



Re-Reading Luke 10:25-37 in the Digital Age: Postcolonial Exegesis and Filipino Perspectives on Cyber-Neighborliness

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ABSTRACT:

This article reinterprets the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37) through a triadic approach integrating postcolonial exegesis, Filipino cultural hermeneutics, and digital theology. It revisits the question “Who is my neighbor?” within the context of cyberspace, employing the Filipino concepts of *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa-tao* as ethical foundations for solidarity that transcends geographical and social boundaries. Through postcolonial analysis, the study exposes the power dynamics embedded in traditional interpretations and demonstrates how digital theology enables new expressions of compassion in online spaces. The findings reveal that digital platforms can function as modern “roads to Jericho,” where inclusion, exclusion, and advocacy unfold. By integrating theological and cultural insights, the study asserts that neighborliness is not merely a moral gesture but a theological vocation to embody mercy and justice within digital networks. It concludes that *kapwa* offers a humanistic and contextually grounded framework for digital ethics, calling the Church and society to cultivate genuine fraternity in cyberspace as an extension of Christian compassion and mission.

ABSTRAK:

Artikel ini bertujuan menafsirkan ulang perumpamaan Orang Samaria yang Baik Hati (Luk 10:25–37) melalui tiga pendekatan: eksegesis pascakolonial, hermeneutika budaya Filipina, dan teologi digital. Penelitian ini menelaah pertanyaan “Siapakah sesamaku manusia?” dalam konteks dunia maya dengan menempatkan konsep *kapwa* dan *pakikipagkapwa-tao* sebagai dasar etika solidaritas yang melampaui batas geografis dan sosial. Melalui analisis pascakolonial, studi ini mengungkap dinamika kekuasaan dalam tafsir tradisional dan menunjukkan bagaimana teologi digital membuka ruang bagi praksis belas kasih di lingkungan daring. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa ruang digital dapat dipahami sebagai “jalan Yerikho” modern,

tempat berlangsungnya solidaritas, pengucilan, dan advokasi. Dengan memadukan wawasan teologis dan budaya, penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa sikap bersesama tidak hanya tindakan moral, tetapi juga panggilan teologis untuk menghadirkan kemurahan dan keadilan dalam jejaring digital. Kajian ini menyimpulkan bahwa konsep *kapwa* memberi landasan bagi etika digital yang humanis dan kontekstual, mendorong Gereja dan masyarakat untuk mewujudkan persaudaraan sejati dalam ruang siber sebagai perpanjangan dari misi belas kasih Kristiani.

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INTRODUCTION

In an era where digital technologies increasingly shape human relationships, this study reimagines the question “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:25–37) through a postcolonial

exegetical lens rooted in Filipino theological ethics. Moving beyond Western domestications of the Good Samaritan, it foregrounds *kapwa*¹ and *pakikipagkapwa-tao* indigenous paradigms that resist colonial individualism and affirm an interconnected self, where the neighbor dwells not in physical proximity but within relational presence.

Drawing from digital theology and thinkers like Heidi Campbell,² the analysis embraces cyberspace as a site of incarnational mercy, where online interactions become acts of solidarity and communal care.³ Engaging Luke’s parable from the margins and through Filipino communal wisdom, it challenges dominant hermeneutical traditions and offers a prophetic call to resist exclusion and apathy especially within networked digital contexts.⁴

Grounded in the liberative trajectories of postcolonial biblical criticism, the study affirms the interpretive agency of historically marginalized communities⁵ insisting that theological readings must confront power, identity, and erasure whether on dusty roads or digital screens. Considering colonial histories and contemporary digital marginalization, Filipino readers encounter Luke 10:25–37 as a living challenge that demands not only reinterpretation, but ethical resistance shaped by indigenous relational values. The parable, reframed through *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa-tao*, speaks to digital exclusion manifested in algorithmic bias, cyberbullying, and the erasure of local voices.⁶ These paradigms offer a counter-ethic to the moral fragmentation of globalization, affirming that neighborliness is a shared identity marked by solidarity, embodied mercy, and communal responsibility.⁷

¹ *Kapwa* is a core Filipino concept of shared identity, viewing the other as a co-self rather than a separate individual. Its active form, *pakikipagkapwa*, involves engaging others with empathy, mutual respect, and solidarity. Together, they form a relational ethic that resists colonial individualism and supports a theology of neighborliness—both in embodied and digital contexts. See: Virgilio G. Enriquez, *From Colonial to Liberation Psychology* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1992), 49–55.

² Heidi A. Campbell is a leading scholar in digital religion, known for her work on how religious communities engage with new media technologies. See: Heidi A. Campbell, *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds* (London: Routledge, 2013).

³ Heidi A. Campbell and Stephen Garner, *Networked Theology: Negotiating Faith in Digital Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016); Jonathan James Canete and Fides A. del Castillo, “*Pakikipagkapwa* (Fellowship): Towards an Interfaith Dialogue with the Religious Others,” *Religions* 13, no. 5 (2022): 459, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13050459>.

⁴ Augustine M. Mensah, “The ‘Neighbour’ in the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37),” *Ghana Journal of Religion and Theology* 9, no. 2 (2019), <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/gjrt/article/view/227825>.

⁵ R. S. Sugirtharajah, ed., *The Postcolonial Biblical Reader* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006); Musa W. Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2000).

⁶ Canete and del Castillo, “*Pakikipagkapwa*,” *Religions* 13, no. 5 (2022): 459.

⁷ Inge Kaul et al., eds., *Providing Global Public Goods: Managing Globalization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Benjamin Mueller, “Corporate Digital Responsibility,” *Business & Information Systems Engineering* 64 (2022): 689–700, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12599-022-00760-0>.

