"A BRUISED CHURCH" FOR THE POOR?

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Abstrak

Visi Gereja bagi kaum miskin, lemah dan tersingkir dinyatakan secara istimewa oleh paus Fransiskus. Gereja diajak untuk instrospeksi sampai menyadari keberdosaannya dan sekaligus kembali pada akar iman dan harapannya, yaitu Yesus Kristus sebagai perwujudan belas kasih Allah bagi kita. Kenyataan ketimpangan sosial sekarang ini telah menjadi sumber penyakit sosial baru. Gereja di Asia terus ditantang untuk mewartakan Kabar Gembira Yesus Kristus melalui dialog kehidupan dan analisa sosial-budaya serta keagamaan yang berujung pada strategi serta tindakan pastoral demi kesejahteraan umum. Demikianlah cara menggereja dan beriman Kristiani selalu mengandaikan pengalaman pribadi dengan Yesus Kristus yang membawa kabar gembira dan berkat kehidupan.

Keyword:

Poor Church, social inequality, integral approach, common good, Emmanuel

To mark one year of the appointment of an Argentinian cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio as Pope Francis, a virtual booklet was published.[1] One of its pages voice out again pope Francis's vision of a more inspiring church for our world today. "How I would like a Church which is poor and for the poor![2] This vision previously was spelled out by the pope only about 3 days after his election while he was addressing about 6,000 journalists accredited to cover the conclave at the gathering with representatives of the communications media who work in Rome. Since then, many Catholic communities, churches and dioceses all over the world are either revisiting their concern for the poor and marginalized or realigning their communal as well as institutional programs in view of the respective vision. Where are we now as a church who embraces the option for and to be the poor, "a bruised church"?

1. SEEING THE SCANDAL OF INEQUALITY

Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* no. 202 stated that inequality is the root of social ills. This goes along with recent discussions on poverty. The issue is often presented within a bigger picture which is the growing of inequality in

our world and correctly is seen more and more as a major root social-ecclesial problem. Indifferent communities, of faith and of non-faith, have been tolerating the reality of dehumanizing poverty and aggravating it by their minimal as well as inefficient efforts to reverse. *Evangelii Gaudium* points to the crisis of communal commitment which leads to the scandal of inequality in many aspects of human society.

"Some simply content themselves with blaming the poor and the poorer countries themselves for their troubles; indulging in unwarranted generalizations, they claim that the solution is an "education" that would tranquilize them, making them tame and harmless. All this becomes even more exasperating for the marginalized in the light of the widespread and deeply rooted corruption found in many countries – in their governments, businesses and institutions – whatever the political ideology of their leaders."[3]

On the other hand, instead of generating efforts to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality, concern on self-defense and national security have been prioritized. Was it not fear, instead of love of others, as its major driving force? In view of this common concern of many world governments, *Evangelii Gaudium* correctly saying that:

"Today in many places we hear a call for greater security. But until exclusion and inequality in society and between peoples are reversed, it will be impossible to eliminate violence. The poor and the poorer peoples are accused of violence, yet without equal opportunities the different forms of aggression and conflict will find a fertile terrain for growth and eventually explode. When a society – whether local, national or global – is willing to leave a part of itself on the fringes, no political programs or resources spent on law enforcement or surveillance systems can indefinitely guarantee tranquility. This is not the case simply because inequality provokes a violent reaction from those excluded from the system, but because the socioeconomic system is unjust at its root."[4]

As we are focusing on the economic measure, it is to be noted that inequality is multiple-dimensional and intersecting in nature, covering the economic, social, political, legal, cultural and environmental spheres. This should include deprivations faced by specific groups and individuals, and are closely related to marginal status in society – e.g. based on gender, ethnicity, location, age, disability and indigenous identity.[5] In turn, multiple inequalities are reinforced by bias dominant ideologies, political and socio-economic marginalization, and, often, group stereotyping and various forms of discrimination and violence. This should add to the critical observation above and on what the apostolic exhortation named as the economy of exclusion and idolatry of money.

