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**ACTIVE LAY PARTICIPATION IN THE LIFE AND MISSION OF THE CHURCH
ACCORDING TO THE SECOND PLENARY COUNCIL OF THE PHILIPPINES OF 1991**

by
Rafael Rustico G. MACARANAS

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Canon Law,
Saint Paul University, Ottawa, Canada, in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Canon Law

Ottawa, Canada
Saint Paul University
1994



Rafael Rustico G. Macaranas Ottawa, Canada 1994



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ABBREVIATIONS

AA	<i>Apostolicam actuositatem</i>
Acts and Decrees of PCP II	= Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines
Acta of PCP I	= <i>Acta et Decreta Primi Concilii Plenarii Insularum Philippinarum</i>
AG	<i>Ad gentes divinitus</i>
AAS	<i>Acta Apostolicae Sedis</i>
BCCs	Basic Christian Communities
BECS	Basic Ecclesial Communities
CEBs	Base-level Ecclesial Communities
CBCP	Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines
CCCCB	Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
CD	<i>Christus Dominus</i>
CFL	<i>Christifideles laici</i>
CLSA	Canon Law Society of America
EN	<i>Evangelii nuntiandi</i>
FABC	Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference
FABCOHD	Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference Office of Human Development
FG	"Fundamentalist Groups" (Pastoral Letter)
FDCCL	"Final Draft on the Commission of Christian Life"
FDL	"Final Draft on the Laity"
FDC	"Final Draft on the Clergy"
FDRC	"Final Draft on Religious Concerns"

FFCMF	"To Form Filipino Christians Mature in their Faith" (Pastoral Letter)
GS	<i>Gaudium et spes</i>
LG	<i>Lumen gentium</i>
LS	Letters and Statements
MD	<i>Mulieris dignitatem</i>
MB	"Ang Mahal na Birhen" (Pastoral Letter)
NASAGA	National Social Action General Assembly
NASSA	National Secretariat of Social Action
NCDP	National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines
NEDA	National Economic Development Authority
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NPP	National Pastoral Plan
ORE	<i>L'Osservatore romano</i> , English Edition
PCP I	First Plenary Council of the Philippines
PCP II	Second Plenary Council of the Philippines
PCP II CD	Second Plenary Council of the Philippines Conciliar Document
PCP II D	Second Plenary Council Decrees
PLNEY	"Pastoral Letter on the National Eucharistic Year"
PLE	"Pastoral Letter on the Eucharist"
PFMOW	"Protect Our Filipino Migrants and Overseas Workers" (Pastoral Letter)
PI	Philippine Islands
PO	<i>Presbyterorum ordinis</i>
RM	<i>Redemptoris missio</i>
UST	University of Sto. Tomas

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INTRODUCTION

The emphasis on active lay participation in the life and mission of the Church is one of the noble visions of Vatican II. The 1983 Code clearly reflects this insight by adding more comprehensive provisions for the laity, especially with the formulation of their obligations and rights. *Christifideles laici* builds upon the conciliar teachings of Vatican II:

This Exhortation intends to stir and promote a deeper awareness among all the faithful of the gift and responsibility they share, both as a group and as individuals, in the communion and mission of the Church.¹

Particular law intends to grasp the concrete reality of the Church in its own unique milieu and adapts the law to the local situation. Just as Vatican II stressed lay participation, the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines of 1991 in its agenda for renewal strongly emphasized lay participation.

What has happened to the rest of the universal Church as a result of Vatican II has happened here in the Philippines too: a purposive concern with the overall role of the laity, their place in the Church, the neglect shown them in the past, in short their empowering to be real and vital members of the Church. Again, the sheer fact that in this Council a whole

¹ JOHN PAUL II, Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles laici* (=CFL), 30 December 1988, no. 2, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (=AAS) 81 (1989), p. 397 (English translation as published by Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops [=CCCB], Ottawa, 1988, p. 9).

commission is devoted to the laity is most supportive of this development.²

Without prejudice to universal law, particular laws purposely direct the mission of the Church more actively with respect to the conditions of local cultures. In accordance with canon 439, §1, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) convoked the Second Plenary council of the Philippines (PCP II) with the intention of embarking on a renewed integral evangelization of the Church in the Philippines through a more participative mission. Hence, the concept of active lay participation outlined in the documents of Vatican II has been further defined and elaborated in the teachings and decrees of PCP II. It is in this vein that the law achieves the purpose of guiding the life of the People of God. There is an interplay of the teachings of Vatican II, the 1983 Code and the Second Plenary Council to work for the common goal of implementing active lay participation. The definition of active lay participation takes on herein new shapes and meanings. Lay participation is a very broad concept but if it is seen in its context, a new meaning and a unique application of lay participation are brought forth.

The Church highlights active lay participation because Christian passivity is an extremely dangerous spiritual condition and in clear contradiction to the Church's

² *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (=Acts and Decrees of PCP II)*, Manila, CBCP, 1992, Appendix I, p. 290.

missionary calling; Christian passivity blurs the concept of the People of God as outlined in Vatican II ecclesiology. The Vatican II model of the Church places an emphasis on a Church centered on the faithful.

In fact, the Christian vocation is, of its nature, a vocation to the apostolate as well. In the organism of a living body no member plays a purely passive part, sharing in the life of the body it shares the same time in its activity.³

Hence, "the lay faithful are not second class members,"⁴ passive conformists, priests' helpers, and mere objects of pastoral activity in the Church.

How is lay participation developed in the teachings and decrees of PCP II? To answer this question we shall examine the contextual, doctrinal, legislative, and pastoral orientations of lay participation in the Philippines. The problem is discussed in four chapters:

a) Chapter I introduces the context of the study which is the Catholic Church in the Philippines from its early establishment to the present time. It also presents the evolution of particular councils which have safeguarded the life and mission of the growing Church whose norms and decrees

³ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, *Apostolicam actuositatem* (=AA), 18 November 1965, no. 2, in AAS, 58 (1966), pp. 837-838 (English translation in A. FLANNERY (ed.), *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents* (=FLANNERY, I), 1992 rev. ed., Northport, NY, Costello Pub. Co., 1992, vol. 1, p. 768.

⁴ PCP II Conciliar Document (=PCP II CD), no. 405, p. 140.

are solidified at present in PCP II. Historical assessment is the basic method used in this chapter.

b) Chapter II focuses on the active participation of the laity in the mission of the Church in the Philippines. The first part discusses the general legal principles according to the Vatican II teachings and the provisions of the 1983 Code relating to the laity. The second part provides a particular application of these teachings to the Church in the Philippines with a closer look at the cultural situation. A documentary and situational analysis (presentation of church demography and other statistical surveys) is the method being used to prepare this chapter.

c) Chapter III conducts an in-depth documentary analysis of the teaching and legislation of PCP II. It reveals the general focus of the teaching of PCP II and particularly concentrates on the teachings and decrees relating to the laity.

d) Chapter IV sums up the implications of active lay participation by looking into the role of the Filipino Catholic laity and their mission in Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs). It discusses BECs as encouraged by the CBCP and PCP II as the principal means of evangelization in the Philippines. Guidelines for proper lay participation are enumerated herein. This chapter considers the possibility of canonical inculturation. An analysis of the universal Church

teachings as well as of the PCP II and CBCP documents, form the content of this chapter.

Two reasons influenced the choice of the topic of this dissertation. The first was to contribute to canonical science because PCP II is a concrete application of Can. 439, §1. Moreover, PCP II is an example of particular law of the Church which needs a sound explanation in order to be properly implemented. Secondly, it is an expression of the researcher's interest to demonstrate clearly the teachings and decrees of PCP II on active lay participation, the CBCP's most recent local legislation. May this work as it elaborates the teaching and decrees of PCP II assist the CBCP in its program of implementation of the Council as well as contributing both canonical and pastoral insights to the CBCP and to our readers.

CHAPTER I
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES

This chapter will examine the historical context of the Catholic Church in the Philippines, and investigate the following:

a) The early organization of the Catholic Church in the Philippines as initiated by the Spanish missionaries; the consequent major development of the Church hierarchy; and the contemporary ecclesial situation in the Philippines;

b) The periodic gatherings of the hierarchy, particularly in councils, synods, and assemblies which enabled the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) to play a crucial role in shaping the life and mission of the Catholic Church in the Philippines;

c) the formulation of the Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II).

This data will help provide an appropriate understanding of the pastoral situation of the Catholic Church in the Philippines which prompted the convocation of PCP II.

A. The Context

1. The Early Establishment of the Church

The Church possesses a very distinct character as manifested in its history.¹ In like manner, the Catholic Church in the Philippines has undergone a very unique and dramatic historical development because it was subject to a great variety of external influences from both Eastern and Western religious cultures. The fact that the Philippines is the only truly "Catholic country" in the East bears witness to the influence of Western Catholic culture, for the majority of its population are Roman Catholic.² Hence, this study explores the socio-political and religious milieu of the Philippines from the pre-establishment of the Church to the present time.

¹ See J. CORIDEN, *An Introduction to Canon Law*, New York, Paulist Press, 1991, p. 5.

² Cf. Appendix Quarta, "Oratorio Salutario Exc.mi et Rev.mi D. Julii Rosales," in *Acta et Decreta Primi Concilii Plenarii Insularum Philippinarum* (=Acta of PCP I), Manila, 1957, p. 294; CBCP, COMMISSION ON RELIGIOUS CONCERNS, *Final Draft on Religious Concerns* (=FDRC), Manila, CBCP National Coordinating Office, 1991, p. 1; CBCP, *PCP II Exhibits: "Towards the Greening of the Catholic Church in the Philippines,"* Manila, CBCP National Coordinating Office, [1991], p. 6; P. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission, The Philippine Catholic Church 1965-1981*, Manila, New Day Publishers, 1988, p. 12; *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines*, Conciliar Document (=PCP II CD), no. 355, Manila, CBCP, 1992, p. 122; P. DE ACHUTEGUI, "Pre-Plenary Council Statistical Profile," in *Landas*, 4 (1990), pp. 182-221.

The research is to be divided into three major stages: the early period, the Spanish, and the American periods.³

a. The Early Period

The term "early" connotes a quasi-historical character which unfortunately lessens the accuracy of the information. This stage begins with a somewhat primitive period prior to the coming of the Spaniards in 1521. Little is known about it, although, William Henry Scott attempted to collect pre-hispanic sources for the study of Philippine history.⁴ But it

³ Most Philippine church history books make these distinctions rather than an integration of the pre-historic and the Spanish periods. See M. BERNAD, *The Christianization of the Philippines, Problems and Perspectives*, Manila, Filipiniana Book Guild, 1972, pp. 3-198; J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, Quezon City, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, 1987, pp. 12-21; A. MOLINA, *The Philippines Through the Centuries*, vol. 1, Manila, UST Cooperative, 1960, pp. 1-53. Other studies concerning the Christianization of the Philippines are introduced by a historical background which directly and indirectly mentions the pre-historic, the Spanish, and the American periods. See R. TANO, *Theology in the Philippine Setting*, Quezon City, New Day Publishers, 1981, pp. 14-24; P. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, pp. 8-9; V. MAYNIGO, *Evangelization and Philippine Culture in the Light of Second Vatican Council*, Romae, Pont. Universitas S. Thomae, 1978, pp. 7-17.

⁴ William Henry Scott was a professor of Philippine History for thirty years. The purpose of his archeological study is to present what is actually known of the pre-historic period. He claims that "the earliest descriptions of the Philippines or part of the Philippines are the Chinese accounts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, a time when the archipelago was already flooded with important porcelain..." (in W.H. SCOTT, *Pre-hispanic Source Materials for Philippine History*, rev. ed., Quezon City, New Day Publishers, 1984, p. 138).

was only in the sixteenth century that detailed historical accounts were written.⁵ Nevertheless, the incomplete information available about the racial and cultural background can still provide us with some historical understanding.⁶ Whatever is unknown or beyond archeological and anthropological interpretation has been thematized through literary genre which enables one to establish easily the connection between the historical and quasi-historical accounts.⁷ Moreover, there still remains a difficult task to be undertaken by anthropology and archeology, especially to collect and analyze data about the early Filipinos.

It can easily be attested that there existed primitive Filipinos with an organized lifestyle. In fact, Horacio de la Costa, a Filipino Church historian notes:

The Europeans had obviously been impressed by the fact that the inhabitants of the islands were not a primitive tribe of barbarians, but a highly civilized community. These were not a nomadic people. They lived in villages, cultivated fields, were governed by laws and customs, led organized

⁵ Cf. R. FOX, "The Philippines in Prehistoric Times," in *Readings in Philippine Prehistory*, vol. 1, Manila, Filipiniana Book Guild Inc., 1979, p. 36.

⁶ See M. TANGCO, "Racial and Cultural History of the Filipinos," in *Readings in Philippine Prehistory*, vol. 1, Manila, Filipiniana Book Guild Inc., 1979, p. 77.

