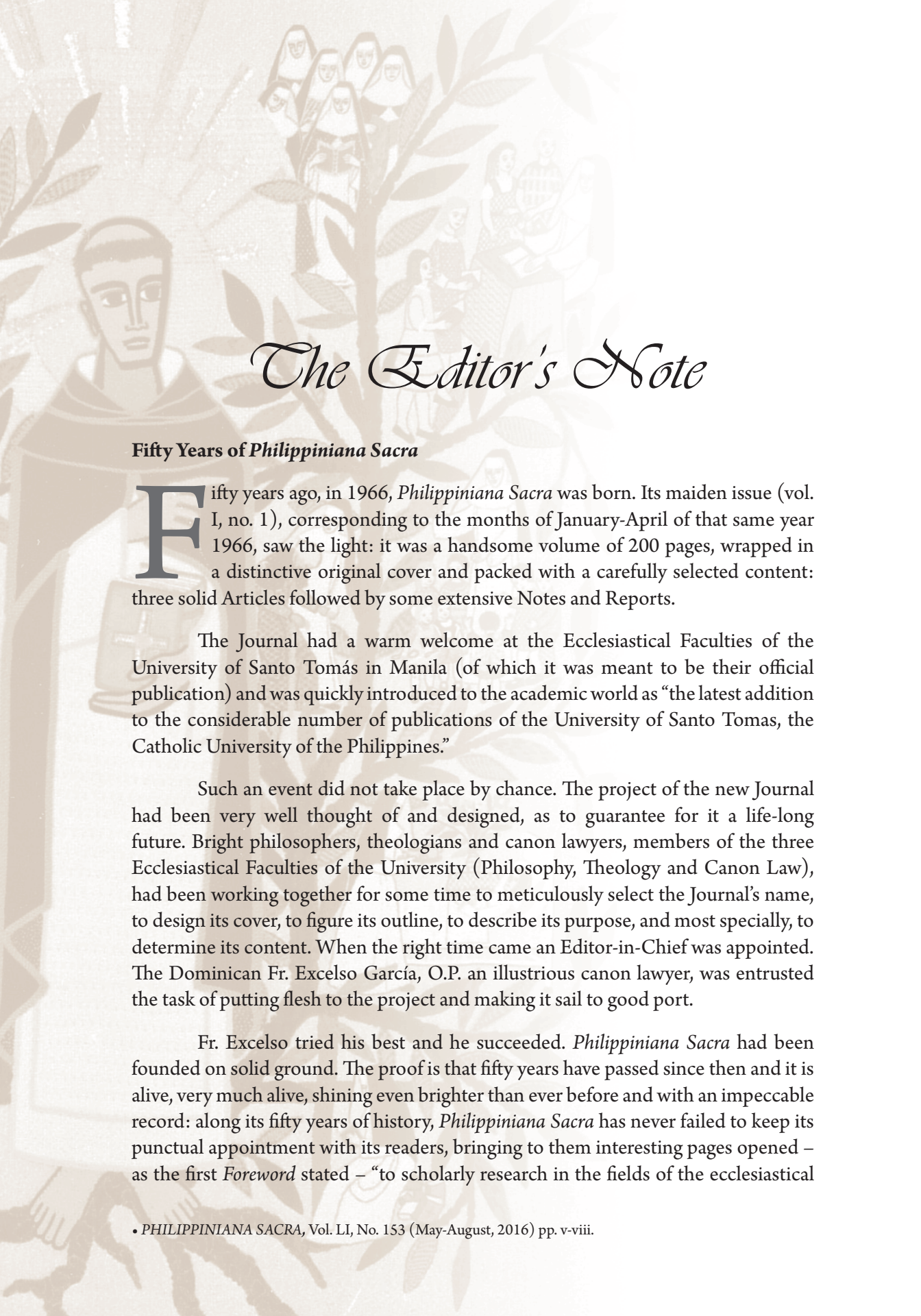


The background of the page features a faint, stylized illustration. On the left, a large, dark silhouette of a monk's head and shoulders is visible. In the center, a tree with many leaves stands, and within its branches, several small, light-colored figures of people are depicted. To the right of the tree, another group of figures is shown, some appearing to be in conversation or study. The overall style is reminiscent of a woodcut or a traditional religious illustration, rendered in a light, monochromatic tone that blends with the page's background.