1.1. Indonesia

A view from the marginalized and impoverished at least materially is affirming what was stated by *Vivi Alatas, a Senior Economist at the Poverty Reduction and Economic.*

*"T*he rate of poverty reduction continues to slow in Indonesia, despite sustained economic growth. With the exception of the 2006 increase in poverty due to the international food price crisis, the decrease in the official poverty rate from 12.5 per cent of all Indonesians in 2011 to 12 per cent in 2012 was the smallest since 2003. Efforts to reduce poverty often fail to address the issue of Indonesia's economically vulnerable population. For instance, while 12 per cent of Indonesians live below the official poverty line, nearly 40 per cent live below 1.5 times this line, or on less than Rp. 12,400 per day (around US$ 1.80 adjusted for purchasing power)."[6]

As urbanization has not been subsided, the risk of impoverishment especially for those displaced is higher, primarily in cases of landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, food insecurity, morbidity and social disarticulation. New policy on regional autonomy in Indonesia that was promoted since 2001, has not made a meaningful breakthrough in this matter.[7]

While recognizing many positive structural efforts of the present government of Indonesia such as the persistent poverty reduction explicitly stated since 1994 as well as an ambitious program of decentralization or 'regional autonomy' begun in 1999, it is still worth-reflecting what was said by Roland Chia: "The long era of colonialism during which the peoples of Asia were placed under Western imperialism, and which, according to one analyst, caused the breakdown of the confidence and creativity of the Asian people, is often cited as one of the major causes of poverty."[8] On the other hand, it is true in many countries of Asia such as Indonesia and the Philippines that the control of the economic life is still in the hands of the few, primarily the authorities or owners of huge capital. This small elite eventually has enjoyed life amid the massive poor and marginalized of their fellow citizens, often in collaboration with the new form of colonialist powers, from the West as well as the East.[9]

1.2. Philippines

In the Philippines, as I am currently missioned, similar situation is also obvious. It is reported that more than a quarter of the country's population of about 92.3 million lives below the poverty line, and social as well as economic inequality has been its major problem regardless the famous People Power movement in 1986 that successfully toppled the corrupt regime under the late president Ferdinand Marcos. Randolf David observed that globalization in the lives of the poor and of indigenous communities particularly in the Philippines,

has caused great disorder and made the sufferings and misfortunes of its victims appear as if they were part of the natural order of things.[10]

According to the ASEAN Trade Union Council, the Philippines has the highest rate of economic and social inequality in Southeast Asia. The study points to the growing disparity between the Philippines' richest and poorest citizens that eventually affected its land distribution, educational and vocational opportunities as well as basic welfare programs. Fast urbanization makes this reality concentrated in major cities and especially the capital city of Manila. On the other hand, in the past decade economic inequality has resulted in geographical disparity. It is reported that in Mindanao, the southernmost and second largest of the Philippines' islands, six of the 10 regions are among the top 10 nationally in terms of poverty rates, with between 25 and 40 percent of families living in abject poverty. There, we have been reading of so many news of social and regional unrests.

Anyhow, nationwide, the 30 most deprived provinces are home to more than one-third of the Philippines' poorest families, resulting in generational poverty that is incredibly difficult to emerge from the misery. As in many other parts of the world, it is often the indigenous population that suffers the most. In the Philippines, the approximately 1.7 million people belonging to the nation's 100 ethnic groups remain the most disadvantaged, with discrimination and a lack of opportunities creating serious barriers.[11] From the point of view of theology, a question of faith and quality of life has been raised. How do Christians live a faith that does justice? After all, the Gospel has proclaimed eloquently: "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."[12]

2. OPTED PASTORAL APPROACH

In one of the gatherings of Asian bishops, reflecting on the reality of being Church in Asian countries, the following vision was introduced.

> "Ours is a vision of holistic life. We envision a life with integrity and dignity, a life of compassion for the multitudes, especially for the poor and needy. It is a life of solidarity with every form of life and of sensitive care for the earth At the heart of our vision of life is the Asian reverential sense of mystery and of the sacred, a spirituality that regards life as sacred and discovers the Transcendent and its gifts even in mundane affairs, in tragedy or victory, in brokenness or wholeness."[13]

Since the beginning of gathering of the Asian bishops, an experience of living in Asia, sharing and evangelizing the people of Asia have raised critical questions on the traditional understanding of Christian life and mission. What it means to be Christian in Asia? Question on the fact that Christianity remains as minority in Asia is paired with a broader concern on social and spiritual

contribution of Christianity in different countries of Asia which largely remain poor. How significant and relevant has Christianity been? The good fruit of the discernment is expressed in a pastoral approach. FABC or Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, representing the whole Asian Christian faithful, is known for its commitment to the whole people of Asia through the following pastoral approach or cycle: exposure-immersion, analysis, contemplation and pastoral planning.[14] The following dynamic should explain again a Christian commitment for life of all.

