateos to Governor de la Torre, 2 May 1870; Manuel Ramirez to Gov. de la Torre, 13 June 1870, *Manila Complex 1839-1898*, RMAO

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Mateo Yague y Mateos to Governor de la Torre, 14 June 1870, *Manila Complex 1839-1898*, RMAO.

⁹¹ Decree of La Torre, June 5, 1870, *Manila Complex 1839-1898*, RMAO.

tion best suitable for the reconstruction. The committee fulfilled its objectives but Oliver was not able to make a proper project presentation for some reasons. Since the *Inspección General de Obras Públicas* could not give its stamp of approval without any formal project proposal, it proposed on March 8, 1871 to suspend all works on the cathedral. The suspension took effect on May 26, 1871 by virtue of the Royal Order no. 396.⁹²

On July 29, 1871, Governor General Rafael Izquierdo ordered for a reassessment of the works executed in the cathedral and to determine which could be completed, so that in a span of two months, the cathedral could be protected from the oncoming rainy season, until such time the formal project proposal could be approved and reconstruction work could commence again. However, Don Luciano Oliver could not continue to work on the project, and on October 3, 1871 he renounced his position as director.⁹³

Restoration Under Archbishop Meliton Martinez

With the arrival of Archbishop Meliton Martinez from Rome, membership of the Junta or committee formed to take charge of the cathedral restoration was modified by the Superior Decree of September 12, 1871. The new members would be composed of the entire Cabildo under the presidency of the archbishop.⁹⁴

The Junta met to elect and assign a new architect for the project. On October 23, 1871, Don Vicente Serrano y Salaverry was named officially as the new director of the project. On April 20, 1872, Serrano y Salaverry presented the *memoria y planos*, proposal and plans, of the reconstruction projection. In the said proposal, modifications were made in the buttresses and framework of the roof. The said proposal, with some modifications introduced by the *Junta Consultativa de Obras Públicas*, was approved by virtue of the Royal Order of August 6, 1872.⁹⁵

The following were the modifications in Serrano's proposal. Instead of the iron columns specified by Serrano, columns of molave to be

⁹² Fonseca, *op. cit.*, p. 21; Yague, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ Fonseca, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

sheathed with iron would be used. The *zocalos* of granite stone would be replaced by *zocalos* of Meycauyan stone. All other specifications made by Serrano were approved.⁹⁶

In May of 1873, the final plans for the project were elevated to the Minister of Overseas with favorable recommendation from the *Junta de Obras Públicas*. It was approved by the *Academia de Nobles Artes de San Fernando* and ultimately by the Supreme Government on December 13, 1873 by virtue of the Supreme Order No. 1686.⁹⁷ Construction of the new cathedral commenced immediately thereafter.

Construction Under Archbishop Payo

Archbishop Pedro Payo worked with so much zeal and tireless activity for the cathedral so that he was able to obtain easily the necessary funds required to complete the structure. He even donated a part of his own wealth to several works in the cathedral among which were the construction of the main altar, the image of the Immaculate Conception, the organ, and the *reboque* and painting of the belltower.⁹⁸

Failing health forced Architect Serrano to resign from his job as director of the cathedral reconstruction, so that he was replaced on October 31, 1873 by Eduardo Lopez Navarro, who was Chief Engineer of Roads, Canals and Ports in the colony. Serrano died a short while after Navarro replaced him. Engineer Navarro continued to direct the work until April 10, 1878 when he had to leave for Spain to recover his health. Taking over from Navarro was Manuel Ramirez y Bazan, who was Inspector General of Public Works, and who was assisted by Ramon Hermosa. Navarro and Ramirez did not change Serrano's approved proposal. They retained the basic essence and architectural character of the cathedral as planned and envisioned by Serrano.⁹⁹

The new Manila Cathedral was inaugurated during a two-day festivity with solemn rites. On December 7, 1879, the Manila Cate-

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Vicente Serrano y Salaveri, *Proyecto de la Reedificacion de la Catedral de Manila Memoria*, 19 May 1873, Archives of the Archdiocese of Manila; Fonseca, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁹⁸ Fonseca, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

dral was blessed and consecrated by Archbishop Payo. He blessed the exterior and interior of the cathedral. Afterwards, the relics of two martyrs, San Victor and San Lorenzo were brought to be kept in the cathedral's Chapel of St Peter. Then, the first mass to be held in the new cathedral was officiated by the Bishop of Jaro. The following day, feast of the Immaculate Conception, titular patroness of the archdiocese of Manila, saw the formal opening of the cathedral.¹⁰⁰ Much revelry and merrymaking with fireworks and music accompanied the feastday and the cathedral's inauguration, sixteen years after it was destroyed by the 1863 earthquake.