The Editor's Note

Fifty Years of *Philippiniana Sacra*

Fifty years ago, in 1966, *Philippiniana Sacra* was born. Its maiden issue (vol. I, no. 1), corresponding to the months of January-April of that same year 1966, saw the light: it was a handsome volume of 200 pages, wrapped in a distinctive original cover and packed with a carefully selected content: three solid Articles followed by some extensive Notes and Reports.

The Journal had a warm welcome at the Ecclesiastical Faculties of the University of Santo Tomás in Manila (of which it was meant to be their official publication) and was quickly introduced to the academic world as “the latest addition to the considerable number of publications of the University of Santo Tomas, the Catholic University of the Philippines.”

Such an event did not take place by chance. The project of the new Journal had been very well thought of and designed, as to guarantee for it a life-long future. Bright philosophers, theologians and canon lawyers, members of the three Ecclesiastical Faculties of the University (Philosophy, Theology and Canon Law), had been working together for some time to meticulously select the Journal's name, to design its cover, to figure its outline, to describe its purpose, and most specially, to determine its content. When the right time came an Editor-in-Chief was appointed. The Dominican Fr. Excelso García, O.P. an illustrious canon lawyer, was entrusted the task of putting flesh to the project and making it sail to good port.

Fr. Excelso tried his best and he succeeded. *Philippiniana Sacra* had been founded on solid ground. The proof is that fifty years have passed since then and it is alive, very much alive, shining even brighter than ever before and with an impeccable record: along its fifty years of history, *Philippiniana Sacra* has never failed to keep its punctual appointment with its readers, bringing to them interesting pages opened – as the first *Foreword* stated – “to scholarly research in the fields of the ecclesiastical

disciplines, authoritative comments on kindred matters, critical studies of the diverse problems assailing the spiritual and cultural growth of the religious world (especially of the communities in the South Asia-Pacific), and weighty contributions to the doctrinal and anthropological heritage of the Philippines.” The fact that not a single issue has been missed since then is in itself an achievement!

The merit of it obviously cannot be assigned only to the first editor, but also to those who succeeded him in the office: Frs. Antonio González, O.P. (1970-1972), Lucio Gutiérrez, O.P. (1973-1990), Javier González, O.P. (1991-2009), Norberto Castillo, O.P. (2010-2012) and Jesus Miranda Jr., O.P. (2012-present). They, each in their own way, have been able to maintain the purpose, the hope and the expectation with which *Philippiniana Sacra* was born. The *purpose* was to publish the scientific output of the three Ecclesiastical Faculties (Philosophy, Theology and Canon Law) of the University; the *hope*, “to validate already acquired verities with new conquests in the larger areas of contemporary knowledge”; and the *expectation*, to keep abreast with the ecumenical spirit of the Vatican II Council, whose celebration was still going on at that time.

The journey continues. The popular saying that “any time in the past was better” is not applicable to the case of *Philippiniana Sacra*; on the contrary, the Journal has reached in the present day such a high level of recognition as never before had done, having qualified in 2014 for the Research Journal Category A-2, accredited by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) of the Philippines. An honor that means in practical terms that the Journal meets “international standards” in all its elements.

***Philippiniana Sacra* in the Philippine Academic World**

It is true that *Philippiniana Sacra* coexists with quite a number of sister publications in the Philippines, starting by its very neighbours *Unitas* and *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* (University of Santo Tomas), *Philippine Studies* and *Landas* (Ateneo de Manila University), *Diwa* (Divine Word Seminary), *MST Review* (Maryhill School of Theology), *EAPI Review* (East Asian Pastoral Institute), *Hapag* (St. Vincent School of Theology), *Lantayan* (Don Bosco Center of Studies), *DAKATEO* (Catholic Theological Society in the Philippines), and so on. This may lead to think of *Philippiniana Sacra* simply as “one more” Journal in the Philippine spectrum of academic publications.