1. *Exposure and immersion* means taking into account seriously and purposely our daily living as Christ's follower in one's neighbourhood and society. As vision, for instance, the Asian bishops have raised an important challenge on how the Asian Church could be at home within the diversity and plurality of the Asian milieu, not of confrontation or a move of overcoming. The following statement from the FABC's Theological Advisory Commission summarizes the insight succinctly:

   > "In the course of the last two thousand years the church has encountered and dialogued with various peoples, cultures, and religions, with varying levels of success. Today, however, especially in Asia, in the context of the Great Religions, which are in a process of revival and renewal, the church is aware of a markedly different situation. We do not ask any longer about the relationship of the church to other cultures and religions. We are rather searching for the place and role of the church in a religiously and culturally pluralistic world…"[15]

2. *Analysis* needs to be inclusive and critically mind-opening. Christians are a journeying people with others in history. Integrated social analysis includes economic, political, cultural and religious systems that takes into account the need and aspirations of the people as well as events of history which now deeply questioned by the presence of so many poor and unjust inequality. Correctly *Evangelii Gaudium* 55 recently explicates:

   > "The worship of the ancient golden calf (cf. *Ex* 32:1-35) has returned in a new and ruthless guise in the idolatry of money and the dictatorship of an impersonal economy lacking a truly human purpose. The worldwide crisis affecting finance and the economy lays bare their imbalances and, above all, their lack of real concern for human beings; man is reduced to one of his needs alone: consumption"

3. *Contemplation* put in place important insights of the integrated analysis in the light of Christian wisdom and memory of Jesus Christ. The poor and marginalized are in the heart of Jesus therefore of the Church. Prophetic mission of the Church as it is rightly reflecting the crucified Christ *for our*

sake and *Emmanuel* - God with us, evokes continuously our commitment to love God and neighbor. In Asia, it calls for dialogue with all people of great religions especially those who appreciate Asian values and wisdom similar to the gospel values such are simplicity of life, genuine openness, generous sharing, harmonious coexistence, family or community loyalty and "fear of the Lord".

4. *Pastoral planning* should aim at a "historization", a gradual embodiment of the Joy of the Gospel.

> "Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did…. As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead" (James 2:21-22, 26)

2.1. Common good and the poor

Analyzing the reality of today's world and of human community, pope Benedict in his encyclical "Charity in Truth" (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009) concluded that "As society becomes ever more globalized, it makes us neighbors but does not make us brothers."[16] As human intelligence has been able to develop communication media in a revolutionary way, there is emerging a generation of digitally native. On the other hand, this does not automatically make us brothers and often not even good neighbors. To speak once again about poverty today, we need to start with our personal engagement in the matter. Are we seeing the poor and what are we seeing? We know that we live in a culture which makes us numb though we are surrounded by the poor and marginalized. Statistics are important, indeed. Yet they could remain as "cool information" for the head without any power to move our human heart.

For instance, in August 2008, the World Bank presented a major overhaul to their estimates of global poverty, incorporating what they described as better and new data. The World Bank's long-held estimate of the number of people living on the equivalent of $1 a day has now been changed to $1.25 a day. At a poverty line of $1.25 a day, the revised estimates find 1.4 billion people live at this poverty line or below. This is more than the previous estimate of 984 million with the older measure of a $1 a day in 2004. In 1981, the estimated number of poor was also revised upward, from 1.5 billion to 1.9 billion. The poverty in the world is higher than past estimates particularly due to an implicitly underestimated the cost of living in most developing countries at the previous data. The data also does not reflect the recent global food crisis and rising cost of energy, which is feared will bring another 100 million into poverty.[17] Indeed, the discussion on the global common good should not be an excuse to avoid the poor and most marginalized.

3. WALKING THE PATH OF JESUS CHRIST

Option for the poor in the Christian theology starts with an affirmation on the centrality of Jesus Christ, who shows us a merciful God who never tires of being compassionate, makes the connection between faith and justice, and help us to focus our attention on the hierarchy of truths and the importance of priority or even of taking side on behalf of the poor and marginalized.

The Catholic Bishops of the Philippines' last Lenten season message rightly pointed out that "In his earthly life, Jesus was no stranger to poverty. He knew well how people suffered from it and he tirelessly went about lightening their burdens: 'Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness' (Mt. 9:35). He worked against this kind of poverty because it degrades and dehumanizes humanity; deforming the very ones created lovingly in God's image and amounting to a grave insult hurled at God. Such poverty continues to undermine and threaten our existence…"[18] Commitment to the poor is not an end in itself as it draws us to come closer to Jesus Christ, "Emmanuel" and companion on a journey of life in solidarity.