Drawing on Heidi Campbell’s Religious-Social Shaping of Technology (RSST) framework,⁸ Filipino churches and communities actively shape digital spaces through theological conviction, crafting cyber-neighborliness that resists apathy and reflects postcolonial agency. As Cañete and del Castillo affirm, this vision transforms ethical responsibility into a culturally grounded, radically inclusive response to alienation and estrangement in the digital age.⁹

Building on previous insights, Filipino communities rooted in *pakikipagkapwa-tao*¹⁰ offer a powerful theological response to digital alienation by transforming networked spaces into loci of embodied neighborliness, care, and solidarity.¹¹ Campbell’s RSST and her expanded work on digital religion dismantle binaries between “virtual” and “real” religious life, revealing that religious meaning is co-constructed through convergence, networked identity, and relational authenticity.¹²

In algorithmic terrains where visibility often substitutes for virtue, digital creatives redefine authority beyond ecclesial hierarchies, raising urgent questions about ethical representation and communal voice.¹³ Filipino cyber-ecclesial praxis, often sidelined by Western scholarship, embodies lived theology and postcolonial resistance, insisting that digital space is not neutral but a battleground for justice and recognition.¹⁴ This study bridges the gap by proposing a cyber-theological rereading of Luke 10:25–37, arguing that *kapwa* must anchor digital ethics lest online interactions reinscribe the very exclusions they promise to transcend.

Thus, this research is both timely and necessary. It reclaims interpretive agency in Luke’s parable through postcolonial biblical tools, it re-grounds neighborliness in Filipino ethics of relational solidarity, and it engages digital theology to interrogate how authority, community, and compassion are reconfigured in the digital age. In doing so, it calls for a theologically informed, culturally grounded, and digitally aware response to cyber-neighborliness transforming the digital highway into a terrain of mercy, advocacy, and ethical kinship.

⁸ Heidi A. Campbell, *When Religion Meets New Media* (New York: Routledge, 2010), chap. 7.

⁹ Canete and del Castillo, “Pakikipagkapwa,” *Religions* 13, no. 5 (2022): 459.

¹⁰ *Pakikipagkapwa-tao* is the active expression of *kapwa*, emphasizing empathy, mutual respect, and solidarity in daily relationships. See: Virgilio G. Enriquez, *From Colonial to Liberation Psychology* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1992), 49–55.

¹¹ Jeizelle Solitario, “Revisiting Kapwa: Filipino Ethics, Subjectivity, and Self-Formation,” *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 70, no. 4 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.13185/2244-1638.1141>.

¹² Heidi A. Campbell and Wendi Bellar, *Digital Religion: The Basics* (London: Routledge, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003058465>.

¹³ Heidi A. Campbell, “How Churches Became Platforms: Reinventing Religious Community in Digital Culture,” *Social Media + Society* 6, no. 2 (2020): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305120933281>.

¹⁴ Agnes M. Brazal, *A Theology of Southeast Asia: Liberation-Postcolonial Ethics in the Philippines* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2019), <https://www.orbisbooks.com/products/a-theology-of-southeast-asia>.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts an interdisciplinary methodology that weaves postcolonial exegesis, Filipino cultural hermeneutics, and digital theology to re-read Luke 10:25–37 as a call to radical kinship in digital and physical spaces. Building on the works of Sugirtharajah¹⁵ and Dube,¹⁶ it interrogates biblical power dynamics and reframes Scripture as a contested site of liberation.

Filipino cultural values such as *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa-tao* offer a relational lens that resists colonial individualism and grounds ethics in solidarity and mutual recognition.¹⁷ Drawing from Heidi Campbell's RSST framework, the study analyzes how Filipino faith communities embody cyber-neighborliness through digital rituals shaped by tradition and communal identity.¹⁸ Theological insights from *Fratelli Tutti*¹⁹ further affirm the need to enact fraternity across digital borders, positioning cyberspace as a locus of mercy and mission. However, the methodology's reliance on Filipino categories may limit its translatability across cultural contexts, inviting further comparative research to broaden its applicability and deepen intercultural theological dialogue.

DISCUSSION

Analysis of the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37) through Postcolonial, Filipino, and Digital Theological Lenses

Postcolonial hermeneutics thus reorients biblical interpretation toward the lived experiences of those historically marginalized by imperial and theological hegemonies. As Sugirtharajah notes, the interpretive monopoly of Western traditions has often silenced the voices of colonized peoples, reducing their realities to footnotes in theological discourse.²⁰ Segovia deepens this critique by insisting that theological categories themselves must be interrogated from the underside

¹⁵ R. S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism and Biblical Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), <https://academic.oup.com/book/49608>.

¹⁶ Musa W. Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2000).

¹⁷ Virgilio G. Enriquez, *Kapwa: The Self in the Other—Worldviews and Lifestyles of Filipino Culture* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1982); Jeizelle Solitario, "Revisiting Kapwa: Filipino Ethics, Subjectivity, and Self-Formation," *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 70, no. 4 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.13185/2244-1638.1141>.

¹⁸ Heidi A. Campbell, *When Religion Meets New Media* (London: Routledge, 2010), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203695371..>; Vladimer Kobayashi et al., *Understanding Pakikipagkapwa through Analytics: Exploring Filipino Relational Communication in Online Spaces*, UP CIDS Discussion Paper Series 2024-11 (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies, 2024).

¹⁹ Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2020), https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_encyclica-fratelli-tutti.html.

²⁰ Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism*, 26–29.

of empire, where the colonized speak not from abstraction but from embodied struggle.²¹ Dube's feminist postcolonial lens further insists that exegesis must foreground power, identity, and resistance especially in contexts where gender and race intersect with colonial legacies.²² Luke 10:25–37, when read through this lens, becomes a site of resistance.

The Samaritan, a figure historically despised by Jewish audiences, embodies a radical ethic of compassion that transcends purity codes and ethnic boundaries. His mercy is not merely moral it is political. It disrupts the priestly and Levite paradigms of religious orthodoxy and redefines neighborliness as an act of solidarity with the wounded and excluded. In this way, the parable becomes a postcolonial text: it critiques systems of exclusion and invites readers to imagine compassion as a subversive, embodied practice.

Christianity's colonial legacy in the Philippines has deeply shaped theological consciousness. José de Mesa reclaims indigenous concepts such as *loob*²³ and *pakikipagkapwa* as theological anchors, allowing the Gospel to speak meaningfully to Filipino experiences not as foreign impositions but as expressions of relational solidarity rooted in interiority.²⁴ Stephen Bevans affirms the necessity of contextual theology through his praxis model, emphasizing theology as lived engagement and prophetic dissent.²⁵ Brazal and Odchigue expands this into digital theology, illustrating how cyberchurches and migrant communities reimagine *pakikipagkapwa* in online spaces.²⁶

Contributors to *Concilium* 2022/1 such as Peter Phan challenge universalist theology by rooting their reflections in Asian embodied experiences.²⁷

²¹ Fernando F. Segovia, *Decolonizing Biblical Studies: A View from the Margins* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 16, <https://www.orbisbooks.com/products/decolonizing-biblical-studies>.