⁷ See for instance, Prem Jesus Jesswani, a Filipino historian who introduces his book with a legendary prologue: "Millions of years ago, a mighty giant walked across the Pacific Ocean carrying a bag of stones. As he approached Asia he slipped and thousands of stones fell out of the bag, and so the Philippines were born" (P.J. JESSWANI, *A Look at Philippine History*, Manila, St. Paul Press, 1989, p. 1).

lives. They had a highly developed arts and crafts, strict notions of justice and property and civilized methods of trading both among themselves and with outsiders.⁸

i. The Peopling of the Philippines

There was a slow process of successive migration of different peoples. The Negritos are the aborigines of the Philippines. The succeeding racial types which blended with the former were the Australian aborigines, Oceanic negroids (known as Papua-speaking peoples of New Guinea and Melanesia), Indonesian, and Malay peoples.⁹

The ninth century marked the period of "Great Traditions."¹⁰ The Arabs were the earliest traders in the country.¹¹ The Chinese traders came as early as the tenth

⁸ H. de la COSTA, *Readings in Philippine History*, Quezon City, Bookmark, 1965, p. 5. As quoted by V. MAYNIGO, *Evangelization and Philippine Culture in the Light of the Second Vatican Council*, pp. 7-8.

⁹ See R. DIZON, "The Peopling of the Pacific," in *Readings in Philippine Prehistory*, vol. 1, Manila, Filipiniana Book Guild, Inc., 1979, pp. 1-6; P. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 8. See also A. GAGELONIA, *The Filipinos of Yesteryears*, Manila, National Bookstore, 1973, pp. 61-71.

¹⁰ "Great Traditions" refers to the opening of the Philippine archipelago to foreign commerce from the mainland of Asia and the Middle East. New ideas, values and attitudes affected the social, religious, and economic life of the Filipinos during this period (see R. FOX, "The Philippines in Prehistoric Times," p. 50).

¹¹ Cf. A. GAGELONIA, *The Filipinos of Yesteryears*, p. 76.

century.¹² Asia eventually became a vast area for trade and cultural exchange.¹³

ii. The Development of Primitive Filipino Culture

The development of the primitive Filipino culture was enhanced by the ongoing racial mix. The following are some of the significant and common characteristics of the primitive society.

The early primitive society, particularly the Negritos considered the family as its basic unit. They lived with their family and the family groupings subsisted on fishing and hunting. The family orientation was strengthened by the *barangay* system which came into existence through the migration of the Malays.¹⁴ However, the *barangay* was not so much based on territory as on clan. Hence, the *barangay* was

¹² See A. MOLINA, *The Philippines Through the Centuries*, p. 22; cf. R. TANO, *Theology in the Philippine Setting*, p. 14. However, some archaeologists would assert that Filipino-Chinese contacts had already begun during the Tang Dynasty in China at around 618-907 AD. This is attested through the discovery of Tang pottery. Cf. A. GAGELONIA, *The Filipinos of Yesteryears*, p. 78.

¹³ P. J. JESSWANI, *A Look at Philippine History*, p. 7.

¹⁴ *Barangay* etymologically comes from *balangay* which means "boatload"; it refers to kinship groups of peoples who came to the islands on a boat at the dawn of its history. In common parlance, it simply means an extended Filipino family which is governed by the *datus* and *rajahs* who are known to be patriarchal leaders (see N. ROMUALDEZ, "A Rough Survey of the Prehistoric Legislation of the Philippines," in *Readings in Philippine Prehistory*, vol. 1, Manila, Filipiniana Book Guild, Inc., 1979, pp. 86-87).

the only form of government the pre-hispanic Philippines had.

The early community was hierarchically divided into four classes: the *datu* (ruler), the *maharlika* (nobility), the freemen, and the slaves.¹⁵ The social stratification appears to be extrinsically exaggerated although some subtle and varied distinctions are applied to the regional classification of slaves.¹⁶

¹⁵ See L. MERCADO, *Christ in the Philippines*, Tacloban City, Divine Word Publishers, 1982, p. 4; R. TANO, *Theology in the Philippine Setting*, p. 16.

¹⁶ The Visayan region comprised the southern part of the Philippines where the following distinctions were formerly in practice: first, the *ayuey* (to request) was a slave who had to work three days for his master and one day for himself. His wife also served the master. The master was obliged to furnish the slave with food and clothing. Secondly, *tumarumpuk* (from *tampu* which means "to unite" or "to join") was a slave who had to work three days for himself and one day for his master. His wife and children also worked for his master, weaving cotton for him fifteen days every month. He had similar compensation as that of *ayuey*, twelve pesos. Thirdly, *tumatabang* (it refers to the condition of the slave as indicated by the root *tabang* which means "to help") was a slave who had to serve the master only during the festival in the house; he was also obliged to bring some presents but he was paid only six pesos; his wife also weaved cotton for the master. The Tagalog region comprised a greater population mostly in central Luzon and roughly extending to the northern Philippines where there were two distinctions. First, the *aliping-namamahay* (a slave who lives in his own house) was commonly a slave who lived in his own house but served his master in harvesting half of his crop; otherwise, the duties would depend from any previous agreement between them. Secondly, *aliping saguiguilir* (its root words are *sagui* which means "to touch slightly" and *guilir* or *guilid* which means "side" or "edge" just like a person who touches the lives of the house) was a slave who stayed in the house of the master and served him there and on his master's land (see N. ROMUALDEZ, "A Rough Survey of the Prehistoric Legislation of the Philippines," pp. 85-86).

Leonardo Mercado, S.V.D., a well known Filipino theologian, said that the "Philippine society was and is hierarchic."¹⁷ It is based on the understanding of an intimate link between culture and religion where the hierarchical framework affects man's perception of God as Supreme and Inaccessible Being.

God for the Filipinos is also remote and somewhat unapproachable. Just as one does not directly approach the Big People in the Philippine society but must make use of intermediaries, so is the Filipino attitude towards God.¹⁸

In line with the observation of Mercado, the religious concepts and beliefs are considered to have evolved from the different cultural migrations. For instance, the intermediaries were known as *anitos*.¹⁹

The majority of the early laws consisted of oral traditions and ancestral customs. There were no written laws except the popular Maragtas Code and the Code of Kalantiao.²⁰

¹⁷ L. MERCADO, *Christ in the Philippines*, Tacloban City, P.I., Divine Word University Publications, 1982, p. 4.

¹⁸ ID., *Elements of Filipino Theology*, Tacloban City, P.I., Divine Word Publications, 1976, p. 41.

¹⁹ Most Filipinos believe that the world is full of *anitos* which is an ambiguous term since it is commonly attributed to evil spirits or spirits in general, deities proper to the souls of the dead. It is possibly an offshoot of polytheistic religion (see M. TANGCO, "Racial and Cultural History of Filipinos," p. 76).

²⁰ The Maragtas Code was written in 1225 by Sumakwel, a very intelligent Datu of Borneo. The Code is simple but imposing since it deals primarily with labor as the essential obligation of man. The Code of Kalantiao was written in 1433 by Datu Bendahara Kalantiao, third chief of Panay. It was

To sum up, the primitive society had its own socio-political structure. The family or *barangay* units scattered throughout the archipelago were the basic social units of society.²¹ The governance was clannish because the royal family had the exclusive right to rule the *barangays*. Likewise, the primitive society was paternalistic and authoritarian; it practiced slavery. This hierarchic socio-political framework affected the Philippine perception of the Absolute as an unapproachable Being. In this manner, the primitive religion opted to be ritualistic since it used varied means to appease the Absolute. However, it would be wrong to conclude that the primitive lifestyle was magical and chaotic. The early Filipinos had made an effort to develop whatever existing belief they held on to so long as it was typically their own. They had neither temples or churches nor fixed calendars of cultic celebrations. This is the socio-political and religious situation which the early missionaries encountered.

known to be the first penal law. It contains eighteen articles which dealt with very threatening penalties for some political, social, moral, and religious violations. Cf. A. GAGELONIA, *The Filipinos of Yesteryears*, pp. 96-100; N. ROMUALDEZ, "A Rough Survey of the Prehistoric Legislation of the Philippines," p. 88. Both Codes reflect general cultural information such as social customs and other details of early Philippine culture (see W.H. SCOTT, *Prehispanic Source Material for the Study of Philippine History*, p. 99 & p. 104).

²¹ See P.T. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 8.

b. The Spanish Period

Spain had the most extensive and deep-seated influence on Philippine culture and society. The Spanish period lasted for almost four hundred years. The Church came to the Indies and particularly to the Philippines under the control of the *Patronato Royal* of Spain.²²

i. The Origin of Spanish Patronage

One of the primary purposes of the Royal Patronage was to establish and to propagate the faith in the Indies.²³ This

²² The general obligations of the Spanish crown according to the *Patronato* were for example, to propagate the faith, to build up the Church, to promote, maintain and defend the Catholic religion and to defray the expenses for worship. More concretely, they were: sending of missionaries at the expense of the state, support of the clergy, building and maintenance of churches, provisions for religious instruction. On the other hand, the rights mainly consisted in the right of presentation of candidates for ecclesiastical offices. Concretely these were: erection of dioceses and religious provinces; approval of assignments of missionaries; presentation of bishops; holding of synods, collecting income from tithes and "fruits" of vacant churches; control over ecclesiastical affairs like erection of parishes, etc. There were also extensions of these rights which served as an irritant between the agents of both church and state in the colony (cf. D. LAEDA, "Notes on Philippine Church History," unpublished, Ilocos Sur, P.I., 1994, pp. 1-2 in Immaculate Conception School of Theology Office; Danilo Laeda is an eminent Filipino Church historian of the Northern Philippines; he taught Philippine church history at the Immaculate Conception School of Theology, regional seminary of Northern Luzon from 1986-1994; J.N. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, pp. 114-140).

²³ See "El Regio Patronato es un Patronato extraordinario, concedo por el Papa a los Reyes de Castilla para premiar el celo de estos y alentar en orden al establecimiento y propagacion de la Iglesia en Indias" (M. GOMEZ-ZAMORA, *Regio patronato español e indiano*, Imprenta del Asilo de Huerfanos

privilege of Spain was granted through the papal bull *Inter caetera* issued by Alexander VI (1492-1503; date of the bull: May 4, 1493).²⁴ *Inter caetera* was strengthened by the consequent bull *Universalis ecclesiae regimini* of Julius II (1503-1513), July 28, 1508. In it the Holy See recognized that the Spanish monarchy possessed privileges in the colonies it had conquered in the Spanish America and in the Philippines,

del S.C. de Jesus, Madrid, 1897, p. 287, quoted by R. MAGNO, *The First Philippine Provincial Council [1771]*, Romae, Pontificia Universitas S. Thomae, 1979, pp. 11-12).

²⁴ "... Et ut tanti negotii provinciam, apostolicae gratiae largitate donati, liberius et audacius assumatis, motu proprio, non ad vestram vel alterius pro vobis super hoc nobis, ablatae petitionis, instantiam, sed de nostra mera liberalitate et ex certa scientia, ac de apostolicae potestatis plenitudine, omnes insulas et terras firmas inventas et inveniendas, detectas et detegendas versus [here comes the line of demarcation] ita quod omnes insulae et terrae firmae repertae et reperiendae, detectae et detegendae a praefata linea... per alium regem aut principem Christianum non fuerint actualiter possessae usque ad diem Nativitatis Domini Nostri Jesu Christi proxime praeteritum, a quo incipit annus praesens millesimus quadringentisimus nonagesimus tertius, quando fuerunt per nuntios et capitaneos vestros inventae aliquae praedictarum insularum, auctoritate omnipotentis Dei nobis in beato Petro concessa ac vicariatus Jesus Christi, qua fungimur in terris, cum omnibus illarum dominiis, civitatibus castris, locis et villis iuribusque et successoribus vestris (Castellae et Legionis regibus) in perpetuum, tenore praesentium, donamus, concedimus et assignamus; vosque et haeredes ac succesores praefatus illarum dominos cum plena, libera et omnimoda potestate, auctoritate et jurisdictione facimus, constituimus et deputamus" (S. FRANCO and H. DALMAZZO, eds., *Bullarium romanum diplomatum et privilegiorum Sanctorum Romanorum Pontificum*, Taurinensis Editio, vol. 5, Augustae Taurinorum, 1857-72, pp. 361-364; quoted in R. MAGNO, *The First Provincial Council [1771]*, p. 12).

such as maintaining and defending the Roman Catholic religion in the Indies.²⁵

The papal bulls had been the source of Spain's authority even though Spain in the fifteenth century was already a leading world power in Europe. But it was a few years later, after the kingdom of Aragon and Castille were united under Ferdinand and Isabella in 1479, that Spain gained an internationally powerful name.²⁶ In the sixteenth century, the Spanish Church played an important role in the evangelization of both America and Asia.²⁷ The unknown and remote mainlands, including the Philippines, were entrusted to the care of the

²⁵ "...quod nullus in praedictis acquisitis et aliis acquirendis Insulis et locis maris hujusmodi, Ecclesias magnas, alias quam Ferdinandi Regis et Joannae Reginae ac regis Castellae et Legionis pro tempore existentis expresso consensu, construi, aedificari et erigi facere possit, ac Jus Patronatus et praesentandi personas idoneas ad Aguacen, et Maguen, ac Bayumen, praedictas et alias quascumque Metropolitanas ac cathedrales Ecclesias et Monasteria ac Dignitates, in eisdem Cathedralibus etiam Metropolitanis post Pontificales, maiores, et in collegiatis Ecclesiis principales; ac quaecumque alia beneficia ecclesiastica, et pia loca in dictis insulis et locis, pro tempore vacantia..." (*Cedulario Indiano, recopilado por Diego Encinas, Reproducción Facsimil de la edición única de 1596*, Ed. Cultura Hispanica, Madrid: 1945 Lib. I, folios 33-34; quoted in R. MAGNO, *The First Provincial Council [1771]*, p. 13; also quoted in J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, p. 8).