However, *Philippiniana Sacra* is not just “one more” publication in the Philippine context. Its symbiotic connection with the University of Santo Tomas – particularly with its Ecclesiastical Faculties, which have always been considered as a

primary component of the University—bestows on *Philippiniana Sacra* a privileged position over Journals, namely, having available for publication in its pages not only the outputs of a large number of Thomasian researchers and scholars, but also the inexhaustible collection of original manuscripts that the University archives have accumulated along its more than 400 years of existence. The Journal's section "Philippiniana Records" is an excellent proof of it, which speaks by itself of one additional contribution *Philippiniana Sacra* is called to offer to the fields of history and ethnography. The recent occasion of the Fourth Centennial commemoration of the Foundation of the University of Santo Tomas (1611-2011) is another good example of the important role *Philippiniana Sacra* is called to play in the mentioned field of history: for the past six years its issues have made available for researchers abundant and priceless documentation treasured in the University Libraries and Archives. Definitively, it won't be possible to write about the Philippines in the future without making some reference to materials published in *Philippiniana Sacra*.

Universities all over the world have taken good note of these things and, aware of the relevance of *Philippiniana Sacra* in the academic world, continue to show interest in having its complete collection in the shelves of their libraries.

A Glowing Instrument of Evangelization

Dominicans are preachers of truth. Like St. Dominic, their founder; like St. Thomas Aquinas, Albert the Great, Raymond of Peñafort, Jordan of Saxony, Miguel de Benavides and many other illustrious names attached to the University of Santo Tomas' buildings and surrounding streets. Such preaching has not been reserved to pulpits in churches, but has found a preeminent *agora* in the classroom of schools and universities, as well as in the publication of books and journals. The University of Santo Tomas is a splendid witness to it since its foundation in 1611: a vast number of Dominican professors have left important written works for posterity. They have written original works of authentic merit on various themes and subjects, such as dogmatic and moral theology, apologetics, philosophy, law, history, ethnography, customs and practices, linguistics, casuistic, hagiography, etc. Oftentimes, they were the pioneers in a difficult field where they had "to make the road as they walked." Their works reveal one common trait: their passion for truth. *Veritas*.

The association of this Journal with the University of Santo Tomas imprints in it a somehow unique character. *Philippiniana Sacra* has become a practical expression of the vision-mission of the University. Thus, it is a channel through which the University carries out the pursuit of truth "guided by reason and illumined by faith" as well as "the generation, advancement and transmission of knowledge," which the

University of Santo Tomas professes as its Mission. Likewise, *Philippiniana Sacra* has greatly contributed and continues to do to the output of the University “in the particular fields of research in the arts and humanities, social science and education, and the sacred sciences” which constitute one of the University’s main objectives.

St. Dominic and the first Dominicans made study an essential part of their “*Sacred Preaching*.” This was no small innovation in the thirteenth century when most of the clergy were uneducated. St. Dominic sent the friars to the universities “to study, to preach, and to establish places of learning.” The dedication to study and teaching continues today. We, Dominicans, put particular emphasis on study because it opens our hearts and minds more fully to the human condition today, continues to build on a rich history and tradition and has its ultimate effect on our preaching and teaching.

It is not by chance that *Philippiniana Sacra* was born to bring to its readers pages opened “to scholarly research in the fields of the ecclesiastical disciplines, authoritative comments on kindred matters, weighty contributions to the doctrinal heritage of the Philippines and critical studies of the diverse problems assailing the religious world.” It was to serve the Mission of the University of Santo Tomas and it continues today to be an instrument of evangelization. ■