²² Musa W. Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2000), 67, <https://www.chalicepress.com/products/postcolonial-feminist-interpretation-of-the-bible>.

²³*Loob* is a Filipino concept of the inner self, encompassing moral will, emotional depth, and relational integrity. It reflects one's capacity for empathy and is expressed through sincere, ethical engagement with others. See: Dionisio M. Miranda, *Loob: The Filipino Within* (Manila: Divine Word Publications, 1989), 15–22.

²⁴ José M. de Mesa, *In Solidarity with the Culture: Studies in Theological Re-rooting*, Maryhill Studies 4 (Quezon City: Maryhill School of Theology, 1987); Rebecca G. Cacho, "Ang Hindi Malilimutang Pamanang-Aral ni Ka Jose de Mesa," *Hapag: Journal of Theology and Ministry* 15, nos. 1–2 (2018): 105–113.

²⁵ Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, revised and expanded ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002).

²⁶ Agnes M. Brazal and Randy Odchigue, "Cyberchurch and Filipin@ Migrants in the Middle East," in *Church in the Age of Global Migration: A Moving Body*, ed. Susanna Snyder, Agnes M. Brazal, and Joshua Ralston (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 187–199, https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137518125_13.

²⁷ Peter C. Phan, "Asian Christian Theologies: Present Tasks and Future Orientations," in *Concilium* 2022/1: *New Developments in Theology in Asia*, ed. Huang Po Ho, Daniel F. Pilario, Catherine Cornille, Stephan Van Erp, and Tran Van Doan (London: SCM Press, 2022), 107–117, <https://www.scmpress.co.uk/books/9780334063535/concilium-20221>.

This further affirms marginalized spaces as theological loci, where Filipino relational ethics like *kapwa* and *loob* offer a counter-narrative to Western theological abstraction.²⁸

Re-Reading Luke in Cyber-Theological Perspective

Luke 10:25–37 reframes neighborliness as mercy enacted beyond ethnic, cultural, and ritual boundaries. The lawyer’s question, “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29) invites not a legal definition but an ethical transformation. Jesus disrupts expectations by casting a Samaritan as the moral exemplar a figure historically despised within Jewish tradition.²⁹ Postcolonially, the Samaritan functions as the subaltern who challenges theological gatekeeping by foregrounding mercy over hierarchy.

Digital spaces deepen and complicate this reading. Just as the Samaritan defies social categorization, cyber-neighborliness resists boundaries of location, class, or creed.³⁰ The Samaritan’s engagement through heart, hands, and feet exemplifies an ethic of disruptive compassion that confronts systems of exclusion.

The Levite’s passivity, rooted in ritual duty, reinforces the failure of institutional response. As biblical tradition affirms, Levites were consecrated for temple service and guardianship of sacred space, yet their role often emphasized ritual maintenance over prophetic action.³¹ In contrast, the Samaritan’s visceral response (*splagebnizomai*) initiates a theology of proximity—mercy enacted through material risk and bodily involvement.³²

This ethic reaches its climax in Jesus’ directive: “Go and do likewise” (Luke 10:37). Compassion, in this view, is not an exception but the normative threshold of eternal life.³³ Martin Luther King Jr.’s³⁴ reimagining of the parable reframes the ethical question

²⁸ Jeremiah Lasquety Reyes, “Loób and Kapwa: An Introduction to a Filipino Virtue Ethics,” *Asian Philosophy* 25, no. 2 (2015): 148–171, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09552367.2015.1043173>.

²⁹ Amy-Jill Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi* (New York: HarperOne, 2014), <https://www.harpercollins.com/products/short-stories-by-jesus-amy-jill-levine>.

³⁰ Terry Moe, “Constructing Boundaries by Crossing Them: Contemporary Comparative Theology as a Practice of Community Self-Definition,” in *Comparative Theology in the Millennial Classroom*, ed. Reid B. Locklin (London: Routledge, 2015), 157–170, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315776156>.

³¹ “The Levitical Line and the Priestly Order,” *Tabletalk Magazine*, June 2024, <https://tabletalkmagazine.com/article/2024/06/the-levitical-line-and-the-priestly-order/>.

³² Charles H. Spurgeon, *Sermons on Our Lord’s Parables: Delivered at the Metropolitan Tabernacle and New Park Street Chapel* (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1904), 106, <https://archive.org/details/sermonsparables00spuruoft>.

³³ Mescher reframes the Good Samaritan parable as a call to “neighbor-formation,” emphasizing solidarity, proximity, and the preferential option for the poor. Let me know if you’d like a shortened version for repeat citations or help integrating this with your theology of mercy and digital kinship; Marcus Mescher, *The Ethics of Encounter: Christian Neighbor Love as a Practice of Solidarity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2020), 49, <https://www.orbisbooks.com/products/the-ethics-of-encounter>.

³⁴ Martin Luther King Jr., “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop,” speech delivered April 3, 1968, Memphis, TN, <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkivebeentothemountaintop.htm>.

from “What will happen to me?” to “What will happen to him?” inviting readers to reconstruct the Jericho Road itself into a pathway of justice and communal solidarity.