3.1. Emmanuel

The most significant experience of the disciples with Jesus, from early of his ministry, listening to his words and witnessing his deeds to the moments of his crucifixion and resurrection, was God's faithfulness and mercy to Israel, to God's chosen people. This is well-expressed in the Gospel of Matthew 1:22-23: "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").[19]

Like in Indonesia, many people of Asia take for granted what is called regular communication with and from God. Amid doubts of the existence of God as well as an increasing demand of the fruits of the relationship between believers and God, often people found themselves without a genuine prophet or spokeperson for God. Around the dawn of the Century of Christ, the ministries of John and Jesus reminded God's people that God had not forgotten them. After the Babylonian exile and enduring about four hundred years of prophetic silence, God's people wondered whether or not God had deserted them. The Gospel of Matthew made clear that God's silence was a meaningful preparation for God's redemptive action in Jesus Christ, proclaimed by John the Baptist, his predecessor. God had not forgotten God's people. God remembered His people especially now by being present in Jesus Christ, the righteous one who gave his life for others. The Gospel of Matthew gave witness that Jesus Christ was revealed as Israel's King and Messiah. His coming to earth as God in the flesh should remind us

of God's deep love for us. Now resurrected and ascended, the Lord Jesus will always be with us, even to the end of time. "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

"Christian faith is centered on Christ; it is the confession that Jesus is Lord and that God has raised him from the dead (cf. *Rom* 10:9). All the threads of the Old Testament converge on Christ; he becomes the definitive "Yes" to all the promises, the ultimate basis of our "Amen" to God (cf.*2 Cor* 1:20). The history of Jesus is the complete manifestation of God's reliability. If Israel continued to recall God's great acts of love, which formed the core of its confession of faith and broadened its gaze in faith, the life of Jesus now appears as the locus of God's definitive intervention, the supreme manifestation of his love for us." (*Lumen Fidei* no. 15)

3.2. Who walks with us

Our world of today has been greatly fragmented especially by a worsening inequality. While globalization brings people closer to one another and live in a so-called global village, economic inequality and different form of injustices have separated peoples and their communities and wounded our shared humanity. Who is a human being in relation with others including the rest of creation? How do we rethink Christian revelation of the merciful God who raised Jesus from the cross of injustice, and who calls for a following of Christ for bringing that Good News for all? Is there genuine hope for transformation and positive change?

Early Christians such as represented in the gospel of Luke believed that Jesus is the friend of outsiders, the neglected and the weak. They occupy a special place in Jesus' ministry, an important concern of his mission and his proclamation of the Reign of God. Throughout Jesus' life as well as his death crucified and resurrection, God is being manifested as the Faithful One, not only to God's first covenant with the chosen one, Israel, but also to their subsequent neighbors and even to the whole creation, a God who walks with God's people to help them understand God's merciful and salvific presence. This Good News is well-proclaimed in the Easter apparition along the road to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13-35). Jesus was reminding the two disciples who were saddened by the crucifixion and lost their courage as well as hope. By reading through the first covenant, through Israel's fathers of faith and the preaching of the prophets all the way to new covenant between God Father with God's Son, Jesus Christ, those who were discouraged, awakened and recognized the Risen Lord. Despite their disorientation and confusion, they admitted the presence of God's transforming grace: "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"[20] This means a new phase of their life as friends of the Risen Lord, a new mission to communicate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and God's faithfulness throughout their life journey. This is a new covenant started with a real personal encounter with the Risen Lord.

"They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together[34] and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon."[35] Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread"[21]

3.3. Simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ

Since the time of Saint Paul, there has been diverse understandings and interpretations about Jesus' words and deeds, his life as well as his mission. Based on the great experience of being encountered by the Risen Lord, Paul guided Christian communities to the simple faith in Jesus Christ preached by the apostles and to love the Risen Lord in pure devotion.[22] The person of Jesus Christ whom the disciples encountered and his life and mission whom they proclaimed as God with us or Emmanuel was and has been the Good News of salvation for all. Yet, this does not mean always of what it is said. Due to diverse interpretations and doctrinal emphases as well as various personal conflicts or interests, the Good News occasionally has become "no-news" or even "bad-news" and the kerygma of salvation has become condemnation or a cruel exclusion. This includes the ignorance of Christ's poor as well as different kinds of marginalization and indifferentism.

