

DOCUMENTATION

BISHOPS' ANNUAL MEETING DECISIONS

Gathered in annual meeting at the Jesuits House, Mirador Hill, Baguio City, January 19-24, 1970, the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines deliberated on vital matters, among them: the new liturgical reforms; Church support of a non-partisan, intelligent, honest and orderly election of delegates to the forthcoming Constitutional Convention and cooperation with different groups in formulating Constitutional reforms; social action; the problem of population; the priestly life; the formation of Pastoral Councils; education and youth's role in our society; support for a continuing dialogue among the People of God, and ecumenical activities.

Special feature of this year's meet was the election of a new Administrative Council of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), the official organization of the Philippine Bishops, and also the election of members of fifteen Commissions.

The following CBCP officers were elected:

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Archbishop Teopisto Alberto	— President
Bishop Antonio Mabutas	— Vice-President
Bishop Antonio Fortich	— Member
Bishop Xavier Labayen	— "
Bishop Jose Sanchez	— "
Bishop Pedro Bantigue	— "
Bishop Gerard Mongeau	— "

EPISCOPAL COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

Bishop Antonio Mabutas	— Chairman
Bishop Arnulfo Arcilla	— Member

Bishop Felix Perez	— Member
Bishop Joseph Regan	— "
Bishop Alberto Van Overbeke	— "
Msgr. Benjamin L. Etruiste	— Secretary
(who is also National Director of the CDD.)	

COLEGIO-SEMINARIO FILIPINO

Rufino J. Cardinal Santos	— Chairman
Julio R. Cardinal Rosales	— Member
Archbishop Juan C. Sison	— "
Archbishop Teopisto Alberto	— "
Archbishop Lino Gonzaga	— "
Bishop Carmelo Morelos	— "
Bishop Reginald Arliss	— "
Bishop Mariano Gaviola	— "

ON SEMINARIES

Bishop Jaime Sin	— Chairman
Bishop Teotimo Pacis	— Member
Bishop Jesus Varela	— "

LAY APOSTOLATE

Bishop Carmelo Morelos	— Chairman
Bishop Bienvenido Tuditud	— Member
Bishop Manuel Salvador	— "
Bishop Vicente Reyes	— Ex officio member

SOCIAL ACTION

Bishop Antonio Fortich	— Chairman
Bishop Vicente Ataviado	— Member
Bishop Victorino Ligot	— "
Bishop Xavier Labayen	— Ex officio member

MISSION

Bishop Odilo Etspueler	— Chairman
Bishop Epifanio Surban	— Member
Bishop Bienvenido Lopez	— "

CLERGY

Bishop Francisco Cruces	— Chairman
Bishop Reginald Arliss	— Member
Bishop Henry Byrne	— "

LITURGY

Bishop William Brasseur	— Chairman
Bishop Cipriano Urgel	— Member
Bishop Francis McSorley	— "
Bishop Leopoldo Arcaira	— "
Bishop Juan Nilmar	— "

CHRISTIAN UNITY

Bishop Cornelius De Wit	— Chairman
Bishop Francisco Claver	— Member
Msgr. Mario Baltazar	— "

COMMUNICATION AND MASS MEDIA

Bishop Gerard Mongeau	— Chairman
Bishop Jose Ma. Querexeta	— Member
Bishop Teodulfo Domingo	— "

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

Bishop Hernando Antiporda	— Chairman
Bishop Pedro Bantigue	— Member
Bishop Godofredo Pedernal	— "

APOSTOLATE OF SEA AND AIR

Bishop Artemio Casas	— Chairman
Bishop Porfirio Iligan	— Member
Bishop Amado Paulino	— "

UNBELIEVERS

Bishop Felix Zafra	— Chairman
Bishop Charles Van den Ouwelant	— Member
Bishop Gregorio Espiga	— "

FAMILY LIFE

Bishop Salvador Lazo	— Chairman
Bishop Jesus Sison	— Member
Bishop Jose Sanchez	— "

COORDINATION WITH THE RELIGIOUS

Bishop Patrick Cronin	— Chairman
Bishop Antonino Nepomuceno	— Member
Bishop Emilio Cinense	— "

Outgoing CBCP President is Archbishop Lino R. Gonzaga of Zamboanga who finished his second term (2 years with re-election or 4 years in all).

