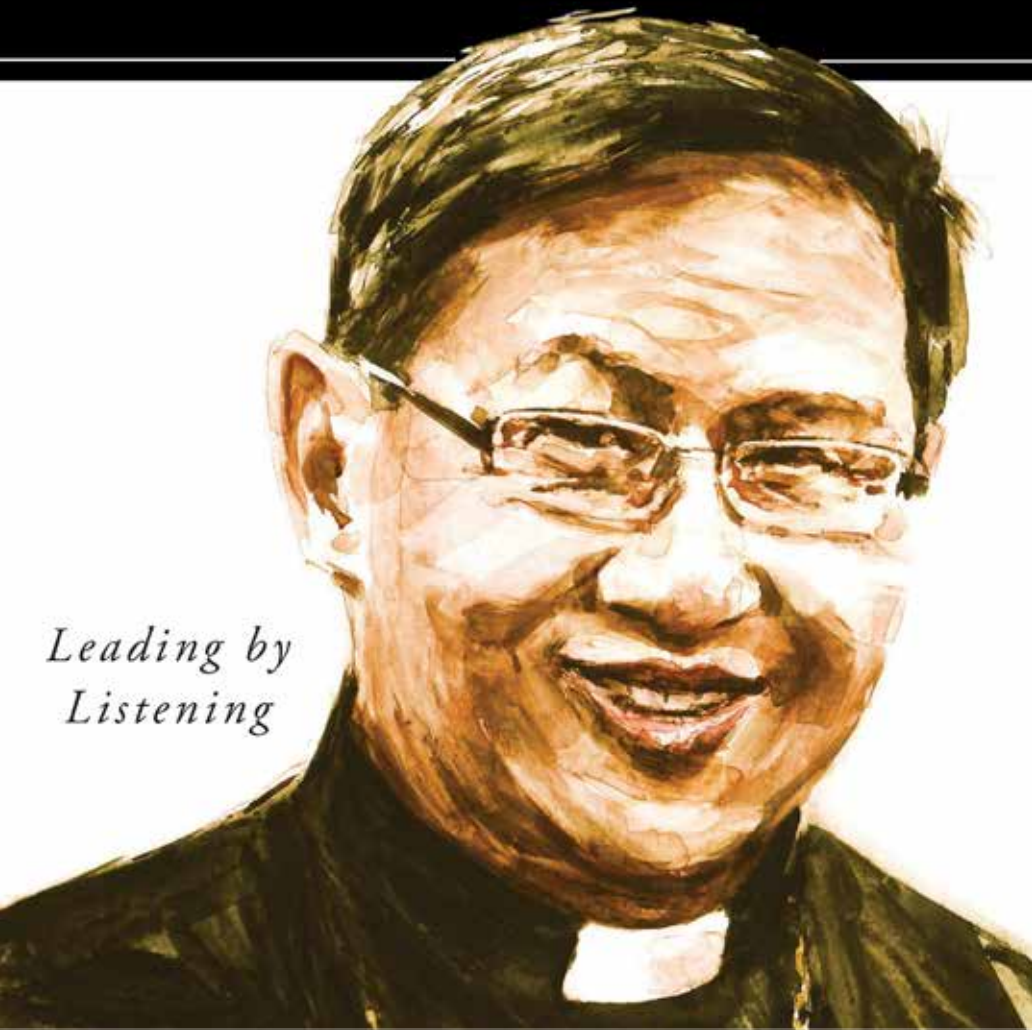


CINDY WOODEN

LUIS ANTONIO TAGLE

*Leading by  
Listening*



DISCUSSION GUIDE

## About the Book

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle has been called “the Asian Pope Francis,” because of his humility, his connectedness to the lives of everyday Catholics, and his insistence on the church’s duty to care for the poor and the marginalized. In *Luis Antonio Tagle: Leading by Listening*, veteran Catholic journalist Cindy Wooden offers a poignant look at this archbishop of Manila who has impressed Catholics around the world.

At the world Synod of Bishops on Evangelization in 2012, he told his fellow bishops, “The church must discover the power of silence. Confronted with the sorrows, doubts and uncertainties of people she cannot pretend to give easy solutions. In Jesus, silence becomes the way of attentive listening, compassion and prayer. It is the way to truth.” While not afraid to speak the truth to power, Cardinal Tagle also is not afraid to listen to the poor, the confused, and the searching.

Wooden shares much insight into this man of deep faith and compassion, a pastor driven both to bring Christ to the people and to listen to the people in whom Christ lives and through whom he speaks.

## About the Author

Cindy Wooden is chief of the Rome bureau of Catholic News Service. She has been reporting on the Vatican and the Catholic Church since 1989. She has traveled around the world with John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and now Pope Francis. As a result of this work, she is respected around the world as an authority on the life and workings of the church. She is the author of *Pope Francis: A Guide to God’s Time*.