Recently, *Evangelii Gaudium* of pope Francis remember the poor again and introduce their new faces and vulnerability due to the unjust system of our world today. It is stated that "the poor" are now appeared in the homeless, drug addicts, refugees, indigenous people, the elderly who are more and more alone and neglected, migrants, victims of human trafficking, women who are doubly poor and who suffer from exclusion, abuse and violence, unborn children. How has our human family especially Christians been defending life and promoting human rights in a world of so much inequality and injustice? How should we address the issue of the vulnerability of creation at the mercy of economic interests and indiscriminate exploitation, which leads to desertification of the soil, ecological illness, turning even the wonderful marine world into underwater cemeteries stripped of life and color.[23]

Revelation of God in Jesus Christ invokes faith that does justice. Life of faith has not been only about contemplation but action. In the face of the poor of our time and the scandal of inequality that generates various new social ills, people might be overwhelmed to the point of giving up any efforts to bring the Good News particularly to the marginalized and poor. On the other hand in the light of our Christian faith centered in Jesus Christ, crucified and resurrected, human effort with its results is not understood as the end in itself, and even in the case of death, peacefully or violently. We remember Christian earliest proclamation:

"The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead—whom you killed by hanging him on a cross. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and

Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins. We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."[24]

Victor Codina in his discussion on *Evangelii Gaudium* rewrote an important Easter message: "But if we think that things won't change, remember that Jesus Christ has triumphed over sin and death. Jesus Christ lives and has power. Christ, resurrected and glorious, is the deep source of our hope. His help will not fail us."[25] Indeed, loosing of that sight, lacking of deep spirituality produces pessimism, mistrust or even fatalism. Many continue to believe that nothing can change, that it is useless to make any effort though every year the Easter mystery was proclaimed and in every Eucharist, Christ's death, resurrection and his second coming is celebrated.

Evangelii Gaudium speaks about the mysterious working of the Risen Christ and his Spirit (no. 275-280). The Gospel tells us that when the first disciples went forth to preach, "the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message" (Mark 16:20). *Evangelii Gaudium* no. 276 stated clearly: "…it is also true that in the midst of darkness something new always springs to life and sooner or later produces fruit. On razed land life breaks through, stubbornly yet invincibly. However dark things are, goodness always re-emerges and spreads. Each day in our world beauty is born anew, it rises transformed through the storms of history. Values always tend to reappear under new guises, and human beings have arisen time after time from situations that seemed doomed. Such is the power of the resurrection, and all who evangelize are instruments of that power."

Being Christian in today's world and taking Christian faith and responsibility seriously also mean trusting God, "believing in God, believing that he truly loves us, that he is alive, that he is mysteriously capable of intervening, that he does not abandon us and that he brings good out of evil by his power and his infinite creativity. It means believing that he marches triumphantly in history with those who "are called and chosen and faithful" (*Rev* 17:14)"[26] Again, this insight is rooted in God's action in raising up Jesus from death.

4. Afterword: Christians on Mission

Christian mission to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ for all is a shared mission of the disciples of Jesus. Pope Francis belongs to this group of missionaries when he shared his faith as well as his view and experience. Let me end this reflection with his encouragement and personal words:

"Keeping our missionary fervor alive calls for firm trust in the Holy Spirit, for it is he who 'helps us in our weakness' (*Rom* 8:26). But this generous trust has to be nourished, and so we need to invoke the Spirit constantly. He can heal whatever causes us to flag in the missionary endeavor. It is true that this trust in

the unseen can cause us to feel disoriented: it is like being plunged into the deep and not knowing what we will find. I myself have frequently experienced this. Yet there is no greater freedom than that of allowing oneself to be guided by the Holy Spirit, renouncing the attempt to plan and control everything to the last detail, and instead letting him enlighten, guide and direct us, leading us wherever he wills. The Holy Spirit knows well what is needed in every time and place. This is what it means to be mysteriously fruitful!"[27]

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Endnotes

1 *http://www.vatican.va/auguri-francesco/pont_2014/en/index.html#34*, p. 29. BBC News on 13 March 2014 recalled Pope Francis' statement: "I see the Church as a field hospital after battle. It is useless to ask a seriously injured person if he has high cholesterol and about the level of his blood sugars. You have to heal his wounds. Then we can talk about everything else." http://www.bbc.com/news/world-26549698 (accessed 14 March 2014). See Jim Yardley, "In His Second Year Pope Francis Faces Expectations That Change is Coming." *International New York Times* 12 March 2014

2 *Address of the Holy Father Pope Francis, Paul VI Audience Hall*, *Saturday, 16 March 2013*

3 Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*. Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 24 November 2013, no. 60.