Bishop Mariano G. Gaviola continues as CBCP Secretary General with Msgr. Florencio C. Yllana and Msgr. Benjamin L. Etruiste as Assistant Secretaries General.

LITURGY

The liturgical life through the Word of God and the Holy Eucharist (Holy Mass and Communion), which by its very nature is communitarian, must bring into fruition the mission of the Church in both the spiritual or supernatural and temporal orders. To strengthen this Mission the Bishops made the following decisions, among others:

- 1) Accelerate the careful translation of the new liturgical texts into the various vernaculars of the country.
- 2) Set the 1st Sunday of Advent of this year 1970 as the deadline for making obligatory the use of the new Order of the Mass.

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

In response to the pressing needs of the times and of our country as well as the expectations of our people, the Bishops have reiterated their support for a non-partisan, intelligent, peaceful and honest election of delegates to our forthcoming Constitutional Convention and have unanimously agreed to join hands with patriotic groups in the study

and formulation of needed Constitutional reforms, particularly those that would promote social justice and the spiritual, moral and cultural values that constitute the true greatness of a people.

The Bishops issued a statement on the subject.

POPULATION PROBLEM

Fully aware of the dire implications of a run-away population growth in the wholesome development of our people, the Bishops have come out openly in support of a program, initiated by lay technocrats and civic-minded citizens, that takes the totality of the human person as its underlying basis for action and will therefore promote responsible parenthood and integrate into this the socio-economic uplift of families and the strengthening of their spiritual and moral values. The Bishops and the Clergy will actively collaborate with the lay experts in their initiatives and projects and will also lend support to all government and civic programs that emphasize the above-mentioned values.

LIFE OF THE CLERGY

Since in the administration of their respective dioceses, the Bishops' principal concern is the welfare, both spiritual and temporal, of the priests, their brothers and collaborators in the pastoral ministry, suggestions from the priests themselves as well as from individual Bishops are now under serious study.

The Bishops have gratefully acknowledged receipt of the resolutions passed by the recently held Convention of Priests under the auspices of the Philippine Priests, Incorporated.

Because of the importance and urgency of the resolutions of the PPI Convention, a Committee was formed to study them and make recommendations.

Furthermore, the Bishops have agreed to invite the PPI and members of religious orders and congregations to submit nominees, including laymen, who can be consultors of the Episcopal Commissions.

Moreover, the dioceses will select some parishes as pilot parishes to update the method of training the faithful in properly supporting

their pastors, which could remedy the sad situation of social insecurity under which the priests are living.

The Bishops have also set target dates for the formation of Pastoral Councils and are encouraging the setting up of Senate of Priests.

To further promote the priestly spirit and pastoral commitment of our Clergy, the Bishops are giving full encouragement and support to the "Apostolic Union of the Clergy" an association that is open to all priests who wish to help one another to achieve in the spiritual, intellectual, apostolic and pastoral life, personal sanctification through their ministry.

SOCIAL ACTION

The Bishops have agreed to further encourage and strengthen the thousands of already existing socio-economic projects of the Church.

The National Secretariat of Social Action, the coordinating and supporting arm of the dioceses in socio-economic projects, have presented a more vigorous program of activities.

Rufino J. Cardinal Santos is putting up a pilot project called "Action Leaven", which calls for teams of ten—3 seminarians, 6 laymen (women), and 1 nun—to engage in socio-economic-religious action in selected urban and rural parishes of the Archdiocese of Manila.

To coordinate the nation-wide socio-economic activities and projects of the Church, the Bishops may form a permanent council. But before embarking on this they consider it necessary to first set up a "Roundtable Conference" which through dialogue could discover the ways and means of effective planning and coordination which could also be instrumental in overcoming the Communications gap that exists among the hierarchy, clergy, religious and laymen, which gap has been recognized as a major factor in the failure of any attempt at coordinating Church activities.

BISHOPS ON RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD

To our Catholic sons and daughters:

Six months ago, after our semi-annual Conference, we expressed our views on basic principles relevant to programs of Fertility Control. This month, at our forthcoming Conference, we propose to consider the implementation of those views.