The Digital Samaritan: Rethinking Neighborliness in Cyberspace

The ethical question posed in Luke “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29) resonates in digital spaces where exclusion now operates through algorithms, anonymity, and platform design. Heidi Campbell’s Religious-Social Shaping of Technology (RSST) framework demonstrates how religious communities actively negotiate digital platforms considering belief, authority, and communal identity.³⁵

Filipino faith networks, grounded in *kapwa*, do not merely adapt digital tools they reshape them through relational engagement. Agnes Brazal affirms that cyber-compassion manifests in donation links, virtual pastoral care, and advocacy in comment threads.³⁶ Filipino netizens engage in digital bayanihan, responding to injustice with hashtags like #NasaanAngPangulo and #JusticeForChristineDacera, transforming social media into a space of ethical witness and communal solidarity.³⁷

Pope Francis’s *Fratelli Tutti* urges global fraternity amid digital fragmentation, calling for a renewed commitment to “dream together” as one human family.³⁸ He critiques the illusion of digital communication and warns against algorithmic isolation, emphasizing the need for embodied encounter and ethical listening.³⁹

In today’s rapidly evolving digital landscape, the concept of neighborliness acquires new dimensions that challenge traditional boundaries of community and care. As users navigate algorithmic architectures, platform anonymity, and fragmented attention economies, the imperative to redefine “neighbor” emerges as a moral summons in cyberspace. This redefinition calls for ethical proximity not grounded in physical nearness but in relational responsiveness, digital solidarity, and the intentional cultivation of compassion across virtual divides.

³⁵ Heidi A. Campbell, “Considering the Religious-Social Shaping of Technology,” in *When Religion Meets New Media* (London: Routledge, 2010), <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/mono/10.4324/9780203695371-7/considering-religious-social-shaping-technology-heidi-campbell>.

³⁶ Agnes M. Brazal, “Feminist Cyberethics in Asia: Religious Discourses on Human Connectivity,” in *Feminist Cyberethics in Asia: Religious Discourses on Human Connectivity*, ed. Agnes M. Brazal and Kochurani Abraham (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

³⁷ Rappler. “A New Bayanihan: Filipinos Use Social Media to Help People in 2019.” *Rappler*, December 22, 2019. <https://www.rappler.com/moveph/247546-new-bayanihan-filipinos-social-media-help-people-2019/>.

³⁸ Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, §8, 2020.

³⁹ Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, , §§42–49, 2020.

The fusion of Filipino faith networks with digital platforms exemplifies a transformative force where compassion transcends physical limitations. By integrating *kapwa* into online spaces, individuals not only adapt but actively mold digital tools to foster genuine human connection. This evolution, rooted in relational engagement and ethical commitment, illustrates a profound shift towards a digital Samaritanism that extends compassion and solidarity beyond geographic and cultural confines, echoing the timeless query of Luke 10:29 into our digital age.

The Politics of the Question: “Who is My Neighbor?”

In Luke’s narrative, the lawyer’s question reflects a desire to delimit moral obligation. Jesus disrupts this impulse by telling a story that centers the Samaritan a marginalized outsider. Musa W. Dube explains that this rhetorical inversion “disarms the powerful” and confronts interpretive bias, reframing the Samaritan’s mercy as a political and theological act of resistance.⁴⁰

R.S. Sugirtharajah highlights how empire lurks behind biblical geography the road from Jerusalem to Jericho becomes a metaphorical borderland of failed institutional religion and imperial complicity.⁴¹ The parable thus critiques religious gatekeeping and invites a hermeneutic of solidarity from the underside of empire.

José de Mesa’s Filipino reframing of the question “To whom do I allow myself to become neighbor?” reflects *kapwa*’s relational ethic, emphasizing shared personhood and interior openness (*loob*) as theological virtues.⁴² This reframing shifts the focus from obligation to volitional solidarity, aligning with Filipino theological sensibilities that prioritize *pakikipagkapwa-tao*.

Theologically, the parable’s reorientation of the question from legalistic boundary-setting to radical mercy echoes the kenotic pattern of Christ himself, who “emptied himself” (Phil. 2:7) and became neighbor to humanity in its most vulnerable condition. The Samaritan’s crossing of boundaries ethnic, religious, and moral mirrors the incarnational logic of divine compassion, where God does not remain distant but draws near in suffering and scandal. This act of mercy is not ancillary to salvation history but central to it, for as Gustavo Gutiérrez affirms, salvation is inherently social and historical, marked by concrete acts of liberation and love for the other.⁴³ Thus, to become a neighbor is to participate in the mission of God (*missio Dei*), dismantling

⁴⁰ Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation*, 67.

⁴¹ Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism*, 106.

⁴² de Mesa, *In Solidarity with the Culture*, 61.

⁴³ Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*, revised ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2023), 83–86, <https://www.orbisbooks.com/products/a-theology-of-liberation>.

hierarchies and constructing a communion that reflects the inclusive hospitality of the Kingdom. The question “Who is my neighbor?” becomes not merely an ethical query but a theological summons to embody God’s preferential option for the wounded along the road a praxis of solidarity rooted in history and grace.⁴⁴

Priests and Levites as Symbols of Institutional Complicity

The priest and Levite figures traditionally associated with religious authority pass by the wounded man in Luke 10:31–32. While earlier interpretations allegorize this inaction as concern over ritual impurity (cf. Lev. 21:1–3; Num. 19:11), postcolonial interpretation reframes their behavior as emblematic of institutional religious failure. R. S. Sugirtharajah contends that colonial Christianity often prioritized orthodoxy and purity over embodied compassion, facilitating systems of exclusion rather than liberation.⁴⁵ Amy-Jill Levine further argues that these characters symbolize those who prioritize theological legalism at the expense of human need.⁴⁶ In *The Misunderstood Jew*, she critiques Christian interpretations that cast Judaism as rigidly legalistic, warning that such portrayals not only distort the historical Jesus but also perpetuate anti-Judaic tropes. Levine reframes the priest and Levite not as villains but as figures caught in a system that privileges ritual purity over relational mercy. Her analysis invites readers to interrogate how theological frameworks can obscure ethical responsibility, especially when institutional norms override compassion.

This critique reverberates across global ecclesial history, where religious institutions have at times colluded with oppressive regimes or remained silent amid injustice.⁴⁷ In the Philippine context, silence on extrajudicial killings, political misinformation, and online violence mirrors the priestly inaction of Luke’s narrative. A postcolonial reading calls for a Church of praxis one that upholds mercy, not performance, solidarity, not orthodoxy.

This narrative tension reaches its theological climax when read through the lens of Christ’s own ministry, which consistently subverted institutional expectations in favor of radical mercy. The refusal of the priest and Levite to act stands in stark contrast to Jesus’ declaration in Matthew 9:13: “I desire mercy, not sacrifice.” This citation of Hosea underscores a divine critique of religiosity devoid of compassion.