Serrano's Legacy — The 1879 Manila Cathedral

Sixteen years after it was destroyed by an earthquake, the Manila cathedral rose once again to become the city's premier temple. The Revival Styles, which swept the circles of art and architecture in Europe, made its impact in the Manila Cathedral when Architect Serrano employed a style *dentro del mismo estilo Romano Bizantino pero con más gusto Oriental como satisfacción a las exigencias de lugar* —after the Romanesque-Byzantine style but with more Oriental flavor to be satisfied by the exigencies of the site.¹⁰¹ What evolved was an eclecticism combining and reviving the two styles, with much influence too from the Renaissance.

The cathedral had three main portals with receding arches and a giant rose window over it. Sculptured figures of Saints Peter and Paul graced the cornice above the main portal. Angels with a cross cap the cornice of the uppermost level of the cathedral's main facade. Antefixae adorned the cornices while the roof ridge was ornamented with delicate wrought iron railing. A dome raised on a fenestrated drum marked the nave and transept crossing of the cathedral. Finials with pineapple motifs find their way as ornaments in the facade walls.

The cathedral was cruciform in plan, with a central nave and two collateral ones. Arcaded colonnades separated the central nave from the other two. It had a raised main altar, a semi-circular apse, and transept ends which follow the same semi-circular pattern. At the epistle side of the main altar was a rectangular room with a hemi-

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-44.

¹⁰¹ Salaverri, *loc. cit.*

spherical ceiling assigned to be the Chapel of St. Peter. Two other large chapels, which belonged to the *Parroquia de Intramuros*, were connected to the nave with the same ceilings. Although highly modified, these areas were parts of old cathedral, which had been preserved.¹⁰² The new plan of the cathedral did not deviate much from the plan of the previous one in terms of distribution of spaces.

Major accessways to the cathedral were nine: three in the facade, one at each lateral side, one at each transept end and two in the apse. Four minor entrances, which were those leading to the Chapel of St. Peter and the other auxiliary areas of the cathedral, made up a total of thirteen entrances to the structure.

The interior of the cathedral was richly ornamented, with gildings, sculptures and *al fresco* paintings. The Italian artist Giovanni Dibella executed the paintings in the nave and dome. The study of the four evangelists painted in the dome were by the director of the *Academia de Dibujos*, Señor Saez, while it was Dibella who executed it. The paintings in the chapels were done by native artists.

Illuminating the nave were tall clerestory windows with their stained glass panes providing a rich and colorful luminosity in the cathedral. The side chapels were illuminated by large *ojos de buey* or ox-eye windows.

The church had a spacious and raised nave, with the choir area located at the center of the nave. The nave columns and pilasters were tall and slender and raised on granite bases. The arches were majestic and highly ornamented. Its elevated dome was raised on an octagonal drum, each face of which had three tall windows.

The choir which was at the center of the nave had benches and a finely wrought railing. Six seats of honor under the baldachino were imported from Paris, while the rest of molave were sculpted by the famous Manila artist Isabelo Tampinco who also sculpted some of the ornamental details in the church like the wooden capitals of the pilasters in the nave.

The image of the Immaculate Conception, which was a copy of the Spanish painter Bartolomé Esteban Murillo's work exhibited in the Real Museo de Madrid, was executed in Manila by Señor Sales, a Filipino.

¹⁰² Fonseca, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25.

The main altar was raised by a series of marble steps and a lovely table of the same material. Both were the works of Rodoreda.

The building materials used for the cathedral were varied. Granite was used for bases, walks, pavements and steps. Meycauayan stone was used for the exterior walls while volcanic stones from Guadalupe were utilized for the interiors. Bricks were used for the upper level of the main facade and for the arches. Iron was used for wrought and consolidation works. Galvanized iron found their way in the roofs over the nave and apses. Red copper plates covered the dome. Gutters were of lead and ornamental crests were of zinc. Mortar used for the building was reinforced with Portland cement. Native hardwood like molave, were also used for structural framework.¹⁰³

The Secularization Issue and the Execution of Gomburza

The Manila cathedral was witness to the movement to Filipinize parishes and to the tragic aftermath of its persecution. The issue of secularization in the Philippines had long been a source of conflict among the religious regulars and church seculars. Among those who advocated strongly for the rights of the secular clergy were Fathers Pedro Pelaez of the Manila cathedral and Mariano Gomez of Cavite.