We would like to share with you, for your reflection and suggestions, a review of events that have taken place thus far.

A nation-wide program to promote Responsible Parenthood was proposed to us for our support. It is the work of a group of idealistic and highly competent young men. It incorporates the elements which we hold necessary for a truly humane and Christian approach to the problem of fertility control.

Those elements, expressed in our Statement, are the very same contained in documents of Vatican II and the papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. We are accepting the Program, and we will actively and wholeheartedly support it.

The enterprise is an enterprise of the private sector of our society, not of the government. But it is premised on the joint involvement of the Business and Academic sectors, of the Catholic Church, and of the Government agencies, particularly the public schools system. Mr. Jaime Zobel de Ayala heads the project.

President Marcos has in recent weeks expressed concern over the population problem in our country. He has found time to receive delegations of existing Family Planning agencies, even before his second inaugural. We are therefore quite surprised that he has shown no interest in the request that was made to discuss this program.

There are three basic points that the Program underscores.

1. The role of government. In the Program, government facilities and personnel play an important role; but merely supportive. It is the private citizen, the married couples who assume the task of teaching other couples grow in the exercise of responsible parenthood.

Were the government to dispense fertility control services itself, it would be constrained to proclaim that none of its employees is bound to obey those directives in the program that do violence to their consciences.

2. Cultural Realism. The program departs radically from that obsession with technology which is even now failing to solve deep human problems such as war and peace. The program proposes fertility control through education without contraception; through an understanding and mastery of biological processes by self control.

Studies by the WHO, IPPF, the LATZ FOUNDATION, show an effectiveness of Periodic Abstinence that is sufficient to meet the problem of fertility, without the sacrifice of Christian sexual values and mores. That it is feasible for both urban and rural peoples is now surprisingly being proven by the mixed ethnic peoples of Mauritius Island.

We are proud of the young Filipinos who creatively designed this program for Filipinos. Merely to apply programs devised elsewhere to our people would be to retard the development of our people's talents.

3. Total View. While educating couples to inner control and an appreciation of the spouse as a person, the Program aims to help families raise their economic income and improve their social condition.

On a national scale, the government concern has focused its attention exclusively on the rate of population growth. But the problem of population can be understood only when figures of population growth are matched with the actual achievement of the government in socio-economic development.

Our economists must play an indispensable role in assessing the extent of our problem. It will help parents judge the extent of the sacrifice that will be needful.

The above points form the core of the dialogue that the citizens will enter into with the government when the Program is presented.

Our final observation. When the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* was issued by Pope Paul VI, there fell upon each of the Conferences of Bishops, the responsibility of interpreting the document in pastoral terms for their respective peoples.

To have been content merely with bodily assuming some one or another of those interpretations for application to our people would have shown utter irresponsibility on our part, and a tragic regression from Vatican II. We therefore issued our own interpretation of the encyclical.

The value judgments we assumed there were based on an assessment—of the spirit and character of our people. This was the fruit of many years of pastoral experience of both your Filipino and non-Filipino Bishops. That our assessment was accurate, we are becoming increasingly confident.

The Program which these young men have designed is one more indication of that. We therefore offer it to you as a beautiful act of faith, expressed in terms that are professional, contemporary, competent. It deserves your prayers and support.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD
Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines

12 January 1970

SACRA CONGREGATIO
PRO CLERICIS

Romae, die 1 decembris 1969

Prot. 1 2 6 4 3 7/I

(In responso hic numerus referatur)

Excellentissime ac Reverendissime Domine,

Honori mihi duco Excellentiae Tuae Reverendissimae, qua istius Conferentiae Episcopalis Praesidi, exemplar remittere Litterarum Circularium de permanenti cleri, maxime iunioris, institutione et formatione secundum placita Congregationis Plenariae die 18 octobris anno 1968 habitae.

Dum Te rogo ut Litteras ipsas, quo opportuniore judicaveris modo, cum istius Nationis Ordinariis humaniter communicare velis, omni qua par est aestimatione permaneo.

Excellentiae Tuae Reverendissimae
amicus in Christo
J. CARD. WRIGHT
Praefectus

Exc.mo Domino
D.no LINO G. Y RASIDEZALES
Archiepiscopo

ZAMBOANGEN