²⁶ "Under Fernando and Isabel's successors, King Carlos I (the Emperor Charles V in Germany), and his son Felipe II, the Hapsburg dynasty was to make Spain a world power, the greatest empire the world had known to that time. Spain became the leading military power of Europe, and hence the champion of Catholicism against the Protestant Reformation" (J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, p. 1).

²⁷ *Ibid.*

Spanish kings and princes.²⁸ From Spanish Patronage, the *encomienda* system was introduced.²⁹ Eventually, *requerimiento* was also introduced in 1514 to maintain the *encomienda* system although the *requerimiento* was intended for the legitimization of the Spanish conquest as a whole.³⁰

²⁸ The following is an English excerpt from *Inter caetera* (this bull is dated 4 May 1493): "You at once, as becomes Catholic kings and princes, with particular attention to the exaltation and spread of Catholic faith, . . . proposed with the divine blessing to take control over these mainlands and aforesaid islands, their natives and inhabitants, and to bring them to the Catholic faith.

"We therefore commend in the Lord your sacred and laudable intentions, and desire the enterprise to come to its proper end, so that the name of our savior may be brought to those regions" (F.G. HERNANDEZ, *Collección de bulas, breves, Y otros documentos relativos a la Iglesia de America Y Filipinas*, Brussels, 1879, 1: 12-14, quoted by J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine History*, p. 3).

²⁹ "The *encomienda* is not a land grant, but a grant of jurisdiction over the people of a certain territory, giving the *encomendero* the right to collect for himself the tribute due the king and to demand labor services. In return he was 'to discharge the conscience of the King' by providing the people of his *encomienda* with protection, the administration of justice, and especially, religious instruction" (J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine History*, p. 407). The *encomienda* system is a product of the Middle Ages and the feudal system (cf. D. LAEDA, "Notes on Philippine Church History," p. 2). It is comparable to the seigneurial system found in France up to the Revolution and in French Canada up to 1854.

³⁰ "The *requerimiento* was a proclamation supposed to be read to the Indians (naturally through interpreters), calling upon them to submit to the all powerful king of Spain. Once the Indians heard the proclamation, if they failed to make their submission, so the theory ran, it was just then to make war on them for refusing to accept the authority of the Spanish king and consequently that of the pope, lord of the whole world" (J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine History*, p. 5).

ii. The Spanish Patronage and Early Evangelization in the Philippines

Lucio Gutiérrez, O.P., a church historian, attempted to explain the legitimacy of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines as it was highlighted in the teachings of the Synod of Manila (1581-1586). Furthermore, he claims that the Filipinos accepted the Spanish rule willingly because of the efforts of the missionaries who defended them against the injustices of the authorities.³¹ This assertion would affirm the evangelical intention of the Royal Patronage. Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese navigator, claimed the Philippines for Spain on March 15, 1521. In 1565, Don Miguel Lopez de Legazpi was accompanied by a group of Augustinian friars (headed by Martín de Rada with Andrés de Urdaneta, Andrés de Aguirre, Diego de Herrera, and Pedro de Gamboa) from Mexico to bring evangelization to the Philippines in a more systematic fashion.³² The letter of King Philip II of Spain to Legazpi,

³¹ See L. GUTIERREZ, "The Synod of Manila: 1581-1586," *Philippiniana sacra*, 25 (1990), pp. 195-199.

³² Fray Andrés de Urdaneta joined the Legazpi expedition not as a missionary but as a cosmographer with specific assignment to plot a return route to Mexico via the Pacific Ocean. He thus returned to Mexico in June 1565 and was successful enough to plot the coordinates of the return route which would become the standard route of the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade in the next two centuries (see D. LAEDA, "Notes on Philippine History," p. 2; P.G. GALENDE, *Apologia pro Filipinos*, Manila, Salesiana Publishers, 1980, p. 56).

a Spanish noble chosen by the former to convert the Filipinos, clearly asserted the royal prerogatives.³³

Manila was erected as a diocese on February 6, 1579 with Fray Domingo Salazar, O.P., as the first bishop. The bull *Illius fulti praesidio* issued by Pope Gregory XIII, created the diocese of Manila as a suffragan of Nueva España in Mexico.³⁴ It was under the supervision and support of the king according to a letter to the governor of the Philippine Islands.³⁵

³³ "And you shall have special care that, in all your negotiations with the natives of those regions, some of the religious accompanying you be present, both in order that the natives may see and understand your high estimation of them; for seeing this and the great reverence of soldiers towards them, they themselves will hold the religious in great respect. This will be of great moment so that when the religious shall have understood their great language or have had interpreters through whom they make them understand our holy Catholic Faith, the natives shall put entire faith in them, since you are aware that the chief thing sought after by His majesty is the increase of our Holy Catholic Faith, and the salvation of souls of those infidels" (PHILIP II, "Instructions to Don Miguel Lopez de Legazpi," 1564, in H. BLAIR and J.A. ROBERTSON, *The Philippine Islands*, vol. 2, Manila, Cacho Hermanos Inc., 1974, pp. 98-99; quoted by V. MAYNIGO, *Evangelization of Philippine Culture in the Light of Second Vatican Council*, p. 10-11).

³⁴ See CBCP, *PCP II Exhibits: "Towards the Greening of the Catholic Church in the Philippines,"* p. 4.

³⁵ "Fray Domingo Salazar of the Dominican Order, bishop of those islands, has reported to us that he is going to take up residence in those islands. He is taking with him religious of his order to found monasteries and to take charge of the conversion and instruction of the natives...

"You will be careful always to inform us of what is being done in this respect, and of the result of the labors of the religious" (F. COLIN, *Labor Evangelica*, ed. Pablo Pastells, Barcelona, 1900-1902, vol. 3, pp. 681-82; quoted and translated in English by J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine*

It was only on June 17, 1595 that King Philip II instructed his ambassador in Rome to obtain the separation of the ecclesiastical province of Manila from the archdiocese of Nueva España. The request extended to the creation of suffragan dioceses: Nueva Segovia for the whole of Northern Luzon, Nueva Caceres for the whole of the Bicol Peninsula, Cebu for the Visayas and Mindanao including the Marianas Islands in the Pacific. The archdiocese of Manila embraced all of central and southern Luzon and other neighboring islands. This ecclesiastical set-up in the Philippines would not change until the twentieth century except for the creation of the diocese of Jaro (Visayan region) in 1865.³⁶

There was a significant development which proceeded from the theory of Royal Patronage. At times, a friar or the pastor was also the civil administrator; eventually, he acquired a strong power since he regulated the spiritual and civil affairs of the natives.³⁷ The trend also developed into an

Church History, pp. 20-21).

³⁶ See "Cedula of 1 June 1574," in *Recopilación de leyes de las Indias*, lib. VI, tit. 7, ley 16; quoted by M. BERNAD, *The Christianization of the Philippines*, pp. 271-72; also quoted by J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, pp. 18-19.

³⁷ The emerging abuse of power created a dangerous situation: "It would become more so as the century went on and the Spanish political system became less and less responsive to the needs of Filipinos and more purely exploitative, in spite of the continuing efforts of the friar parish priests to defend their parishioners. As friar influence on the Spanish bureaucrats became less effective, they would be more and more left in the position of apparent defenders of a corrupt system

anti-native clergy character trait which later on became the principal rationale for stunting the development of the native clergy.³⁸ The long contested anti-native clergy issue came to the fore through the Cavite Mutiny which broke out in 1872, although the fight for the rights of the Filipino clergy had been started beforehand by a priest, Pedro Pelaez. José Burgos, Mariano Gómez and Jacinto Zamora (whose names were later attributed to the "Gomburza" execution, the watershed of Philippine nationalism) were priests who were unjustly condemned to death by the Spanish authorities. This incident also triggered the Aglipayan revolt which was led by the schismatic Gregorio Aglipay, a former chaplain of the

rather than its severest critics" (J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, p. 253); cf. P.T. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 14.

³⁸ Pasquale T. Giordano, who wrote recently about the situation of the Philippine Catholic Church between 1965-1981 commented that "The Spaniards discouraged the development of a native clergy in the Philippines, not only for religious but also for political reasons. The religious reasons given were that the Filipinos were not yet ready to accept the responsibilities of the priesthood because of the lack of educational background and the demands of celibacy. The political reason was that the Spaniards did not want to relinquish any of their administrative control. Since the parish priests were also civil administrators in the towns, the Spaniards preferred that they be Spanish religious, rather than Filipino clergy..." (P.T. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 14).

Horacio de la Costa and John Schumacher, well known Philippine Church historians, agree with Giordano since they described the period from 1768 to the 1850s as one of sheer disaster for the secular clergy (see H. de la COSTA, "Development of the Native Clergy," in *The Filipino Clergy*, pp. 47-56; J. SCHUMACHER, "The Filipino Secular Clergy: Yesterday and Tomorrow," in *The Filipino Clergy*, pp. 87-91).

revolutionary army, who was excommunicated in 1899 for accepting an ecclesiastical appointment from a secular authority without the permission of his ecclesiastical superiors. Aglipay formed the *Iglesia Filipina Independiente* when the Holy See refused to recognize the petitions of the nationalist priests that all positions of the Church be occupied exclusively by Filipinos.³⁹ The Aglipayan schism was formalized on August 3, 1902 in Manila where Isabelo de los Reyes publicly proclaimed the establishment of *Iglesia Filipina Independiente*.⁴⁰ "Even more support for the schism came from anticlericals, Masons, and other enemies of the Catholic Church."⁴¹

The Propaganda Movement⁴² had an enormous influence in producing the major uprising of 1896 by the *Katipunan* under

³⁹ Antonio M. Molina, a Philippine historian, noted that the real founder of the Aglipayans was the layman Isabelo de los Reyes because he established the structure and laws of their church. However, Isabelo de los Reyes proclaimed Aglipay as the supreme bishop on August 3, 1902 (see J. MOLINA, *The Philippines Through the Centuries*, vol. 2, p. 255).

⁴⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 255-258.

⁴¹ J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, p. 329. Masonry spread with the Propaganda Movement. Moreover, masonry added an anti-friar color to the cause. In fact, masonry was an essential element of the *Katipunan* (see D. LAEDA, "Notes on Philippine Church History," pp. 2-3).

⁴² A subversive movement which "was not merely anti-friar, but to a certain extent anti-Catholic as well" (J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, p. 265). It was composed of a group of Filipinos who utilized the press as a means to initiate reforms.

the leadership of Andrés Bonifacio.⁴³ José Rizal, a Philippine national hero, was a popular representative of the Propaganda Movement. His writings shared the same sentiments as those of the *Katipunan*.

The Philippines continued to be governed by Spain until 1898.⁴⁴ Shortly afterwards, the Church in the Philippines began to be reorganized, indeed one month after the solemn inauguration of the Philippine Independent Church (September 1902). "The new Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Giovanni Battista Guidi, finally arrived with the papal constitution, *Quae mari Sinico*, which was to provide the new foundation for the Catholic Church in the Philippines."⁴⁵

c. The American Stage

The *Katipunan* Revolt ended in the Peace of Biaknabato in December 1897, but the Spanish-American War followed shortly thereafter in April 1898. President William McKinley of the United States issued a proclamation on December 21, 1898, whereby in virtue of the treaty with Spain, the future administration of the Philippines would be ceded to the United

⁴³ The *Katipunan* was a lower middle class organization which was the offspring of the *Propaganda* Movement with anti-religious ideas (see *ibid.*, p. 271).

⁴⁴ Cf. P. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 8; J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, p. 13.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 322.

States.⁴⁶ The Americans came supposedly as allies but, as it turned out, they remained as the new colonizers.⁴⁷ They were continuously present in the Philippines for almost fifty years. They contributed to the development of governmental and educational systems in the Philippines, but not to ecclesiastical affairs. The public school system, as a means of mass education, was introduced by the American Protestant teachers. However, the real error of the American administration was its dependency upon the elite of society which later led to the perpetuation of unequal distribution of wealth, land tenancy, etc.⁴⁸ This phenomenon of economic imbalance widened the gap between the rich and the poor.

The growth of Roman Catholicism was stunted by the spread of Protestantism which certainly shook the faith of many Filipinos.⁴⁹

The principle of separation of Church and State was introduced by the Americans.⁵⁰ There were only very few

⁴⁶ See A. MOLINA, *The Philippines Through The Centuries*, vol. 2, Manila, UST Cooperative, 1961, p. 205.

⁴⁷ See P. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 8. See also R. TANO, *Theology in the Philippine Setting*, p. 21.

⁴⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

⁴⁹ Cf. J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, p. 314; *ibid.*, p. 317.

⁵⁰ See President McKinley's instructions issued in April 1900 to the Second Philippine Commission, which paved the way for the spread of other religions especially Protestantism because the provision simply advocates religious freedom: "that no law shall be made respecting an establishment of

significant church events during the American period, some ecclesial highlights will be discussed in the following section since a number of details are integrated into the contemporary period.