# Discussion Guide

## Introduction

1. What do we learn about Cardinal Tagle's personality from this introduction? How does he see himself? In what context does he see his many gifts and achievements?
2. What were the living arrangements like in the home where Tagle grew up? What did he learn from them?
3. What does Tagle see as "a key feature of being Catholic in Asia" and why?
4. How did Tagle, as a seminarian, think about participating in the practice of his grandfather carrying out certain Buddhist rituals long after his acceptance of Catholicism?
5. What keeps Tagle, as a cardinal, from becoming "proud and mighty and lofty"?

## Chapter One

1. What was the “invasive intrusion” into Tagle’s life as a high school student, and how did it impact him?
2. What common thread, related to financial arrangements, ran through Tagle’s educational experiences, and how does it continue to influence his life today?
3. Cardinal Tagle says, “I am the product of so many generous people, why would I not allow that gift to be given to other people? I realize that what I am now is the fruit of the common effort of so many people—my family, my teachers, and so many people I do not know—forming one community of love and service.” Of whose common effort are you the fruit? How so? Do you consider this much? If not, how might it change you if you did?
4. Where did Chito work while studying at the Catholic University of America? How else did he spend his time outside the classroom? What does all of this tell us about him?
5. “How does this truth touch the heart and transform the life of the person hearing it?” Choose one aspect of your Catholic faith and consider: How would you answer this question about it?

## Chapter Two

1. What most attracted Chito to being a doctor, and how might this have been an initial, if unnoticed, sign of his true vocation?
2. What were the questions that Chito was sadly asking himself as he accompanied his friend Fr. Corpuz to his assignment a few hours from Imus? How would you answer these questions about priesthood?
3. What startling elements of Cardinal Tagle's vocation story do we learn about in this chapter? What do they say about the concept of vocation? Do they change your own idea of vocation?
4. What method of prayer did Chito Tagle use in discerning his decision to enter seminary? Is it a prayer method you have used yourself? What is your experience with it?
5. Summarize Cardinal Tagle's understanding of priesthood as presented in this chapter. What do you think of it?

## Chapter Three

1. Tagle's friend observed that he and Pope Francis share "the same instincts." What are these shared instincts?
2. What did Tagle do, as bishop of Imus, to be close to the people? How did it help him? How might we do it in our own lives, and how might doing it help us in our own Christian journeys?
3. What is distinctive about Chito's episcopal coat of arms?
4. Why are the poor "models of hope"?
5. Why, according to Tagle, is each of us in some way a shepherd? How can we live this call to be shepherds in our own lives?

## Chapter Four

1. Cardinal Tagle says that bishops sometimes make the church “sound more like . . . the sacrament of damnation rather than the sacrament of salvation.” Strong words! Your thoughts?
2. Consider the comments by Fr. Daniel Huang on page 50 about the changed social situation in which the church finds itself in the Philippines. How is this similar to or different from the situation of the church in your own nation? What impact does it have on living as Christians in society?
3. At his installation Mass in Manila, what did Tagle mean when he said his new position could, “if I am not careful . . . blind me to the Lord and to my people”?
4. Why does Cardinal Tagle sometimes sing for people and crowds?
5. Reflect on the sort of church the cardinal believes we should aspire to be, as expressed in his words on page 63. In what ways are we that sort of church already? In what ways are we not? How can we grow into becoming more like that? Should we?

## Chapter Five

1. Why does Cardinal Tagle believe that talk of new things in the pontificate of Pope Francis is really “a sign that we have not received Vatican II”?
2. What role has Cardinal Tagle played in developing an understanding of the history of Vatican II? How has it been controversial?
3. To Cardinal Tagle, how does dialogue relate to evangelization? How might this relate to your own call to evangelization within the culture in which you find yourself?
4. What is the “dialogue with the martyrs” Tagle speaks of? How might it enrich our own Christian life and the life of the church today?
5. How might “our own temperaments, our own histories, our own experiences” (to use the words of Hermann Pottmeyer cited on page 73) affect our understanding of Vatican II?



## Chapter Six

1. What is the image of Jesus that we get through the eyes of Cardinal Tagle, in this chapter and, more generally, throughout this biography?
2. What does Cardinal Tagle mean when he says, “Listening is a serious matter” (p. 86)?
3. Reflect on the cardinal’s “three approaches for deepening the disposition for listening” on page 87. How might a real appropriation of these impact our faith, our Christian living, our prayer lives?
4. Consider Cardinal Tagle’s comments on labels like “traditionalist” and “progressive” on page 91. How might taking these ideas seriously impact our life together as a church?
5. Why is “the best response” to criticisms or doubts about the faith expressed by people around us sometimes not “explain, explain,” but rather “compassionate silence”? How might we put this into practice in our own lives? How might you and I “lead by listening”?