⁴⁴ Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 83–86.

⁴⁵ Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism*, 26.

⁴⁶ Amy-Jill Levine, *The Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus* (New York: HarperOne, 2006), 147.

⁴⁷ Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert, eds., *Reading from This Place: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in Global Perspective*, vol. 2 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 23.

Theologically, the parable indicts any ecclesial system that performs holiness while neglecting the crucified bodies on the roadside. True faith begins not in abstract doctrine but in *dangerous memory*, a remembrance of suffering that compels action. Thus, the priestly inaction is not merely a narrative device but a theological warning: when institutions prioritize purity, order, or doctrinal correctness over proximity to the wounded, they betray the very God who “dwells with the brokenhearted” (Ps. 34:18). The Samaritan, not the cleric, embodies divine presence, revealing that God’s grace often moves through the margins, not the mainstream.

Implications for Today’s Global and Digital Borderlands

The parable’s inversion where the outsider becomes the moral center carries into digital terrains. The “road from Jerusalem to Jericho” maps onto virtual spaces where users are excluded by algorithms, harassed through anonymity, or erased from dominant narratives. Johan Fornäs et al. describe digital spaces as “borderlands” that replicate colonial lines of visibility and erasure.⁴⁸ Heidi Campbell echoes this, noting that digital media not only reflects social dynamics but actively shapes ethical behavior.⁴⁹

Agnes Brazal introduces the notion of a “cyber-ethics of neighborliness,” suggesting that online faith communities must become sites of solidarity and prophetic care.⁵⁰ For the digitally marginalized migrants, LGBTQ+ persons, indigenous peoples the Samaritan’s story becomes a call to transform digital presence from passive consumption to active engagement.⁵¹

Theologically, the digital borderland is not a neutral terrain but a contested space where the Church is called to embody the incarnational logic of presence and proximity. Just as the Word became flesh and dwelt among the marginalized (John 1:14), so too must digital discipleship refuse abstraction and algorithmic distance in favor of embodied solidarity even online. In this light, the Samaritan’s act is not simply moral but sacramental: a visible sign of divine grace enacted in hostile terrain. The refusal to “pass by on the other side” (Luke 10:31) becomes a Eucharistic gesture in the digital realm breaking the isolation of the wounded through presence, speech, and action. Echoing the theology of the margins

⁴⁸ Johan Fornäs, Kajsa Klein, Martina Ladendorf, Jenny Sundén, and Malin Sveningsson, *Digital Borderlands: Cultural Studies of Identity and Interactivity on the Internet* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002), 2.

⁴⁹ Campbell, *When Religion Meets New Media*, 83.

⁵⁰ Agnes M. Brazal, “Toward a Cyber-Ethics of Neighborliness,” in *Church and Internet: A Study on the Relationship between Church and Internet in the Philippines*, ed. Franz G. Buenaventura (Manila: Institute of Spirituality in Asia, 2014), 85.

⁵¹ Brazal and Odchigue, “Cyberchurch and Filipin@ Migrants,” 187–199.

advanced by Leonardo Boff⁵² and other liberation theologians, today's Church must recognize cyberspace as a new *locus theologicus*, a frontier where the preferential option for the poor is urgently reimagined through hashtags, livestreams, and community threads. Neighborliness here becomes not only a moral response but a theological vocation.

Theological Redefinition of Neighborliness in Luke's Parable

Jesus reframes the lawyer's bounded inquiry, "Who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29), by shifting the locus of neighborliness from the identity of the recipient to the actions of the subject. The closing directive, "Go and do likewise" (Luke 10:37), becomes a missional imperative: neighbor is defined by mercy enacted. I. Howard Marshall argues that Jesus' narrative ruptures ethnic boundaries and destabilizes the lawyer's legal categories.⁵³ Joseph Fitzmyer connects this reframing to Luke's broader theological intent, noting the influence of 2 Chronicles 28:15, where Samaritans aid wounded Judeans, challenging historical hostilities through acts of compassion.⁵⁴

Philip Esler observes that in Jewish tradition, "neighbor" (*plesion*) typically referred to covenant insiders, but Jesus subverts this category to emphasize ethical inclusion.⁵⁵ Arland Hultgren agrees, interpreting Jesus' definition of neighborliness as grounded not in affiliation but in concrete mercy.⁵⁶ Terry Moe adds that such boundary-crossing compassion reflects theological anthropology where finite human vulnerability meets divine self-giving.⁵⁷ Love, then, becomes not sentimental idealism but embodied relational praxis.

This redefinition of neighborliness is ultimately rooted in the very nature of God, whose self-revelation is characterized by boundless compassion and radical proximity. The parable unveils a theocentric ethic wherein mercy is not merely a moral virtue but a reflection of divine *kenosis* the self-emptying love of God who crosses the infinite distance to dwell among the wounded (Phil. 2:5–8). As such, neighborliness becomes participation in God's own relational being, a theological act that mirrors the triune communion, where love always moves outward in self-giving. The Samaritan does not ask, "Is this person worthy of help?" but enacts mercy because he embodies a divine rhythm

⁵² Leonardo Boff, *Liberation Theology: From Dialogue to Confrontation*, trans. Robert R. Barr (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986).

⁵³ I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978), 448.

⁵⁴ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke X–XXIV: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, Anchor Yale Bible Commentary (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), 875.

⁵⁵ Philip Francis Esler, *The First Christians in Their Social Worlds: Social-Scientific Approaches to New Testament Interpretation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 103.

⁵⁶ Arland J. Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2000), 207.

⁵⁷ Moe, "Constructing Boundaries," 157–170.

that refuses to let suffering be someone else's problem. In this way, the parable does not merely instruct ethical action it reveals the shape of God's grace in human terms and invites believers to be sacraments of that grace in a fractured world.

Levine's Historical-Critical Provocation and the Parable's Political Edge

Levine cautions against rendering the Good Samaritan into a benign fable of roadside charity. For her, parables are "designed to provoke," unsettling pious comfort and exposing social fault lines.⁵⁸ She notes that Jesus' use of Samaritan imagery would have evoked strong emotional reactions in a first-century Jewish audience comparable, she argues provocatively, to invoking "Osama bin Laden" in post-9/11 contexts.⁵⁹ This rhetorical shock is meant to reorient moral imagination.