2. Major Developments in the Hierarchy

a. The Hierarchy under the Two Colonial Powers

The colonial experience of the Church in the Philippines shaped the nature and character of the mission of the hierarchy, with Spain having greater influence than America. The Church in the Philippines was first established by the friars who worked under the administration of the *Patronato Royal*. The government set-up at that time had strongly affected church administration because of the intermingling of ecclesiastical and civil powers. The government was strong, paternalistic, and highly centralized; it was headed by the governor-general who was the sole representative of the Spanish crown. Therefore, he had vast power not only politically but also ecclesiastically since he had authority over pastors and bishops. This control meant

religion or prohibiting the free exercise and enjoyment thereof, and that the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever be allowed" (E. ALIP, *Philippine History*, Manila, Alip and Sons Inc., 1958, p. 82).

executing Spanish policy often through the friars.⁵¹ On the other hand, America mitigated the hierarchic power of the Church by introducing democratic government which advocated the separation of Church and State.

Other major developments of the Church during the colonial period are highlighted in the synods and councils, as well as in meetings of the episcopal conference prior to the convocation of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines. More recent major issues which were tackled by the hierarchy will be discussed in the following section.

b. A Socially Concerned Hierarchy

The colonial problem had shifted to more internal issues. The point of departure was the post-World War II period which challenged the hierarchy to coordinate relief effort to war stricken areas. The apostolic delegate established the Catholic Welfare Organization (CWO) in February 1945. The CWO acquired a permanent status and was recognized as the official organization of the Philippine hierarchy on June 30, 1953 through the approval of its

⁵¹ A viceroy in New Spain remarked "in each friar in the Philippines the king had a captain-general and a whole army" (H. BLAIR and J.A. ROBERTSON, *The Philippine Islands 1493-1898*, Cleveland, Arthur H. Clark, 1903-1909, pp. 41-42; cited by R. TANO, *Theology in the Philippine Setting*, p. 18).

statutes by the Apostolic See.⁵² This organization of the bishops of the Philippines was the forerunner of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines. The social mission was again activated through the establishment in 1965 of the National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA) to carry out the goals of the Priests' Institute for Social Action (PISA). The Holy See approved the constitution of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines on December 12, 1967.⁵³

The CBCP played a socially active role in facing the historical events during the Martial Law⁵⁴ and the post-

⁵² "Naturalis rerum evolutio et immane, nuper gestum, bellum pleraque etiam in Insulis Philippinis peperit problemata, vel urbis, vel diocesis, imo et regionis ambitum transgredientia, quibus, cotidie ingruentibus, ut collatis sententiis conspiratisque viribus aptiore occurreretur modo, universi ibi Praesules ordinarii constituti, iam ab anno 1945, auctore Exc. P.D. Gulielmo Piani, Delegato Apostolico, Conventum inierunt (Catholic Welfare Organization) nuncupatum" (SACRED CONSISTORIAL CONGREGATION, Decree, 28 June 1952, in AAS, 20 [1953], p. 247). The revised statutes of 1967 provided an official title of the CWO: "The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines." The change was effected for two reasons: first, to deemphasize its former title as a "welfare" agency, and second, to conform itself to post-Vatican II nomenclature; see F.I. TESTERA, *Canon Law Digest of the Philippine Catholic Church*, 2nd rev. ed., Manila, Novel Publishing Company Inc., 1989, p. 6.

⁵³ Cf. P. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, pp. 20-26.

⁵⁴ This was a form of military rule in the Philippines declared by Ferdinand E. Marcos on September 21, 1972. The avowed aim of the Government was to create a "new society" (see CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, "Pastoral Letter on Evangelization and Development," 25 July 1973, in R.P. HARDY [ed.], *The Philippine Bishops Speak [1968-1983]* [= R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983] vol. 1, Quezon City, Maryhill School of Theology, 1984, p. 72). Martial Law was described to be an experience of oppressive military control because "Martial Law carried with it, (certainly after 1974 at the

Martial Law eras (1968-1983) to which most of the official decisions of the CBCP were addressed.⁵⁵ For instance, some key social justice documents which appeared in this period were: "Statement on Civic Responsibility" (July 9, 1970), "Statement on the Referendum" (February 27, 1975), "Pastoral Education for Justice" (September 14, 1978), "Pastoral Letter: Exhortation against Violence" (October 7, 1979), etc.⁵⁶

The most recent high-profile social activity of the Church in the Philippines took place in 1986 when a very

very least) evident destruction and violation of human rights, abuses by military authorities and governmental officials, it should have been an area of open concern by the Bishops" (id., "The Philippine Bishops' Post-Election Statement: A Moral or Political stance?" in *Kerygma*, 20 [1986], p. 176).

⁵⁵ The twenty-nine pastoral letters, statements, norms and guidelines which were approved by the CBCP dealt primarily with the religious, moral, and socio-political issues of the country. This set of CBCP documents was edited by Richard P. Hardy who noted three significantly contextual reasons of publishing only the documents which particularly belonged to the period between 1968 to 1983: "While it is true that the Bishops of the Philippines existed as a conference called the Catholic Welfare Organization with its various Episcopal Commissions since 1945, the present organization called the CBCP took its full juridical status with the approval of its rules and constitution only in 1968 when we find them using the official title CBCP for the first time. Besides this juridical factor, the period from 1968 to 1983 is a post Vatican II period and hence is a time in which the changes wrought by the Second Vatican Council began to effect changes in the universal Church. Thus this period is a most important one in the life of the Church as a whole. Thirdly, it is also one of the most important periods in the life of the people in the Philippines for within this time we found the declaration of Martial Law (1972), the formal lifting of Martial Law (1981) and the socio-economic and political crises of the post Martial Law era and in particular the crisis of 1983" (R.P. HARDY, *1968-1983*, pp. 1-2).

⁵⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 28, 127, 173, 208.

popularly known event the "EDSA revolution" occurred.⁵⁷ This event reflected a strong concern for broad social change.⁵⁸ Before and after the snap elections of 1986⁵⁹ the CBCP came up with a plan of action elaborated through its pastoral letters. On January 1986, the bishops convened for the plenary assembly which decided to issue a joint pastoral letter which triggered a unified action of the "People Power".⁶⁰ February 7, 1986 was the day for the elections when Ferdinand Marcos and Corazon Aquino were to clash in the polls. The CBCP issued a post-election statement condemning the conduct of the election and declaring the illegitimacy of a government which

⁵⁷ "EDSA - Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, Quezon City where in February 1986 hundreds of thousands of Filipinos rallied, prayed and shared food and encouragement with one another and eventually forced a change of government from dictatorial to a democratic form. The phenomenon came to be known as 'People Power'" (PCP II CD, no. 20, p. 11).

⁵⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

⁵⁹ These were called by Ferdinand Marcos with a strategy to win because of his perception that the opposition party was divided and probably would not be able to form a coalition against him. However, a last hour unity effort pushed Corazon Aquino to be the leader of the opposition party. One of the factors which caused Corazon Aquino's victory was the sympathy of the Filipinos; on August 21, 1983, her husband, former Senator Benigno Aquino, was brutally murdered at the Manila International Airport while under the "protection" of Ferdinand Marcos (see R.P. HARDY, "The Philippine Bishops' Post-Election Statement: A Moral or Political Stance?" pp. 177-178).

⁶⁰ Cf. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, A Joint Pastoral Exhortation on the Snap Election, "We Must Obey God rather than Men," 25 January 1986, in *Letters and Statements 1984-1990 (=LS)*, vol. 2, Quezon City, Ateneo de Manila, 1990, pp. 51-57.

claimed power by means of deception, fraud and irregularities. The statement said that if the government tolerates the evil inflicted on the people, then it is the CBCP's moral obligation to opt for a non-violent struggle for justice.⁶¹

Some time later, the CBCP considered in the context of the mission of the Church, the Church's competence to speak on matters related to the forthcoming constitutional commission. This gave birth to a new pastoral exhortation which spoke of the Church's presence in the constitutional commission through the expertise of those Catholics who would be selected as Constitutional commission delegates and would act as witnesses.⁶²

3. The Present Situation of the Church

"Poverty" has been the key word in describing the present situation of the Philippines. The Philippine social reality is

⁶¹ See CATHOLIC BISHOP'S CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Post-Election Statement, 13 February 1986, in *LS*, pp. 61-64; R.P. HARDY, "The Philippine Bishops' Post-Election Statement: A Moral or Political Stance?" pp. 175-193.

⁶² See CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Exhortation, "On the Constitutional Commission and its Work," 18 May 1986, in *LS*, pp. 66-71.

identified with a life overwhelmed by *kahirapan*.⁶³ This theme surfaces in the following sectors of human life.

a. The Dehumanizing Economic Structure⁶⁴

The National Secretariat for Social Action used the term "economic slump" to describe the poverty existing five years after the 1986 EDSA revolution.⁶⁵ The present economic situation which involves a sheer lack of productivity is dehumanizing; as a result, a number of women and children have been forced into prostitution. Furthermore, there is an increasing number of homeless street children, thousands of

⁶³ *Kahirapan* means "difficulty," "suffering," "burden of life." The sum of personal, communal and social concerns, difficulties and sufferings in life which makes it burdensome (see *Acts and Decrees of PCP II*, Appendix III, p. 292). The very root of this *kahirapan* is embedded in our economic, political and cultural systems from which the realities of injustice come (*ibid.*, p. 275). The theme of poverty was also used by the CBCP as it formulated the Vision-Mission Statement of the Church in the Philippines: "Immersed in a society fragmented by divisive conflicts and afflicted by widespread poverty yet deeply aspiring for fullness of life in God..." (CATHOLIC BISHOP'S CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, "Vision-Mission Statement of the Church in the Philippines," Philippine Bishops Assembly in Tagaytay City, Manila, July 23, 1992, p. 1, in CBCP Archives).

⁶⁴ *Acts and Decrees of the PCP II*, Appendix I, p. 276.

⁶⁵ "Economic slump" accurately describes the situation because "from a high 7.02% GNP growth rate in 1988, the country's economy slowly contracted to 3.67% in 1990 and .25% by the end of 1991. While this slowdown is still much better than it was during the Marcos years, when calculated in terms of per capita income, the 1991 statistical data show that the poverty threshold in the country has already equaled the 1985 level of 58% (National Economic Development Authority [NEDA] figure)" (O. QUEVEDO, "The Philippines as of October 1992," Manila, p. 1, in NASSA Archives).

men and women are forced to seek work abroad under conditions that are frequently oppressive.⁶⁶ Furthermore, floods, complicated by illegal logging, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and other forms of environmental destruction worsened the problem of poverty.⁶⁷

b. Reinforced by the Political Situation⁶⁸

Power is exclusively in the hands of a few who are either politicians, big businessmen or the military.⁶⁹ Selfish motives on the part of these few can influence all economic policies and decisions. This unfavorable situation is probably the offshoot of the colonial experience and so called "socio-political paternalism."⁷⁰ On the other hand, from the perspective of the people, there is a perverse practice of

⁶⁶ See *Acts and Decrees of PCP II*, Appendix I, p. 278.

⁶⁷ See *ibid.*, pp. 277-78.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

⁶⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 279. This thought was cited by O. QUEVEDO, "Notes on the New Evangelization in the Context of the Religious," 16 June 1992, SEAMS VII Congress, Manila, 1992, p. 2, in Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference Office of Human Development (=FABCOHD).

⁷⁰ Cf. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, EPISCOPAL COMMISSION ON EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTIONS, *National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines, Maturing in Christian Faith* (=NCDP), no. 5, Manila, St. Paul's Publication, 1987, p. 23.

political play.⁷¹ In attempting to solve all political problems, different or even conflicting political visions and programs are presented as diverse ideologies ranging from extreme left to extreme right.⁷² It is very difficult to reach decisions because of the divergent ideologies and the fear of the powerful higher class of society.⁷³

c. The Cultural Situation⁷⁴

Kahirapan is also traceable to the cultural system which has been distorted by improper social behavior.⁷⁵ Sociologically, the cultural system composes values which "are

⁷¹ "Traditionally, in Philippine society, the little man or woman has security in a relation of dependence on some bigger and more powerful individual, who might also be a 'client' of a still more powerful 'patron.' This 'upward' orientation prevents viable self-initiated political organizations among the poor" (CBCP, *Acts and Decrees of the PCP II*, Appendix I, p. 279). This idea is in line with a Filipino expression *palakasan* which means "competition"; it is a system of getting things done through personal (relational) connections rather than personal merit and ability (see *ibid.*, p. 294).

⁷² See *ibid.*, p. 280; see also *NCDP*, no. 5, pp. 22-23.

⁷³ "This fact makes it extremely difficult for decisions, such as on agrarian and urban land reform and taxation, to be made simply on behalf of the poor. Patronage and not ideology is the strength - and the bane - of the Philippine politics. It simply mirrors the agrarian feudal system and keeps the average Filipino in a state of expectant dependency" (O. QUEVEDO, "The New Evangelization and Social Doctrine of the Church of the Philippines, A Country Report," 9-13 November 1992, Manila, p. 2, in FABCOHD).

