

Book Review

***For All the Peoples of Asia:*
Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Documents
from 1970 to 1991**

Edited by Gaudencio B. Rosales and Catalino G. Arévalo

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Jointly published by Orbis Books (Maryknoll, New York) and Claretian Publications (Quezon City, Philippines); 1992; 356 pp. & xxx; Orbis hardcover (\$39.95 in USA and Canada); Claretian hardcover (\$17.95), softcover (\$12.95).

The 21st century will dawn in less than a decade and it is already being called "the Asian Century." In this perspective, the aspirations and initiatives, the pains of growth and movements of Asian Christian communities invite--even demand--the interest and reflection of thoughtful Christians throughout the world. This timely volume provides a privileged resource for a sympathetic listening to the local Churches of Asia and a look into their areas of emphasis on the eve of the dawning century.

Edited by two prominent Asians, G.B. Rosales (Filipino bishop-theologian) and C.G. Arévalo (Jesuit systematic theologian and missiologist) *For All the Peoples of Asia* assembles the most important texts issued by the conferences, consultations, and assemblies of the FABC (Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences) since its inauguration by Paul VI in 1970 in Manila. This compendium serves as a "source-book" for comprehending the dynamic development of mission, theology, church, dialogue and evangelization in Asia's local churches.

Emerging from the historic gathering of 180 Asian bishops with Paul VI in 1970, the FABC has sought to forge a new consciousness on common questions and problems facing the Asian continent--where nearly two-thirds of humanity reside.

The book contains twelve documents on interreligious and dialogue matters, seven on social action, and four each on the missionary and lay apostolates.

The book also contains many topical items: Asian Collo-

quium on Ministries in the Church, International Congress on Mission, FABC Documents Survey, and others. Two important introductory essays by Catalino Arévalo and Felix Wilfred, members of the FABC Theological Advisory Commission, provide an essential overview and framework for situating the FABC in the world of Asia and for comprehending specific documents. An extensive index is truly helpful in locating common themes dispersed throughout the fifty individual items collected here.

Readers should not expect to find a ready-made synthesis of Asian theological-missiological thought in this volume; this is not a deficiency in the book. Its unique contribution lies in providing the sources for discovering the meaning of being Church in Asia during the 1990s and beyond. Reading this collection will be journeying with the Roman Catholic communities in Asia in the post-Vatican II era.

Admittedly, some minor deficiencies and inconsistencies appear in this joint Orbis-Claretian edition. Yet, the remarkable theological vision which emerges from these documents is filled with great breadth, hope, and courage. Here is an "ecclesiology of the Asian churches," arising from the life, experience, and reflection of Jesus' disciples in that part of the world previously called "the Far East." This volume will certainly facilitate dialogue among the local Churches as well as provide a window for the wider Church to appreciate the Asian experience of being a Church truly alive.