Jesus' reference to Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 (Luke 10:27) becomes a springboard for expansive love drawing in the stranger, the enemy, the Other. Levine underscores those ritual obligations in Jewish legal codes, such as *Mishnah Sotah* 9:15, would not justify neglecting the wounded, challenging interpretations that reduce the priest's and Levite's passivity to purity concerns.⁶⁰ Their indifference, in this light, reflects moral failure, not legal observance. Levine's exegesis dovetails with postcolonial theology, where the Samaritan represents agency among the subaltern. He embodies prophetic neighborliness that disrupts social scripts and channels divine care through marginal identity.

Levine's historical-critical lens powerfully reframes the parable not as a call to generic kindness but as a theological confrontation with systems of exclusion and inherited enmity. The Samaritan's mercy is not merely an ethical gesture, it is a subversive theological act that dismantles sacred boundaries and reclaims the margins as loci of divine action. In this way, the parable becomes a site of prophetic imagination, where love is not an abstract virtue but a destabilizing force that reorders social hierarchies and theological assumptions. Theologically, this aligns with the biblical witness that God often chooses the outsider to reveal the scandal of grace, from Hagar in the wilderness to the Canaanite woman challenging Jesus (Matt. 15:21–28). The Samaritan does not just help; he reveals the heart of God who sides with the despised and acts through the unexpected. Such a reading calls the Church not to sentimentalize

⁵⁸ Amy-Jill Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi* (New York: HarperOne, 2014), 3–4.

⁵⁹ Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*, 75.

⁶⁰ Amy-Jill Levine, *The Bible With and Without Jesus: How Jews and Christians Read the Same Stories Differently* (New York: HarperOne, 2022), 106.

the parable but to recover its radical edge: to see in the face of the enemy, the heretic, or the foreigner the very possibility of God's disruptive mercy.

Filipino Theological Perspectives on Neighborliness

At the heart of Filipino ethical life lies *kapwa*, often rendered as “shared self,” a notion rooted in relational recognition and mutual being. Virgilio Enriquez argues that *kapwa* refuses the isolation of Western individualism and affirms that personhood is realized through community and solidarity.⁶¹ This dynamic finds its active expression in *pakikipagkapwa-tao*, a lived ethic of compassion, hospitality, and engagement. It is not an optional gesture—it is a normative responsibility embedded in indigenous consciousness.⁶²

Jeremiah Reyes further develops this framework by integrating *kapwa* into Thomistic virtue ethics, aligning it with the common good and relational justice. He interprets *loob* as “relational will,” and *kapwa* as “together with the person,” forming the pillars of a Filipino virtue ethics that prioritizes solidarity over autonomy.⁶³ Within biblical exegesis, *kapwa* offers a compelling lens through which the Samaritan's mercy in Luke 10:25–37 may be interpreted not as charity, but as mutual recognition. His compassion reflects kinship, not pity, an embodied theology of solidarity.

José M. de Mesa's contextual theology deepens this reading with the concept of *loob* the moral interiority that shapes action. For de Mesa, *may loob* signifies integrity, empathy, and authentic relationality.⁶⁴ The Samaritan's mercy the use of oil and wine, physical effort, and provision for care is animated by *may loob*. It is not performative benevolence but a theological act of shared personhood.

In this light, Filipino theological perspectives offer more than cultural insights they articulate a pneumatological anthropology where the Spirit animates communal interbeing and mutual recognition. *Kapwa*, grounded in *loob*, mirrors the perichoretic nature of the Triune God, where personhood is not defined in isolation but in eternal relation. The Samaritan's action, then, resonates deeply with a Filipino understanding of moral agency: not merely to do good *for* the other, but to suffer *with* and act *from within* the shared self.

⁶¹ Virgilio G. Enriquez, *From Colonial to Liberation Psychology: The Philippine Experience* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2013), 35.

⁶² Katrin de Guia, *Kapwa: The Self in the Other—Worldviews and Lifestyles of Filipino Culture-Bearers* (Manila: Anvil Publishing, 2005), 28.

⁶³ Jeremiah Reyes, “Loob and Kapwa: An Introduction to a Filipino Virtue Ethics,” *Asian Philosophy* 25, no. 2 (2015): 148–171.

⁶⁴ de Mesa, *In Solidarity with the Culture*.

Filipino anthropology asserts that identity is constituted through relationships. Unlike Western paradigms premised on autonomy, Filipino subjectivity is dialogical formed through *pakikipagkapwa*. Enriquez and Reyes both challenge Cartesian individualism, offering an ethical anthropology where the self is always with and for others.⁶⁵ This communitarian vision directly engages the biblical ethic of neighborliness, pushing it beyond legal obligation into the realm of lived solidarity.

Postcolonially, such anthropology resists the erasure wrought by colonial theology. Western theological anthropology often severed spirituality from embodiment, community, and locality. Reclaiming *kapwa* and *loob* is not simply cultural nostalgia it is a theological act of decolonization. Brazal argues that Filipino theology reshapes ethical discourse for a digitized, globalizing world. It grounds the Other not in theoretical inclusivity but in relational presence and advocacy.⁶⁶

This disrupts dominant frameworks of hierarchical benevolence, inviting instead a discipleship rooted in *pakikipagkapwa*, where salvation is not transactional but communal. Such a theological vision challenges global Christianity to recognize that the “neighbor” is not an object of mercy but a co-bearer of the *imago Dei*, drawing the Church into deeper participation in God’s relational mission of justice, healing, and kinship.

Ecclesial Implications: Re-rooting the Church in Kapwa

In Filipino ecclesial praxis, *pakikipagkapwa-tao* offers a theological framework that reimagines the Church beyond institutional boundaries. It proposes a pastoral ethic grounded in accompaniment, mutuality, and shared vulnerability. Pope Francis’s *Fratelli Tutti* calls for a “culture of encounter” that rehumanizes relationships fragmented by fear, ideology, and structural inequality.⁶⁷ In this view, neighborliness is no longer strategic outreach but relational presence.