⁷⁴ *Acts and Decrees of PCP II*, Appendix I, p. 282.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

central criteria by which a member of a socio-cultural group judges his own behavior and the behavior of others."⁷⁶ Values are either positive or negative since they "are basic desires, preferences, and drives governing behavior."⁷⁷ This implies that they can either be assets or liabilities as regards economic, social, intellectual, political, and religious progress. For instance, *kanya-kanya* is a negative value because it implies selfishness.⁷⁸ However, *maka-tao, maka-bayan, maka-Diyos* is a positive value because it is an asset leading to integral human development.⁷⁹ Therefore, it is everybody's moral obligation to filter and select values which facilitate the nation's struggle against *kahirapan*.

d. The Church as a Social and Political Resource⁸⁰

The Church opts for an integral human liberation. The Church in the Philippines, as an institution, has a network of

⁷⁶ P. SWAENEPOEL, *Systems Analysis in Education*, 2nd ed., Manila, University of Sto. Tomas Printing Office, 1985, p. 12.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ "Literally, *kanya-kanya* means 'what is his or what is hers'; an attitude which expresses refusal to share resources in order to build community" (CBCP, *Acts and Decrees of PCP II*, Appendix III, p. 294).

⁷⁹ "*Maka-tao, maka-bayan, maka-Diyos* is a positive orientation towards and advocacy of the human person (tao), the nation (bayan) and God (Diyos). This orientation may literally be translated into 'pro-person, pro-country, pro-God'" (ibid.).

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 286.

77 dioceses, 2,192 parishes, 9,681 chapels, 19 universities and 158 colleges, hundreds of grade schools, radio stations, and publications, hospitals, social action centers, and lay organizations on the parochial, diocesan and national levels. There are 5,572 priests and 10,273 religious men and women plus 21,540 lay teachers and hundreds of administrators in Catholic institutions.⁸¹ Catholics are described as a "social force."⁸² This encouraging title urgently calls the indifferent rich, who have lesser involvement in the Church, to motivate the Filipinos to resolve their social problems.⁸³

B. Councils and Synods of the Philippines prior to the Second Plenary Council

During the Spanish period, the king's permission had to be sought to convoke a provincial council in the Indies. This was primarily based on the system of Royal Patronage although the frequency in the celebration of councils must conform to

⁸¹ Cf. *ibid.* The data presented herein are from the 1989 *Catholic Directory of the Philippines*, Manila, CBCP, 1989. Cf. also P. DE ACHUTEGUI, "Pre-Plenary Council Statistical Profile of the Catholic Church of the Philippines," in *Landas Journal of Loyola School of Theology*, 4 (1990), pp. 184-185.

⁸² This statement is interpreted as "the Catholics as a group are perceived as a potent social, political and cultural force in our society whether toward national development or as a bastion of conservatism" (CBCP, *Final Draft of the Commission on Christian Life [=FDCCL]*, Manila, 1991, p. 6 in CBCP National Coordinating Office).

⁸³ Cf. *ibid.*

the brief of the Pope.⁸⁴ The first attempt to convoke a provincial council was made in 1621 by the fifth archbishop of Manila, Miguel García Serrano, O.S.A. (1620-1629). Its purpose would have been to treat the items decreed in the Council of Trent. Unfortunately, the request was turned down because of the control of the *Patronato Royal* which complicated the decision-making on the Church's system of administration, formulation of legislation, election, and appointments of bishops, etc.⁸⁵

1. The Synod of Manila (1581-1586)

Domingo Salazar, O.P., first bishop of the Philippines, was aware of the feelings of the Filipinos who were beset by serious problems, caused by the conquest and evangelization of the Philippines. The issues arising were the administration of the sacraments to *conquistadores* and *encomenderos*, the collection of tributes from the natives, restoration from the evils inflicted upon the natives, the methodology to be used in preaching the Gospel to pagans and many other related problems. But the bottom line of all these problems was the legitimacy of the Spanish conquest.⁸⁶ The synod begun in 1581,

⁸⁴ See R. MAGNO, *The First Provincial Council (1771)*, p. 15.

⁸⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 22-27.

⁸⁶ Cf. L. GUTIERREZ, ed., "The Synod of Manila: 1581-1586," in *Philippiniana sacra*, 21 (1990), pp. 201-202.

though it was interrupted, it lasted until 1586. The problems really perturbed the natives because of the injustices committed by the *encomenderos* and other Spanish officials. Salazar ultimately wanted to resolve the problem through the Synod of Manila.⁸⁷

What did the Synodal Acts say about the two main issues? Regarding the issue of legitimacy of the Spanish conquest, they recognized that the king possessed a power which was geared towards the greater good.⁸⁸ On the other hand, they also stated that it would be fair to have a military escort since protection from the king was needed to facilitate evangelization.⁸⁹ In this case, the synod was more compromising than straightforward as regards confronting the

⁸⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 204.

⁸⁸ "The king had that universal dominion due to the great end to which he must lead them" (*ibid.*, p. 215). This might be the original text of the Acts as translated in English by Lucio Gutiérrez, Spanish Dominican who specialized in Philippine Church history. According to Gutiérrez, the original Acts of the Synod of Manila are not extant. The Dominican Valentin Marin, in his book *Ensayo de una síntesis de los trabajos realizados por las corporaciones religiosas de Filipinas*, Manila, 1901, vol. 1, pp. 195 and ff. gives us part of the Acts under the title: *Memoria de una junta que se hizo a manera de concilio el año 1582 para dar asiento a las cosas tocantes a la fe y justificación de las conquistas hechas y que además se hicieron por los españoles*. The above text is on p. 198. Gutiérrez further explains that the "universal dominion" refers to the power originating from the pope. By papal concession the Spanish kings participated in the spiritual power of the pope and could promulgate laws to facilitate conversion of the pagans, laws that the native rulers had to support and favor (see GUTIÉRREZ, "The Synod of Manila: 1581-1582," pp. 201-205).

⁸⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 226.

issues of the time since the participants wished to avoid conflict with the Spanish authority.

2. The Philippine Provincial Council (1771)

On August 21, 1769, Charles III issued a *tomo regio*, a royal letter, which called upon the metropolitans of the Indies and of the Philippines to celebrate provincial councils without delay because of the decadence that was sweeping through the Church of the Indies.⁹⁰ The letter outlined twenty articles by which the councils were to be guided before the convocation; for instance, to address the existence of abuses in observing the Royal *Arancel*⁹¹ and the provisions of the Council of Trent as well as abuses of priests demanding support from the royal treasury. There was also question of formulation of the abridged catechism based on the Roman catechism, etc.⁹² The metropolitan who executed the *tomo regio* of Charles III was Archbishop Basilio Sancho de Santa Justa y Rufina (1767-1787).⁹³

⁹⁰ Cf. R. MAGNO, *The First Philippine Provincial Council (1771)*, p. 31.

⁹¹ "The official schedule of stole fees allowed on the occasion of the performance of certain religious functions, such as weddings, funerals, etc." (J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, p. 138).

⁹² See R. MAGNO, *The First Philippine Provincial Council (1771)*, pp. 32-36.

⁹³ See *ibid.*, pp. 36.

3. Provincial Council of Manila (1907-1910)

The Provincial Council of Manila was convened in 1907 by Archbishop Ambrose Agius, O.S.B., the new apostolic delegate. This council attempted to make the Philippine Church independent of the *Patronato Royal*.⁹⁴ It was a provincial council since it involved only one ecclesiastical province, with the metropolitan archbishop of Manila, then the only archbishop in the Islands, and the suffragan bishops of the Philippines. Nevertheless, this council assumed the nature of a national council since it covered the national problem which was the need to unite hierarchy and the laity after the Spanish-American Revolution and to struggle communally against the spread of Aglipayanism.⁹⁵ Rome approved the decrees on March 19, 1910 and they were promulgated on June 29, 1910.

4. The First Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP I)

The First Plenary Council was celebrated from January 7 to 25, 1953, presided over by the papal legate, Cardinal Norman Gilroy, archbishop of Sydney, Australia. There were thirty Fathers at the council; no lay persons participated. It enacted 751 decrees divided into 10 different "titles" following very closely the provisions of the 1917 Code. The

⁹⁴ See J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings of Philippine Church History*, p. 337.

⁹⁵ See CBCP, *Primer on the PCP II*, Manila, CBCP National Coordinating Office, 1989, p. 26; the initial version of this document was published in *CBCP Monitor*, 9 (1988), pp. 1-21.

decrees were promulgated on August 15, 1956 and took effect on February 15, 1957. Four long years elapsed between the celebration of the council and the promulgation of the decrees. The council was followed shortly thereafter by the announcement of the celebration of the Second Vatican Council.⁹⁶

The context of the PCP I was the post World War II period when the CWO wanted to revive the Church's mission, principally in the war stricken areas. Secondly, it continued the admonition of the Provincial Council of Manila regarding the spread of Aglipayanism.⁹⁷ PCP I has a distinct polemic tone which echoes tridentine reforms, as indicated in its introductory decree.⁹⁸ The primary thrust of PCP I, which was

⁹⁶ Cf. CBCP, *Primer on the PCP II*, pp. 23-24.

⁹⁷ "Denique diligenter perpendenda sunt, quod ad executionem attinet, Statuta recenter a Sacra Congregatione Consistoriali approbata de annuis Episcoporum Conventibus, quos vocant Catholic Welfare Organization, decretum eiusdem Sacri Consilii, quo Vicariatus Castrensis in Insulis Philippinis erigitur, et maior sollicitiorque defensio fidei catholicae integritatis morumque catholicorum adversus conatus in dies crebriores dissidentium, qui Aglipay, nuncupantur..." (Pius XII letter to Norman Cardinal Gilroy, 8 December 1952 in *Acta et Decreta Primi Concilii Plenarii Insularum Philippinarum (=Acta of PCP I)*, Manilae, Typis Pontificae Universitatis Sancti Thomae, 1956, pp. xii-xiii). Cf. also warning against invalid celebration of the Holy Mass by the schismatic Aglipayan priests (*Acta of PCP I*, no. 340, Manilae, Typis pontificae universitatis Sancti Thomae, 1956, p. 120).

⁹⁸ "Quoniam sine fide, ut ait Apostolus, impossibile est placere Deo, nos Patres Primi Concilii Plenarii Insularum Philippinarum a fide, quae juxta Tridentinum 'est humanae salutis initium fundamentum et radix omnis justificationis,' ducimus initium" (*PCP I*, no. 1, p. 3).

addressed by the Catholic hierarchy of the Philippines, was to exhort the clergy and people to follow the basic faith.⁹⁹ Finally, the Catholic hierarchy of the Philippines hoped that PCP I would constitute a bond of faith and unity among the people. For this reason, to restore the order of the Church and country, the hierarchy of the Philippines proposed three main approaches: reconstruction of the social order, promoting a vigorous social conscience through renewal, and organization of spiritual and social energy in a form approved by the Church and under the direction of the hierarchy.¹⁰⁰

5. Decisions and Policies of the CBCP

The CBCP decisions and policies reflect the official stand and the mind of the Philippine hierarchy. To date, two published books contain the official letters and statements of the CBCP. The first volume (1968-1983) reflected that "the Church in the Philippines in the 1960s and early 1970s seems to have become more and more active and aware of the role of the social apostolate in the mission of the Church itself."¹⁰¹ The second volume (1984-1990) demonstrates a relevant response to a contemporary Philippine situation. The

⁹⁹ "... Our first act in this Plenary Council was to declare Our complete and irrevocable adhesion to this one true Faith, as it is understood and taught by Peter's successors in the See of Rome" (*Acta of PCP I*, Appendix Quinta, p. 316).

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 318-319.

¹⁰¹ R.P. HARDY, *1968-1983*, p. 2.

Church's role becomes more sensitive to critical social and moral issues during the post-Marcos period. These studies led the CBCP to convoke PCP II. Some of the very important congresses in the history of the Church of the Philippines, to which these pastoral letters were addressed, were the national Marian Year (letters of February 2, 1985 and August 6, 1985), National Eucharistic Year (November 26, 1986), and the National Catechetical Year (January 31, 1990). The PCP II was the culmination of these different events.¹⁰²

C. The Second Plenary Council of the Philippines

1. Plenary Councils in General

In the wider sense, councils and synods are assemblies of bishops and other church leaders who deliberate on issues and matters concerning the faith and discipline of the Church. The early councils of the Church were legislative and judicial bodies; through them the bishops exercised their teaching office in a collegial or more authoritative manner.¹⁰³ In the strict sense, "the Plenary Councils gather together bishops of a number of ecclesiastical provinces, and sometimes the bishops of a whole nation."¹⁰⁴ This implies a distinction in the scope of jurisdiction between the general or ecumenical

¹⁰² Cf. T. BACANI, *Towards the Third Millennium – The PCP II Vision*, Manila, 1991, p. 5.

¹⁰³ Cf. CBCP, *Primer on PCP II*, p. 5.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

council, and the provincial council or diocesan synod. A more precisely combined canonical description is found in the Code of Canon Law:

Can. 439 - §1. A plenary council, that is, one which is held for all the particular churches belonging to the same conference of bishops, is to be celebrated as often as it seems necessary or advantageous to the conference of bishops, with the approval of the Apostolic See.