4 *Evangelii Gaudium* no. 59

5 See Naila Kabeer, 2010, Can the MDGs provide a pathway to social justice? The challenge of intersecting inequalities. Institute of Development Studies, Univ. of Sussex at http://www.cbm.org/article/downloads/82788/Can_the_MDGs_provide_a_pathway_to_social_justice_ISD_and_MDG_Achievement_Fund.pdf. Accessed in March 11, 2014

6 http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2013/01/02/reaching-indonesias-poor-and-vulnerable. Accessed in 11 march 2014

7 Some defects debilitate "Perda" review processes, both bureaucratic and judicial such as unchecked local lawmaking, poor mechanism to resolve conflicts of laws and to respect the hierarchy of laws as well as the protection of the poor and marginalized. See Simon Butt, "Regional Autonomy and Legal Disorder: The Proliferation of Local Laws in Indonesia", p. 190-191 at http://sydney.edu.au/law/slr/slr_32/slr32_2/Butt.pdf. Accessed in March 28, 2014.

8 Roland Chia, *Hope for the World. A Christian Vision of the Last Things*. USA: InterVarsity Press, 2005, 17 and Asep Suryahadi etc., "Review on Government Poverty Reduction Strategies, Policies and Programs in Indonesia". Jakarta: The SMERU Research Institute, October, 2010. http://www.smeru.or.id/report/research/povertyreductionreview/povertyreductionreview.pdf. Accessed in March 28, 2014.

9 A.A. Yewangoe, *Theologia Crucis in Asia*. Amsterdam: Rodopoli, 1987, 11

10 Randolf David, "Asian Societies in the Age of Globalization", in *Faith and Life in Contemporary Asian Realities*. Hong Kong: Christian Conference of Asia, 2000, 23

11 https://www.childfund.org/Closing-the-Social-Inequality-Gap-in-the-Philippines. Accessed in 11 March 2014

12 See John 10:10 that distinguishes a shepherd and a thief who comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy.

13 FABC VI, art. 10. See Franz-Josef Eilers (ed.), *For All The Peoples of Asia: Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Documents from 1992 to 1996*. Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1997

[14] Gaudencio Rosales and Catalino G. Arévalo (editors), *For All The Peoples of Asia: Federation of Asian Bishops'Conferences. Documents from 1970-1991*, New York: Orbis Books, 1992, 231-232

[15] FABC Papers no. 48. Theses on Interreligious Dialogue. An Essay in Pastoral Theological Reflection, no 8. http://www.fabc.org/fabc%20papers/fabc_paper_48.pdf. Accessed in May 16, 2014

[16] Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Varitate*, An Encyclical Letter, June 29, 2009, no. 19

[17] Anup Shah, *Poverty Around the World*. Updated 12 November, 2011. http://www.globalissues.org/article/4/poverty-around-the-world. Accessed 10 March 2014

[18] Catholic Bishop's Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) Lenten Message 2014, *Poverty that Dehumanizes and Poverty that Sanctifies*. Pope Francis' Lenten Message 2014 inspires CBCP and states that "We can do this to the extent that we imitate Christ who became poor and enriched us by his poverty. Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty. Let us not forget that real poverty hurts: no self-denial is real without this dimension of penance. I distrust a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt." Lenten Message of Our Holy Father Francis, "He became poor so that by his poverty you might become rich (cf. 2 Cor 8:9)", Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 26 December 2013

[19] Reference to Isaiah 7:14

[20] Luke 24:31

[21] Luke 24:34-35

[22] 1 Corinthians 15:8 "After that he appeared to James, then to all the Apostles. Last of all, as to one born abnormally, he appeared to me." And 2 Corinthians 11:2-3

[23] See *Evangelii Gaudium* no. 210-216 and reflections of Victor Codina, "The Poor and Poverty in Evangelii Gaudium" in http://iglesiadescalza.blogspot.com/2014/04/the-poor-and-poverty-in-evangelii.html, accessed in May 3, 2014

[24] Acts 5: 30-32

[25] Victor Codina in http://iglesiadescalza.blogspot.com/2014/04/the-poor-and-poverty-in-evangelii.html. Accessed in May 3, 2014

[26] *Evangelii Gaudium* no. 278

[27] *Evangelii Gaudium* no. 280

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