Filipino digital communities creatively embody this ethic. Cyberchurches, migrant prayer networks, and online ministry groups manifest *kapwa*-oriented solidarity, extending pastoral care across borders. As Brazal and Odchigue observe,

⁶⁵ Jeremiah Reyes, “*Loob and Kapwa*: An Introduction to a Filipino Virtue Ethics,” *Asian Philosophy* 25, no. 2 (2015): 148–171.

⁶⁶ Agnes M. Brazal, “Cyberchurch and Filipin@ Migrants in the Middle East,” in *Church in an Age of Global Migration: A Moving Body*, ed. Susanna Snyder, Agnes M. Brazal, and Joshua Ralston (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 187–199.

⁶⁷ Francis, *Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2020), https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html.

these communities constitute theological loci where liturgy, lament, and advocacy converge to enact sacred kinship beyond traditional ecclesial spaces.⁶⁸

Filipino ideas like *kapwa*, *loob*, and *pakikipagkapwa* reject Western divides between self and other, emphasizing shared identity and mutual respect. This is not merely pastoral strategy, but a theological necessity grounded in the Incarnation: just as Christ entered full solidarity with humanity, so too must the Church embody *pakikipagkapwa-tao* as its fundamental mode of being. The Church becomes most itself not in separation from the world but in deep, vulnerable engagement with the wounded, the displaced, and the digitally estranged. As Filipino theology reveals, such solidarity is sacramental making visible the grace of shared humanity. In this view, *kapwa* is a Spirit-given ethic that calls the Church to embody mercy, justice, and communion as its very way of being.

Digital Culture and the Ethics of Cyber-Neighborliness

Contemporary digital spaces function as virtual Jericho roads connective yet perilous. Far from neutral tools, platforms are socially embedded systems shaped by belief, authority, and values.⁶⁹ Within Filipino theology, *kapwa*-driven relationality frames digital engagement as both pastoral ministry and ethical witness.

Brazal⁷⁰ describes these spaces as theological borderlands, where marginalized voices confront hegemonic systems. Trolling, algorithmic erasure, and online violence demand a Samaritan ethic. Disciples are called to "see the wounded" and enact mercy across bandwidth and interface. *Pakikipagkapwa* thus becomes a cyber-ethic of resistance, visibility, and care.

This ethic echoes the Incarnation: just as the Word became flesh (John 1:14), digital neighborliness requires presence, not distance. Vatican reflections affirm that social media should foster "communities of care," not digital tribalism.⁷¹ In a world fractured by algorithms and virality, online solidarity becomes theological praxis.

Filipino Christians have embodied this ethic through online relief efforts, community pantries, and pastoral support during crises. These acts mirror the Samaritan's mercy not as sentiment, but as sacrament: a concrete expression of *loob*

⁶⁸ Agnes M. Brazal and Randy Odchigue, "Cyberchurch and Filipin@ Migrants in the Middle East," in *Church in the Age of Global Migration: A Moving Body*, ed. Susanna Snyder, Agnes M. Brazal, and Joshua Ralston (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 187–199, https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137518125_13.

⁶⁹ Campbell, *When Religion Meets New Media*, 56.

⁷⁰ Brazal and Odchigue, "Cyberchurch and Filipin@ Migrants," 187.

⁷¹ Dicastery for Communication, *Toward Full Presence: A Pastoral Reflection on Engagement with Social Media* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2023).

and shared personhood. As Brazal⁷² notes, digital compassion reflects the face of God in the face of the Other.

Thus, *kapwa* invites a theological reimagining of cyberspace not as an escape, but as a mission field where discipleship is lived in tweets, livestreams, and comment threads. Here, every act of digital mercy becomes a Eucharistic witness to a Church rooted in solidarity, not silence.

Brazal introduces a “cyber-ethics of neighborliness,” wherein actions such as liking, sharing, commenting or remaining silent become moral decisions that shape community formation and relational integrity.⁷³ Rooted in Filipino *pakikipagkapwa-tao*, this framework resists sentimentalism and instead affirms relational presence as an ethical imperative. Here, moral agency extends beyond content creation toward discerning curation and sustained accompaniment in cyberspace.

This reframing transforms the figure of the digital Samaritan into one who intervenes: disrupting misinformation, amplifying silenced voices, and practicing “compassionate bandwidth” through ethical visibility. Such acts embody *kapwa* not only as anthropological identity but as ecclesial vocation in networked terrains.

Pope Francis’s *Fratelli Tutti* deepens this perspective by invoking the Good Samaritan as a model of universal fraternity, challenging “the globalization of indifference,” “the culture of walls,” and ideological compartmentalization.⁷⁴ He calls on digital citizens to become “protagonists of a new encounter” rooted in openness and solidarity (§§30–31), echoing Filipino relational anthropology wherein *kapwa* and *loob* constitute identity through mutuality. As José de Mesa⁷⁵ affirms, relationality *may loob* imbues action with moral depth while Reyes⁷⁶ situates *kapwa* within virtue ethics, calling it a summons to communal justice and embodied mercy. Together, these insights foreground digital platforms as theological spaces, virtual Jericho roads laden with wounds, silence, and potential compassion.

The Samaritan’s praxis “coming near,” “seeing,” and responding (Luke 10:33)\ invites a digitally reimagined ethic of proximity and compassion. In this terrain, presence demands more than access; it calls for ethical attention. Heidi Campbell highlights storytelling as central to religious digital culture, wherein blogs, vlogs, tweets,

⁷² Agnes M. Brazal, *A Theology of Southeast Asia: Liberation-Postcolonial Ethics in the Philippines* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2019).

⁷³ Agnes M. Brazal and Kochurani Abraham, eds., *Feminist Cyberethics in Asia: Religious Discourses on Human Connectivity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 90-91.

⁷⁴ Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, §§27, 72, 2020.

⁷⁵ de Mesa, *In Solidarity with the Culture*. 59.

⁷⁶ Reyes, “*Loob and Kapwa*,” 70.

and livestreams enable theology to unfold through relational narrative.⁷⁷ This practice mirrors the incarnational ethos of Christ (John 1:14), where divine presence emerges not through abstraction but embodied witness.