Can. 445 - A particular council sees to it that provision is made for the pastoral needs of the people of God in its own territory, and it possesses power of governance, especially legislative power, so that with due regard always for the universal law of the Church it can decree what seems appropriate for increasing faith, organizing common pastoral activity, directing morals and preserving, promoting or protecting common ecclesiastical discipline.¹⁰⁵

Synods were introduced in the middle of the second century by the successors of the apostles who became aware of their collegiality in order to solve controversies which arose in the early Church. In the Middle Ages, ecumenical councils enjoyed the clearest precedence over regional synods which consequently broadened the jurisdictional scope of the

¹⁰⁵ "Concilium plenum, pro omnibus scilicet Ecclesiis particularibus eiusdem conferentiae Episcoporum, celebretur quoties id ipsi Episcoporum conferentiae, approbante Apostolica Sede, necessarium aut utile videatur.

"Concilium particulare pro suo territorio curat ut necessitatibus pastoralibus populi Dei provideatur atque potestate gaudet regiminis, praesertim legislativa, ita ut, salvo semper iure universalis Ecclesiae, decernere valeat quae ad fidei incrementum, ad actionem pastorem communem ordinandam et ad moderandos mores et disciplinam ecclesiasticam communem servandam, inducendam aut tuendam opportuna videantur" (*Code of Canon Law*, Latin-English ed., trans. prepared under the auspices of the Canon Law Society of America, Washington, D.C., 1983, cc. 439, §1 and 445).

councils. The Council of Trent fixed the structure and pattern of the succeeding councils.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, plenary councils are still essential despite the existence of ecumenical councils since "without particular councils, universal laws cannot effectively filter down to the local level."¹⁰⁷ Particular councils from the third century were also sources of norms for universal Church laws as they corrected abuses, safeguarded faith and morals, and promoted unity which was expressed in the common observance of laws.¹⁰⁸

2. The Second Plenary Council of the Philippines

The convocation of PCP II did not imply that the Church in the Philippines was in crisis.¹⁰⁹ There were only four principal reasons which the CBCP attributed to the birth of the Council:

1. The needed *aggiornamento* [updating] after Vatican II.
2. The signal pronouncements of the Supreme Pontiffs and of several synods of Bishops held in Rome.
3. The significant developments of Ecclesiology and the promulgation of the new Code

¹⁰⁶ See CBCP, *Primer on the PCP II*, pp. 6-7.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 10-11.

¹⁰⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 38. This thought was reiterated and elaborated by Bishop Teodoro Bacani, Filipino theologian and one of the Council leaders: "The Church in the Philippines is in urgent need of renewal and revitalization. Not that it has fossilized or that it is in immediate danger of decay. In fact, the Church here is very much alive and is very much of a social force in Philippine society" (T. BACANI, *Towards the Third Millennium - PCP-II Vision*, p. 6).

of Canon Law, 4. The social and religious changes in our time.¹¹⁰

The fourth reason is particularly important.¹¹¹ According to Bishop Teodoro Bacani, the convocation of the PCP II is simply a church event since a church possesses two complimentary characters: the *stability* of being a socially active institution which is hierarchically organized and the *dynamism* of being endowed to change in order to accomplish its mission.¹¹²

3. The Historical Overview of PCP II

a. The Preparatory Stage

The idea to convoke PCP II was contemplated in the 1980s by the Philippine bishops. The idea finally materialized in October 1987 in Rome. The unanimous decision to convoke the

¹¹⁰ CBCP, *Primer on PCP II*, p. 39.

¹¹¹ "In civil society, the enormous increase in population – over 100%; the awakening to the problems posed by social justice and human rights, stark poverty, migration, and refugees: the breaking down of peace and order; a radical change in the socio-political situation.

"Within the Church itself, the increase in the number of dioceses and of bishops – thrice the figures of 1953; the relative decrease in vocations in comparison with the increase in population; the emerging of a zealous laity; the imperative need of using proper communications media for evangelization; the rise of aggressive fundamentalist groups; and many others" (ibid., p. 41). The qualitative findings regarding church demographical changes are based on P. DE ACHUATEGUI, "Pre-Plenary Statistical Profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," pp. 184-223.

¹¹² Cf. T. BACANI, *Towards the Third Millennium – PCP-II Vision*, p. 4.

PCP II was made twice in Tagaytay City. The oral deliberative vote was made in January 1988 while the written deliberative one was in July 1988. The decision was confirmed by the Congregation for Bishops on November 10, 1988. A coordinating committee for the preparatory work was established under the leadership of Archbishop Oscar V. Cruz, a well known Filipino canonist. Surveys were immediately conducted through questionnaires to 2,704 individuals.¹¹³ The result of the survey revolved around seven principal themes.¹¹⁴ These

¹¹³ There was a random sampling from groups in the Church of the Philippines: "bishops, parish priests, major religious superiors, secular institutes, the Council of the Laity of the Philippines, presidents and members of lay organizations, and other groups. The members of lay organizations had the highest percentage of responses (76.9%), followed by secular institutes (75.0%), bishops (67.0%), major religious superiors (64.5%), parish priests (44.0%), and Council of the Laity and presidents of lay organizations (32.0%). The responses from parish priests (44.0%, almost 1,000 out of 2,722), coming from all over the Philippines were particularly valuable, since parish priests are in close contact with the lay faithful at the grass roots. Groups, particularly those connected with social action, conducted surveys of their own reaching about another 7,000 people, mostly workers and rural people, and contributed in a very special way to getting a more complete view of the situation. All in all, therefore, responses to various questionnaires reached about 10,000. Schools particularly universities and seminaries, were also tapped and gave their own qualified opinions" (P. DE ATCHUTEGUI, "A Historical Overview of the Preparation and Celebration of PCP II," p. 2, in CBCP Archives).

¹¹⁴ The thoughts of the themes are logically connected: "1. The Council should be geared towards the revitalization of the Christian life both of individual Catholics and of the Church in the Philippines, including its institutions. Christian life, however, would be taken up in all its dimensions, vertical and horizontal, with all its constitutive elements and integrative elements. 2. Hence, the second area of concentration is religious concerns, 3. and the third, social concerns. 4. Since the people who are members of the

pivotal themes were distributed to the following corresponding heads who worked on their respective papers which underwent successive versions:

1. Bishop Cirilo R. Almario, Jr. – Christian Life
2. Bishop Teodoro Bacani – Religious Concerns
3. Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, O.M.I. – Social Concerns
4. Cardinal Jaime Sin – Church and Society
5. Bishop Angel Lagdameo – Laity
6. Bishop Vicente C. Manuel, S.V.D. – Religious
7. Cardinal Ricardo J. Vidal – Clergy

b. The Celebration of the Council

The solemn liturgical opening was held at the Manila cathedral and minor basilica of the Immaculate Conception. All the following sessions, both general and regional, took place at the San Carlos Seminary complex in Makati, Metro Manila. The Council was conducted from January 20 to February 17, 1991. It was during the formal announcement of the convocation of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines that 1991 was

Church are also members of the civil society, there exists the problematic involved in their mutual relationship and interaction. Thus the fifth area of concern was constituted by the theme, Church and society.

"The renewal of Church and society, involving the transformation of persons and institutions, was the goal of the Council. But who would be the agents to work for this intended revitalization and transformation? The agents were identified as 5. The lay faithful, 6. The religious, and 7. the members of the clergy, with all the needed presuppositions, problematic and implications, including the renewal of the agents themselves" (ibid., p. 3).

also officially proclaimed as the "Year of the Second Plenary Council."¹¹⁵

The sessions were accompanied by spiritual activities. Deliberations and resolutions were determined by four dimensions which had been considered essential for achieving the total revitalization of the Church of the Philippines: the focus must be Christ, the orientation must be pastoral, the spirit should be evangelization, and the context, Filipino.¹¹⁶

The resolutions suggested by the regional groups amounted to about 600, although they were later reduced to the more manageable number of 388. The committee on resolutions, together with the board of consultors, was entrusted with the work of incorporating the amendments and integrating propositions which were similar in content or related to one another, so that these could form Part V of the conciliar document: "Agenda for Renewal." They eventually ended up with 132 resolutions, some were retained by the Congregation for Bishops in its review.

The resolutions can be divided into three categories: resolutions on policy orientation; mandatory resolutions but whose implementation is by necessity left to the discretion of

¹¹⁵ Cf. *Acts and Decrees of the PCP II*, p. xxiii.

¹¹⁶ See *ibid.*, pp. lxxvii-lxxxvii.

the diocesan bishops; and resolutions which are obligatory for all the dioceses in the Philippines.

The second version of the Council's message was unanimously approved by the body; unanimously approved too, by both the consultative and deliberative votes on the last day, was the draft of the conciliar document.

The members of the drafting committee were entrusted with the work of publishing the approved document for its submission to Rome. The coordinating committee was composed of the conciliar president, Archbishop Leonardo Legaspi, O.P., the chairpersons of the conciliar commissions, and the secretary general, Archbishop Oscar V. Cruz.

It is important to note that if one assesses the council, four points should be considered:

a) Sociologically, the document presents a forceful description of the Philippine reality of both Church and society.¹¹⁷

b) Theologically, the document offers a clear vision of what the Church in the Philippines is expected to be in order to become truly itself and fulfill its mission: a community of disciples of Jesus is the absolute condition for the renewal of Christian and Church life. Only thus can it be a community-in-mission.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ See *PCP II CD*, nos. 8-33, pp. 7-15.

¹¹⁸ See *PCP II CD*, nos. 34-153, pp. 17-58.

c) Pastorally, the document stresses social ministry for social transformation with a decided preferential option for the poor, thus inculcating the image of "Church of the poor," and strengthening the mission of the Church by means of the basic ecclesial communities.¹¹⁹

d) From the point of view of action, the document emphasizes the need of total involvement of the lay faithful in the life and mission of the Church and in civil society, a greater insertion of religious into the local Church, and the need of total immersion of the clergy in the life of the community, particularly through their own witness and ministry, with strong emphasis on spirituality.¹²⁰

c. Conclusion of the Council

In the closing ceremony held at the Manila cathedral on February 17, 1991, the message of the council to the People of God was solemnly read by different people in various vernacular languages.

d. Towards Implementation

The conciliar document was submitted to the Holy See by Archbishop Legaspi in April 1991, two months after the closing of the council. This period was used by the drafting committee

¹¹⁹ See *PCP II CD*, nos. 154-401, pp. 59-138.

¹²⁰ See *PCP II CD*, nos. 402-671, pp. 139-227.

to polish the approved document based on the results of the voting. It also allowed for the proper "codification" of the approved resolutions. A decree of the Congregation for Bishops dated April 25, 1992 gave the official *recognitio* to the council decrees; the *recognitio* had been previously confirmed and approved by the Holy Father on April 11, 1992. The decrees became effective and acquired their binding force one month after promulgation. The solemn promulgation took place during a eucharistic celebration in the Manila cathedral in July 1992.¹²¹

"The National Pastoral Plan [NPP] is vital for the realization of its Implementation Phase, which calls for translating into reality the Acts and Decrees of the Council."¹²² The first decree of PCP II mentions that a five-to-ten-year national pastoral plan must be drafted and implemented as soon as possible.¹²³ The members of the

¹²¹ Cf. *Acts and Decrees of PCP II*, Decree of Promulgation, pp. xiii-xiv; cf. also c. 8 §2.

¹²² CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, *In the State of Mission, Towards a Renewed Integral Evangelization*, Manila, CBCP, 1993, p. 1.

¹²³ Cf. *PCP II Decrees (=PCP II D)*, no. 1, pp. 232-233. "As an implementing instrument, the NPP has certain characteristics to influence its pastoral use.

"It is above all an ecclesial instrument since its main initiator is the Church, who after discerning the signs of the times, willed to place itself on the road towards conversion and renewal. Its ecclesiality is further underlined by the Plan's continuing relationship to the hierarchy for guidance and leadership.

"The NPP is designed to consolidate Church efforts towards transformative action. It links action to pastoral

national Plan Drafting Committee were chosen in July 1992 during the meeting of the Bishops of the Philippines. The national pastoral plan was to reflect the spirit and decrees of the PCP II. It was on July 11, 1993 that the CBCP officially approved the NPP.¹²⁴ Moreover, the Vision - Mission Statement of the Church in the Philippines was formulated as the guiding instrument for the national pastoral plan.¹²⁵

To sum up, the Catholic Church in the Philippines was uniquely established amidst varied influences from the primitive to the contemporary period. The Catholic faith which was formally handed down by the Spanish missionaries had been safeguarded by the hierarchy through councils, synods,

principles; it grounds praxis in sound doctrine. It promotes action on behalf of justice, charity and unity.

"As a pastoral method, the NPP identifies attitudes and activities that bring about coordination and cooperation among the human, material and institutional resources of the Church. It is an expression of the determination of the Church to be a model of unity for a society that is fragmented.

"Being a planning tool, the NPP offers a systematic framework where the Decrees are classified according to their logic and contextualized within the Conciliar Document whose Acts offer pastoral principles to guide their implementation.