Archbishop Meliton Martinez, bothered by the unrest among the seculars over the usurpation of parishes by the regulars, wrote in 1870 to Marshal Francisco Serrano, who was regent of Spain, reporting:

...the tranquility of his diocese...was frequently disturbed as a result of the practice...of turning over...curacies administered by the secular clergy to the religious corporations. This policy is the cause of an ever growing enmity which is becoming more and more manifest between seculars and regulars, and which sooner or later, may bring lamentable results to our beloved Spain.¹⁰⁴

A few years later, on January 20, 1872, a mutiny broke out at the Cavite Arsenal over the unreasonable deductions in the salaries of the arsenal workers due to Governor General Izquierdo's new tax imposition. Sympathizers for the workers mutinied that night causing the

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *History of the Filipino People* (Quezon City: Garotech Publishing, 1990), pp. 123-124.

death of Sgt. La Madrid, the mutiny leader, and the fort commander whose wife was also injured.

The Spanish authorities used this incident as an excuse to implicate those who were advocating religious reforms by connecting them to a separatist conspiracy. Thus, the government arrested Fr. Mariano Gomez along with the outspoken advocate of secularization, Fr. Jose Burgos, a young doctor of canon law, and Fr. Jacinto Zamora. They were haled to a one-sided trial and publicly executed by mechanical strangulation at Bagumbayan on February 17, 1872.

Archbishop Meliton Martinez privately sympathized with the struggle of the Filipino clergy. Although he threatened the three priests with excommunication in his pastoral letter, he refused to defrock them as requested by the governor general. Instead he even ordered the tolling of the bells of the churches of Manila as a funeral dirge for the three martyr priests whom he saw as mere scapegoats against the rising tide of Filipino nationalism.

In keeping with the treatment of the enemies of the state, the corpses of the three Filipino priests were clandestinely taken to the Paco cemetery and were dumped in a common unmarked grave.¹⁰⁵

The Earthquake of 1880

In 1880, the cathedral fell victim again to another earthquake. Its bell tower crumbled to the ground and a makeshift one of wood replaced it. The dome underwent repairs after this incident.¹⁰⁶ However, the cathedral would remain without a bell tower for many years until its merciless destruction by war in the middle of the twentieth century.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

¹⁰⁶ *The Manila Cathedral Inaugural and Consecration Ceremonies, December 3-9, 1958 Souvenir Programme*. Several times, the bell tower of the cathedral was proposed to be reconstructed, but this rebuilding was never realized, despite bids from the foreign firms of *Sociedad de Braine-le Comte*, *Casa de Baudet Donon*, *Sociedad de Aiseau*, *Arsenal Civil de Barcelona*, and the *Moisant, Laurent Savey and Co.* in 1898. (See *Torres para la Catedral de Manila*, AAM). When the bell tower was still intact, the cathedral clock was maintained by the *relojero* of the Ayuntamiento of Manila, Don Federico Matti of Binondo. (See *Manila Complex 1839-1898*, RMAO).

The Late Nineteenth Century

The closing years of the nineteenth century were turbulent ones, not only for the church but also for the entire colony. The Philippine Revolution of 1896 and the Filipino-American War, 1898-1902, saw the transition of colonial power from Spain to the United States. During these periods, Archbishop Nozaleda opened the cathedral doors to Spanish soldiers who sought refuge from the enemy and to the invading American troops who converted it in 1898 into a hospital for wounded American soldiers.

The Catholic Church would experience trials again with the shift in colonial power. The Cathedral of Manila witnessed the transfer of leadership of the archdiocese to the American secular clergy undergoing a major upheaval with that. In spite of the strong foothold that Protestantism and the Aglipayan Church gained during the early years of the twentieth century, the Catholic church would remain steadfast and strong as the archdiocese of Manila had been.

The First Half of the Twentieth Century

As the twentieth century unfolded, a whole new era dawned for the archdiocese and cathedral of Manila. The first few years of this century saw the last Spanish prelate of Manila, Archbishop Bernardino Nozaleda, holding on to the reins of the Catholic hierarchy. Associated with the old and detested system of frailocracy in Spanish colonial Philippines, Nozaleda easily earned the reputation as one of the most unpopular archbishops in the history of the colony.

The period also saw the secular clergy gaining possession of the parishes, which were once the domain of the regulars. It was the time when the delicate issue of friar lands became a ground for debate. It also saw the rift and final schism between Gregorio Aglipay, a secular priest and a general in the Philippine revolutionary army of Emilio Aguinaldo, and the Catholic church. The *Union Obrero Democratica* of Isabelo de los Reyes, a famous propagandist and labor leader, proclaimed the creation of the *Iglesia Filipina Independiente* in August of 1902 when their clamor to oust all the Spanish friars from the country and their desire to organize a new nationalist and patriotic church composed of Filipinos, but still under the authority of the Pope, were denied by the Vatican. Aglipay accepted the leadership of the newly created church as *Obispo Maximo*.¹⁰⁷

Catholic morale was at its lowest when the tide of Protestantism unrestrictedly washed through and permeated the colony with the coming of the Americans, as part of their concepts of Manifest Destiny and Benevolent Assimilation.