Faithful digital dwelling thus requires active listening and compassionate praxis. Apathy, trolling, and performative solidarity fracture neighborliness. To resist these patterns is to affirm dignity, attend to digital suffering, and enact mercy amidst algorithmic complexity.

Ministry, too, is transformed. Digital modalities reconfigure pastoral care from geographic proximity to networked relationality. The Samaritan's acts touching, tending, and paying attention (Luke 10:34–35) provide a template for ministries of screen-mediated presence. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Filipino clergy navigated emotional and vocational challenges in shifting to online ministry. Interpretive phenomenological studies attest to spiritual burden and adaptive resilience, confirming that intimacy can persist even in digitized forms. Simultaneously, movements like community pantries spread through social media and animated by *Alay Kapwa* redefined ecclesial compassion through decentralized solidarity.

This shift necessitates theological pedagogical renewal. Campbell's RSST model situates religious communities as critical interpreters of technological landscapes, influenced by authority, tradition, and moral reason.⁷⁸ William Schweiker urges theological engagement with globalization, digital rights, and ecological integrity, calling for active ethical construction over passive doctrinal reception.⁷⁹ Brazal⁸⁰ extends this vision, proposing theological ethics attuned to Filipino values and digital justice frameworks.

The Pontifical Academy for Life also gestures toward this horizon, exploring ethical AI, data dignity, and virtue-centered design.⁸¹ Within this landscape, Filipino theological ethics grounded in *kapwa*, *loob*, and *pakikiramay* offer textured tools for shaping Catholic Social Teaching across digital ecologies.

Cyber Solidarity in the Catholic Perspective

Digital platforms enable interfaith and intercultural encounters, transforming online space into a site of moral and relational engagement. Pope Francis's *Fratelli Tutti* envisions a "culture of encounter" beyond ideological and religious divisions, calling

⁷⁷ Campbell, *When Religion Meets New Media*, 83.

⁷⁸ Campbell, *When Religion Meets New Media*, 44.

⁷⁹ William Schweiker, *Theological Ethics and Global Dynamics: In the Time of Many Worlds* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 132.

⁸⁰ Brazal and Odchigue, "Cyberchurch and Filipin@ Migrants," 187.

⁸¹ Fabio Sinibaldi, Paolo Benanti, and Pontifical Academy for Life, *The Good Algorithm? Artificial Intelligence: Ethics, Law, Health* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 2020).

all people to dialogue and collaborative action for universal fraternity.⁸² (In this vision, storytelling, empathy, and advocacy become digital spiritual practices, enabling users to exercise moral agency and foster mutual care.

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) provides foundational principles human dignity, solidarity, subsidiarity, and the common good to address the ethical crises of the digital age, such as algorithmic bias, misinformation, and data commodification (Social-Spirituality 2020; Vincent 2011). The Pontifical Academy for Life strengthens this framework, proposing CST-rooted models for ethical AI that promote inclusive design, digital rights, and justice-oriented platforms.⁸³

Conwill⁸⁴ argue for embedding virtue ethics into digital architecture to encourage moral presence, hospitality, and civic responsibility. These theological-ethical visions find cultural depth in Filipino moral frameworks grounded in *kapwa* and *loob*, which emphasize communal respect, empathy, and care for the invisible. Such values extend CST into culturally embedded cyber-ethics that prioritize relational justice over technological abstraction.

Thus, a theology of cyber-solidarity emerges one rooted in CST but enriched by Filipino ethics where accompaniment, relational presence, and hope shape our digital discipleship. In this moral landscape, the Church is called not merely to critique digital systems, but to humanize them.

CONCLUSION

Luke 10:25–37 demands not polite theology but disruptive mercy. Re-reading the parable of the Good Samaritan through postcolonial, Filipino, and digital lenses compels us to confront and dismantle sanitized interpretations that domesticate neighborliness into abstract goodwill. Mercy here is not metaphor, it is embodied proximity, ethical risk, and radical interruption. It is the refusal to remain indifferent to colonial wounds, algorithmic erasure, and theological apathy.

Filipino notions like *kapwa*, *loob*, and *pakikipagkapwa-tao* challenge Western dichotomies between Self and Other by advancing a relational view of personhood grounded in shared interiority and reciprocal dignity. In digital contexts, this theology of relationality reframes what it means to be present transforming advocacy, visibility, and care into acts of online discipleship. The Jericho Road now winds through

⁸² Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, §§215–224, 2020.

⁸³ Sinibaldi, Benanti, and Pontifical Academy for Life, *The Good Algorithm?*

⁸⁴ Louisa Conwill, *Virtue in Virtual Spaces: Catholic Social Teaching and Technology* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2024).

Wi-Fi networks, livestreamed vigils, and encrypted threads. Violence has gone virtual but so has mercy.

Pope Francis, in *Fratelli Tutti*, calls for a radical fraternity that views every digital encounter as an opportunity for communion. Yet such a vision cannot be realized through techno-optimism or ecclesial complacency. It demands a Church that discerns hashtags as hermeneutical sites, recognizes cyber-pantries as Eucharistic spaces, and listens deeply to migrant prayer networks as loci of theological insight. It calls for dismantling theologies of privilege that mute the cries of the digitally dispossessed.

To pastors, theologians, scholars, and digital citizens, neighborliness cannot remain rhetorical. It must be disruptive witness. It must expose systemic injustice, unsettle passive consumption, and rewire our digital lives toward ecclesial compassion. In cybercommunities shaped by *kapwa*, compassion becomes our currency, and solidarity our sacrament. Only then can we become true cyber-Samaritans agents of healing in a fractured, wired world.

But to become cyber-Samaritans is not merely to extend charity in digital form; it is to confront the digital hegemony itself. Platforms that thrive on surveillance, commodified attention, and algorithmic exclusion reproduce colonial structures under the guise of connection. The Church cannot merely log in, it must log out of complicity. It must unmask the imperial logics embedded in digital infrastructures and disrupt them with a theology of subversion. Inspired by *pakikibaka* (struggle), and animated by *kapwa*, cyber-theology must become a praxis of resistance, reclaiming virtual space as sacred ground where the wounded are not exploited for clicks but embraced as kin. This is more than digital ministry, it is a prophetic uprising on behalf of the crucified neighbor.

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