"It is the nature of planning that it is a continuous process that is always subject to evaluation. The NPP is not intended to be rigid and resistant to change. It respects the diverse charisms animating Church communities and whose initiatives could further refine and enrich the NPP" (CBCP, *In the State of Mission, Towards a Renewed Integral Evangelization*, pp. 1-2).

¹²⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, p. i.

¹²⁵ See O. QUEVEDO, "A National Pastoral Plan and PCP II Decrees on Social Concerns," Manila, 1992, pp. 1-8 in NASSA Archives.

official and mostly social letters and statements. The PCP II, as official and local legislation, is the product of a long and arduous historical reflection by the Catholic Church in the Philippines concerning its response to the pastoral needs of the Church today.

CHAPTER II
THE PARTICIPATION OF THE LAITY
IN THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES

In the first chapter we examined the PCP II as a milestone of the Church's history in the Philippines. It arose from a unique historical context which challenged the Church to assume a more effective missionary role as it approached the third millennium. This chapter first presents the theological roots and the general legal principles regarding active lay participation. It then provides more detailed information about the preliminary survey of the situation of the Filipino laity in the Church. This situation can be more clearly understood by considering the cultural and religious background, values, and orientations of the laity. Finally, we shall examine how Vatican II's and the 1983 Code's concept of active lay participation in the mission of the Church can apply particularly to the Church in the Philippines.

A. General Legal Principles Relating to the Laity¹

1. Doctrinal Basis (Vatican II Teachings)

It is essential to consider theology as the basis of canon law rather than seeing canon law as the basis of

¹ This study does not limit "participation" to the laity's relationship with the Church governance; rather, we consider it to be an active lay participation in the life and mission of the Church which is to be treated in this section.

theology.² For this reason, the theology of the "people of God" provides a doctrinal basis for understanding the mission of the hierarchy and the laity. Furthermore, it is probably for this reason that the 1983 Code used the title "The People of God" as an umbrella under which to present all Christ's faithful - laity, clergy, hierarchy, and religious.³ This premise supports the statement of Pope John Paul II that canon

² James K. Mallett claims that the contemporary theological approach to the role of canon law is a dominant one above the traditional way which treated law simply as one of the species of science in general. "Theology is the heart of canon law, supplying the legal corpus with life-giving blood. Theology is concerned with the mystery of Christ, seeking to understand and articulate the inexhaustible..." (J. K. MALLET, ed., "The Role of Canon Law in the Light of *Lumen gentium*," in *The Ministry of Governance*, Washington, D.C., CLSA, 1986, p. 99). See also the assertion of Cardinal Jerome Hamer, at that time secretary of Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith, about the inseparability for the revision of Canon Law from the work of Ecumenical Council (J. HAMER, "The Code and the Council," in *L'Osservatore romano*, [February 14, 1983] p. 9).

³ The first two chapters of *Lumen gentium* deal with the mystery of the Church and the Church as people of God. The third chapter speaks about the Church as hierarchical while the fourth is on the laity. This structural arrangement is adopted by the 1983 Code in Book II as The People of God (herein taken as a heading although it is derived from *Lumen gentium* ch. 2) for the same reason that it comprises Part I as "Christ's Faithful" (the Church in general), Part II, "The Hierarchical Constitution of the Church", and Part III "Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life" (SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium* [=LG], 21 November 1964, nos. 9-38, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* [=AAS], 57 [1965], pp. 12-43 [English translation in A. FLANNERY [ed.], *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents* [=FLANNERY, I], 1992 rev. ed., Northport, NY, Costello Pub. Co., 1992, vol. 1, pp. 359-396]).

Law is to be interpreted in the light of Vatican II because the Code is to be a reflection of Vatican II ecclesiology.⁴

a. *Lumen gentium*

Lumen gentium, the basic conciliar document regarding the Church,⁵ directly concerns the laity who belong to the faithful and participate in the life and mission of the Church. It teaches clearly that

the faithful who by Baptism are incorporated into Christ, are placed in the people of God, and in their own way share the priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ, and to the best of their ability carry on the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world.⁶

⁴ See JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Constitution, *Sacrae disciplinae leges*, 25 January 1983, in AAS 75, II, (1983) pp. viii-ix; see also *Code of Canon Law Latin-English Edition*, Washington, CLSA, 1983, pp. xiv-xv. "Among the elements which characterize the true and genuine image of the Church we should emphasize especially the following: the doctrine in which the Church is presented as the people of God (cf. *dogmatic constitution, Lumen gentium*, chapter 2) and hierarchical authority as service (cf. *ibid.*, chapter 3); the doctrine in which the Church is seen as a *communio*..." (*ibid.*). The Vatican II spirit is reflected in the 1983 Code; this was John Paul II's persisting option during the drafting process and at the point of formal promulgation (cf. J. A. CORIDEN, *An Introduction to Canon Law*, p. 38; cf. also J. HAMER, "The Code and the Council," p. 9).

⁵ As a dogmatic constitution, *Lumen gentium* is the most solemn form of conciliar utterance (cf. A. DULLES, "The Church," in W. M. ABBOTT, gen. ed., and J. GALLAGHER, trans. ed., *The Documents of Vatican II: With Notes and Comments by Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Authorities* [=ABBOTT], The American Press, New York, 1966, p. 11). *Lumen gentium* is "practically the principal text of the Second Vatican Council" (J. HAMER, "The Code and the Council," p. 9).

⁶ LG, no. 31, in FLANNERY, I, p. 388.

Lumen gentium shows clearly that the foundational elements of the laity's responsibility for the mission of the Church are derived from the sacrament of baptism.⁷ Various forms of lay participation are based on their sharing in the three *munera*⁸ of Christ:

a) Prophetic office – the proclamation of the kingdom of the Father is not understood as something exclusively entrusted to the hierarchy through whom Christ fulfills his

⁷ See *LG*, no. 33, in FLANNERY, I, p. 390; see also E.J. KILMARTIN, "Lay Participation in the Apostolate of the Hierarchy," in J.H. PROVOST, ed., *Official Ministry in a New Age*, Permanent Seminar Studies No. 3, Washington, D.C., CLSA, 1981, p. 89.

⁸ The term "*munus*" referring to lay persons is used in *LG*, no. 31 (AAS 57 [1965], p. 37). It is difficult to translate (cf. B.F. GRIFFIN, "The Treefold-Munera of Christ and the Church," in E.G. PFNAUSCH, ed., *Code, Community Ministry, Selected Studies for the Parish Minister Introducing the Code of Canon Law*, 2nd rev. ed., Washington D.C., CLSA, 1992, p. 16); nevertheless, it has a wider meaning than an "office" which is Flannery's English translation. Norman Tanner used the word "prophetic role" to translate *de munere prophético*: "The holy people of God has a share, too, in the prophetic role of Christ..." (N.P. TANNER, English editor, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, Washington D.C., Sheed & Ward and Georgetown University Press, 1990, vol. 2, p. 858). It may also refer to a "place," "post," "function," "employment," and "duty" (cf. J. WHITE, *A Latin-English Dictionary for the Use of Junior Students*, 27th ed., Boston, New York, etc., Ginn and Company, 1866, p. 392). Generally, it has a comprehensive and secular usage: "the action demanded of or a requisite for a person, a function, task... A duty owed by a citizen to the State [e.g. military service, tenure of magistracies] or by a community [e.g. payment of taxes]; an official post or appointment. It also means "service" which has a very informal character (see C.T. LEWIS and C. SHORT, *A Latin Dictionary*, founded on Andrew's edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary, rev., enl., and in great part rewritten, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1969, p. 1176) which is very compatible with the PCP II's theological emphasis on servant leadership (see *PCP II CD*, nos. 528-531, pp. 180-182).

prophetic ministry. Rather, the laity also play a role in evangelization with their special vocation to preach the word and bear witness to God's message.⁹ Although there is a common dignity and sharing in preaching God's word, the distinction between sacred ministers and the laity is carefully maintained.¹⁰

b) Priestly office - the laity share in the priestly office of Christ through the cultic and sacramental life of the Church. They broaden the area of their participation in liturgy by having it live also in their daily undertakings. "And so, by worshipping everywhere by their holy actions, the laity consecrate the world itself to God."¹¹

c) Royal ministry - the sharing of the laity in the royal office of Christ is seen primarily in terms of the Christian's kingliness of service and victory over the power of sin.

By their secular activity, they help one another achieve greater holiness of life, so that the world may be filled with the spirit of Christ and may the more effectively attain its destiny in justice, in love and in peace.¹²

⁹ See *LG*, nos. 30 & 35, in *FLANNERY*, I, pp. 388, 391-392.

¹⁰ See *LG*, no. 32, in *FLANNERY*, I, pp. 389-390.

¹¹ *LG*, no. 34, in *FLANNERY*, I, p. 391.

¹² *LG*, no. 36, in *FLANNERY*, I, p. 393.

b. *Apostolicam actuositatem*

If *Lumen gentium* serves as a foundational document for the laity, *Apostolicam actuositatem* is a detailed elaboration of the ideas of the former¹³ with particular reference to the fundamental principles and pastoral directives concerning the lay apostolate.¹⁴ Therefore, *Apostolicam actuositatem* depends on *Lumen gentium* for a full understanding of the lay apostolate. In brief, the foundational teachings of *Lumen gentium* are specified and made more precise in *Apostolicam actuositatem* which focusses on matters pertaining to the laity. *Apostolicam actuositatem* reiterates *Lumen gentium's* dictum of "incorporation into Christ through baptism"¹⁵ as the foundation of the lay apostolate.¹⁶ Consequently, this union with Christ comes alive through the practice of spiritual life creating and maintaining a character of holiness in a person's state and condition in life.¹⁷

¹³ For a proper understanding of the text, *Apostolicam actuositatem* has to be read in the light of *Lumen gentium* (see J.B. SHEERIN, *The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity Commentary*, Glen Rock, New Jersey, Paulist Press, 1966, p. 12).

¹⁴ Cf. SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, *Apostolicam actuositatem* (=AA), 18 November 1965, in AAS, 58 (1966), pp. 837-838, no. 1, in FLANNERY, I, p. 766.

¹⁵ LG, no. 31, in FLANNERY, I, pp. 388-389.

¹⁶ Cf. AA, no. 3, in FLANNERY, I, p. 768.

¹⁷ See AA, no. 4, in FLANNERY, I, pp. 769-772.

The primary objectives of active lay participation are evangelization, the renewal of the temporal order, charitable works, and social aid.¹⁸ Areas of concern and various possible forms of the lay apostolate are enumerated in this document.¹⁹ However, this apostolate, whether individual or collective, is to be coordinated with the hierarchy.²⁰ The final chapter of the document refers to principles to be applied in the training of lay people to carry out an effective apostolate.²¹

c. *Evangelii nuntiandi*

Evangelii nuntiandi is a post-synodal apostolic exhortation published ten years after Vatican II. Beginning with Jesus as the evangelizer, the exhortation applies the task of evangelization to the entire Church. The meaning, content and methods of evangelization are treated in separate chapters, followed by sections dealing with its recipients, the evangelizers themselves, and lastly the role of the Holy Spirit in evangelization. Chapter VI sets out the role of the hierarchy and the laity,²² offering a very broad and positive

¹⁸ Cf. AA, nos. 5-8, in FLANNERY, I, pp. 772-776.

¹⁹ Cf. AA, nos. 9-21, in FLANNERY, I, pp. 776-788.

²⁰ Cf. AA, nos. 23-27, in FLANNERY, I, pp. 789-792.

²¹ Cf. AA, nos. 28-33, in FLANNERY, I, pp. 793-798.

²² See PAUL VI, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii nuntiandi* (=EN), 8 December 1975, nos. 1-82, in AAS 68 (1976), pp. 5-63 (English translation in A. FLANNERY [ed.], *Vatican Council II: More Postconciliar Documents* [=FLANNERY, II], Grand Rapids,

affirmation of active lay participation which often is seen to take the form of prophetic ministry. Active lay participation reflects the image of the missionary Church whose primary task is evangelization.²³ Hence, the laity is to have an indispensable as well as an active presence in the Church.²⁴

d. *Christifideles laici*

After the Synod of Bishops in October, 1987, Pope John Paul II issued *Christifideles laici*, another post-synodal apostolic exhortation, the most recent papal document regarding the Church's teaching on the laity.²⁵ This text is considered to be the direct fruit of the synod.²⁶ It is quite

Michigan, B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982, vol. 2, pp. 711-749). This document was issued to mark three events: the end of the holy year proclaimed for 1975, the tenth anniversary of the close of Vatican II, and the close, one year before, of the fourth Synod of Bishops which had studied the topic of evangelization.

²³ Cf. *EN*, no. 59, in FLANNERY, II, p. 740-741; SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, *Ad gentes divinitus* (=AG), 7 December 1965, no. 35, in AAS 58 (1966) p. 983 (English translation in FLANNERY, I, pp. 838-839).

²⁴ Cf. *AG*, no. 21, in FLANNERY, I, p. 838.

²⁵ See JOHN PAUL II, Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles laici* (=CFL), 30 December 1988, no. 1, in AAS 81 (1989), pp. 393-394 (English translation as published by Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops [=CCCB Edition], Ottawa, 1988, p. 3).