With the end of Nozaleda's term as prelate of the Manila archdiocese in 1903, the American secular Jeremias Harty took over the administration of the Manila archdiocese's Catholic faithful signifying an end to Spanish domination in the Catholic Church. Harty successfully consolidated and strengthened the Catholic Church during these troubled years. He also convoked the Second Synod of Manila in 1911, which summarized and tabulated past episcopal decrees and statutes. Michael J. O'Doherty succeeded him in 1916.

Archbishop O'Doherty contributed in freeing the Manila archdiocese and the whole nation from 300 years of Spanish Catholic conservatism and in supporting the rise in leadership of the secular clergy under the Americans and the emerging Filipino leaders like Manuel L. Quezon. In 1925, he convoked the Third Synod of Manila, which brought archdiocesan legislation in line with canon law. He strengthened and improved the facilities of the Seminary of San Carlos, introduced the use of English in Catholic schools, supported the establishment of welfare groups, like the Welfareville Boys' and Girls Town in Mandaluyong, created Catholic organizations like the Catholic Women's League and the Knights of Columbus, and issued Catholic publications—all well-meaning efforts to make the Catholic church closer to the people and attune with the times. In time, the Catholic church gained stronger roots again, weathering the criticisms hurled against it by American Protestant proselytizers, still retaining its position as the dominant religion in the islands.

The Manila Cathedral underwent repairs and minor alterations during the first decades of the twentieth century prior to its cruel destruction during the Battle of Liberation in 1945. In 1915, Archbishop Jeremias Harty made restoration works in the cathedral, making only some slight repairs to restore the cathedral to its former glory before the Philippine Revolution and the Filipino-American War.¹⁰⁸ Thus,

¹⁰⁷ Pedro de Achutegui, SJ and Miguel Bernad, SJ, *The Schism of 1902* (Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1972), pp. 140-141.

¹⁰⁸ *Manila and the Philippines*, p. 92.

Serrano's 1879 Cathedral survived until the Second World War, with its basic forms and features preserved and only slightly altered.

In the Manila cathedral were held important religious ceremonies to celebrate the coronation of the Popes among which was that of Pope Pius XI. In 1907, a significant celebration was held to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the Proclamation of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception, an important event for the cathedral under whose titular patronage it was. Special rites were also performed in the cathedral to observe the XXXIII International Eucharistic Congress held on February 3 to 7, 1937. A solemn *Te Deum* and a special mass to mark the occasion of the inauguration of the Philippine Commonwealth in 1935 were held in the Manila Cathedral.

The Manila Cathedral Prior to the Second World War

During this period before the Second World War, the Manila cathedral was described to be a lovely church replete with ornaments, furnitures, statues and images of remarkable antiquity and beauty. It had several chapels dedicated to St Joseph, Our Lady of Sorrows, St Peter, Sacred Heart, Our Lady of Mercy, St John Nepomuceno, and Our Lady of Guidance, also known as the *Parroquia del Sagrario*, the chapel that served as the parish church of Intramuros. The cathedral's sacristy was hung with old paintings of the different archbishops of Manila. In here were kept rich vestments and old wooden chests and bureaus. Among the exquisite paintings in the cathedral were those of the Baptism of Our Lord, St Anthony of Padua and the Crucifixion.¹⁰⁹

The main altar of the cathedral was graced by the statue of the Immaculate Conception, after Murillo's painting, with the ceiling above it painted to simulate the sky dotted with many faces of cherubs. Surrounding the high altar, like a frieze, are the heads of the apostles, while in the transepts, also in a frieze were the heads of the prophets, kings and patriarchs.¹¹⁰ The dome of the cathedral was raised on pendentives where the frescoes of the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are painted.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Raymundo Bañas, *Brief Historical Sketches of Philippine Catholic Churches* (Manila, 1937), p.

¹¹⁰ "The Manila Cathedral," *The Filipino Nation*, Vol. 5 No. 4 (Feb. 1929).

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

At the back of the main altar were interred the remains of Simon de Anda, while behind it in a mausoleum were those of Archbishops Jose Aranguren and Jose Segui.¹¹²

That is how the Cathedral of Manila was, a survivor of time and nature's devastations and the labor of love of its different archbishops and the countless faithful of the archdiocese. After the Second World War and its destruction, the Cathedral would rise again, as it has always done in its colorful past, stronger and better, a shining torch of the faith, not only of the archdiocese but of the whole Filipino nation.□

¹¹² Bañas, *op. cit.*