²⁶ "John Paul II's document on the Christian lay faithful, *Christifideles laici* is the most important papal text on the laity since the Second Vatican Council, twenty-five years before" (P. COUGHLAN, *The Hour of the Laity, Their Expanding Role*, Newton, E. J. Dwyer, 1989, p. 1). Peter Coughlan, who

sensitive to the pressing needs of the world today such as those touching human dignity, especially when it is violated; the term "participation" emerged in the text and takes up a new challenge.

The sign and fruit of this trend towards humanism is the growing need for *participation*, which is undoubtedly one of the distinctive features of present-day humanity, a 'true sign of the times' that is developing in various fields and in different ways; above all the growing need for participation regarding women and young people, not only in areas of family and academic life, but also in cultural, economic, social and political areas. To be leading characters in this development, in some ways to be creators of a new, more humane culture, is a requirement both for the individual and for the peoples as a whole.²⁷

Moreover, participation becomes concrete when the laity work toward peace and justice in the midst of today's conflicts.

The *participation* by so many persons and groups in the life of society is increasingly pursued today as the way to make a desired peace become a reality. On this road we meet many lay faithful generously committed to the social and political field, working in a variety of institutional forms and those of a voluntary nature in service to the least.²⁸

The theology of active lay participation in *Christifideles laici* revolves around the biblical image of the

was under-secretary of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for the laity visited many countries around the world and his work gave him first hand knowledge of the participation of the laity in the life and mission of the Church.

²⁷ CFL, no. 5, CCCB Edition, p. 16.

²⁸ CFL, no. 6, CCCB Edition, pp. 17-18.

vine and the branches.²⁹ It is also in this ecclesiological context that a very positive definition is given the Christian lay person.³⁰ However, we should neither give lesser significance to nor ignore the definition or indeed any teaching of *Lumen gentium*, *Apostolicam actuositatem*, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, and other related documents since all of these are the basic fonts of *Christifideles laici*.³¹

2. The Legal Basis (The 1983 Code of Canon Law)

The Code opens the door to a clearer understanding of and a more developed legislation on the laity. The 1917 Code has paid less attention to the formulation of the provisions

²⁹ "I am the vine, you are the branches" (Jn 15:5) is the scriptural basis of this document which the Second Vatican Council proposed to help reveal the mystery of the Church (cf. *CFL*, no. 8, *CCCB Edition*, pp. 20-22). It is one of the biblical images used to describe the Church in *Lumen gentium* (cf. *LG*, no. 6, in *FLANNERY*, I, p. 353). It is an image that depicts a clearer idea of active lay participation in the three *munera* of Christ. The laity are not only laborers but part of the vine. "Only from inside the Church's mystery of communion is the 'identity' of the lay faithful made known, and their fundamental dignity revealed. Only within the context of this dignity can their vocation and mission in the Church and in the world be defined" (*CFL*, no. 8, *CCCB Edition*, p. 22).

³⁰ See *CFL*, no. 9, *CCCB Edition*, pp. 22-24.

³¹ See P. COUGHLAN, *The Hour of the Laity*, p. 39. For *LG* and *AA* as key documents of the 1983 Code of Canon Law (see also R.A. DUSTON, *The Rights and Obligations of the Lay Christian Faithful: The Second Vatican Council through the Revised Code of Canon Law*, Romae, Pontificia Studiorum Universitas a S. Thoma in Urbe, 1986, pp. 60-61).

on the laity.³² This was recognized by the *coetus*³³ during the drafting stage. It noted from the beginning a "silence" in the 1917 Code's dealing with the laity.³⁴ A very remarkable accomplishment of the 1983 Code, then, is the fact that less

³² *De laicis* was listed as the third part of Book II, *De personis. De clericis* has the most provisions, followed by *De religiosis* (cf. F. CLAEYS BOUUAERT et G. SIMENON, *Manuale iuris canonici ad usum seminariorum*, 5th ed., Gandae et Leodii, 1939, vol. 1, pp. x-xii. One example of a minimal treatment on the laity is seen in the fact that there were only two canons (c. 682 - the right of the laity to receive spiritual assistance and c. 683 - the prohibition against wearing clerical dress) which directly concern the rights and obligations of the laity: "Quoad hoc vero personale statutum laicorum in Ecclesia, mens fuit ut ipsum sobrietatem saperet nec multis oneratur praescriptionibus. Verum est quidem vigentem Codicem solummodo duos canones continere sub titulo De laicis..." ("De laicis deque associationibus Fidelium," in *Communicationes*, 2 (1970), p. 95; cf. J.A. CORIDEN, T. J GREEN and D. E. HEINTSCHEL, eds., *The Code of Canon Law; A Text and Commentary [=A Text and Commentary]*, New York, Paulist Press, 1985, xv, p. 159; cf. J.A. ABBO and J.D. HANNAN, *The Sacred Canons; A Concise Presentation of the Current Disciplinary Norms of the Church*, St. Louis, Mo., B. Herder Book Co., 1952, vol. 1, p. 358).

³³ The *coetus* (a study group of the Pontifical Commission for the Revision of the Code of Canon Law) on *De laicis deque associationibus fidelium* had Alvarus del Portillo as *relator* with eleven other members whose names are listed in *Communicationes*, 1 (1969), p. 31. The *coetus* met in six sessions. The first session was on November 28 - December 3, 1966 (cf. *Communicationes*, 17 [1985], pp. 164-196) while the last session was from April 7-11, 1975 (cf. *Communicationes*, 18 [1986], pp. 365-407). The last schema of the Code of Canon Law was prepared and presented to Pope John Paul II on April 22, 1982 and the final revision was done by a small group of selected experts with the Pope (cf. J. FOX, "A General Synthesis of the Work of the Pontifical Commission for the Revision of the Code of Canon Law," in *The Jurist*, 48 [1988], p. 802). The dates show how the council documents were able to be used to influence the formulation of the 1983 Code with particular reference to the laity.

³⁴ "...Huic silentio nostro tempore remedium apponendum est..." (*Communicationes*, 1 [1969], p. 95).

emphasis is placed on the distinction between the laity and the clergy.³⁵ It is a subtle change because it tones down the radical distinction between the clergy and the laity found in the 1917 legislation.³⁶ However, there is nevertheless a real

³⁵ The Code does not intend to eliminate distinctions between the clergy and the laity. It still maintains the distinction while considering the commonality between which the two reflect Vatican II's concept of *communio*. It is also important to note that distinction and commonality complement one another in the attainment of the goals of the People of God. For an application of the principle of variety and the principle of equality as two basic principles in treating the constitution of the People of God (see J. HERVADA, "Christ's Faithful," in *Code of Canon Law Annotated*, Latin-English edition of the Code of Canon Law and English translation of the 5th Spanish-language edition of the commentary prepared under the responsibility of Instituto Martín de Azpilcueta, edited by E. CAPARROS, M. THÉRIAULT and J. THORN, Montréal, Wilson and Lafleur Limitée, 1993, p. 185 [further references are designated as *Code of Canon Law Annotated*]).

³⁶ There was certainly a problem concerning the Church's discipline on the laity. The emphasis on the power of the clergy in the 1917 Code can be explained historically from the Protestant Reformation. The provisions on the clergy who were under attack at that time needed more systematic treatment. Secondly, the legislators of the 1917 Code (from 1904-1917) did not consider the vitality of the laity compared to the way we contemplate it today. "Por olvidar esta circunstancia o, loque es peor, por desconocer tan siquiera las líneas fundamentales trazadas por el legislador eclesiástico, hay quienes afirman en nuestros días que, desde hace muchos siglos, las clérigos se olvidaron de la importancia y personalidad que compete a los laicos en la Iglesia; y se quejan amargamente de que la presente legislación canónica centre, casi por completo, su atención en los clérigos, con la excesiva preocupación por salvar los fueros de la jerarquía eclesiástica, que el protestantismo había querido destruir. Otros, que también denuncian esta preterición del laicado en el derecho, tratan de explicarla diciendo que durante los años en que se preparó la codificación actual de la Iglesia (desde el 1904 hasta el 1917) no era conocida la vitalidad y operosidad de los seglares, tal como providencialmente hoy la contemplamos..." (M.C. DE ANTA, A.A. LOBO, and S.A. MORAN, eds., *Comentarios al Código de derecho canonico con el texto lega latino y castellano*, Madrid, Biblioteca de autores

distinction between the two. The 1917 Code stated:

By divine institution the clergy are distinct from the laity in the Church, though not all of the orders of the clergy are of divine institution. Both clerics and laymen may be religious (canon 107).³⁷

The 1983 Code does not use the word *distincti*:

Can. 207 – §1. Among the Christian faithful by divine institution there exist in the Church sacred ministers, who are also called clerics in law, and other Christian faithful, who are called laity.³⁸

Moreover, the distinction does not imply polarization or opposites; otherwise it would tend to be quite dangerous when dealing with the ecclesiology of communion.³⁹ In fact, the 1983 Code formulated distinct lists of obligations and rights of the faithful⁴⁰ and of the laity.⁴¹ It is in this context that the 1983 Code has opened the door to a more active lay

cristianos, 1963-64, vol. 1, p. 3).

³⁷ "Ex divina institutione sunt in Ecclesia *clerici a laicis distincti*, licet non omnes clerici sint divinae institutionis; utrique autem possunt esse *religiosi*" (CIC 107). The English translation is in S. WOYWOD, *A Practical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, revised and enlarged edition of combined volumes I & II, New York City, Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., 1958, p. 58.

³⁸ "Ex divina institutione, inter christifideles sunt in Ecclesia ministri sacri, qui in iure et clerici vocantur; ceteri autem et laici nuncupantur" (c. 207, §1).

³⁹ See P. COUGHLAN, *The Hour of the Laity*, p. 44.

⁴⁰ Cf. cc. 208-223: "The rights and obligations of the faithful are fundamental and they form the basic nucleus of the juridical status of the faithful" (J. HERVADA, "Christ's Faithful," p. 186).

⁴¹ Cf. cc. 224-231.

participation of the laity. On the other hand, had the wording of the 1917 Code been retained and other emendations not made, the Code could have perpetuated negative consequences which could then lead to treating the laity as passive members of the Church.

Active lay participation is legally rooted in two canons namely, cc. 204, §1 and 225. These two canons contain the most proximate description of the laity, and set the base for lay participation. In other words, they contain the basis and the general applications of the laity's tasks. Further arguments to illustrate this statement can now be put forward.

a. Canon 204, §1

Canon 204 is an introductory and basic canon for *Liber II: De populo Dei*. It is a succinctly condensed canon which contains the basic theological truths⁴² presenting Vatican II's ecclesiology of communion.⁴³

Can. 204 - §1. The Christian faithful are those who, inasmuch as they have been incorporated in Christ through baptism, have been constituted as the people of God; for this reason, since they have become sharers in Christ's priestly, prophetic and royal office in their own manner, they are called to exercise the mission which God has entrusted to the Church to fulfill in the world, in accord with the condition proper to each one.⁴⁴

⁴² Cf. *A Text and Commentary*, p. 122.

⁴³ Cf. J. HAMER, "The Code and the Council," p. 2.

⁴⁴ "Christifideles sunt qui, utpote per baptismum Christo incorporati, in populum Dei sunt constituti, atque hac ratione

Active lay participation is naturally based on this doctrine since the *laici* are part of the *christifideles*.⁴⁵ Canon 204, §1 is taken from the two foundational documents, *Lumen gentium* and *Apostolicam actuositatem*.⁴⁶ The canon foresees that baptism produces two simultaneous effects, namely, incorporation in Christ and in the People of God. Through baptism, a person is called to participate in the three *munera* of Christ and to carry out the mission entrusted by God to the Church.⁴⁷ "Incorporation in Christ" entails personal responsibility which comes unconditionally from baptism; on the other hand, "becoming members of the People of God" entails social responsibility which varies according to a person's juridical condition.⁴⁸ Hence, these juridical

muneris Christi sacerdotalis, prophetici et regalis suo modo participes facti, secundum propriam cuiusque condicionem, ad missionem exercendam vocantur, quam Deus Ecclesiae in mundo adimplendam concredidit" (c. 204, §1).

⁴⁵ Regarding c. 204: "...the scope of the Code is restricted to Catholics of the Latin rite. For the most part the term 'faithful' should be understood and applied in this restricted meaning unless in a particular canon the broader understanding is evident. This canon is an example of the broader meaning given 'the faithful.' All the baptized, Catholics and non-Catholics, make up the people of God" (J.M. HUELS, *The Faithful of Christ, The New Canon Law for the Laity*, Chicago, Franciscan Herald Press, 1983, p. 20).

⁴⁶ Cf. *LG*, nos. 9-17, 31, 34-36, in FLANNERY, I, pp. 359-369, 388-389, 391-394; *AA*, nos. 2, 6, 7, 9-10, in FLANNERY, I, pp. 767-768, 772-775, 776-778.

⁴⁷ Cf. *LG*, no. 31, in FLANNERY, I, pp. 388-389.

⁴⁸ Cf. *A Text and Commentary*, pp. 122-123. However, J. Hervada was keen to note "with respect to this condition of the faithful, no distinction is made between men and women;

effects of baptism hereby constitute someone a person in the Church with rights and duties proper to Christians.⁴⁹ Furthermore, the participation of the faithful in the *munera* of Christ is not hierarchical.⁵⁰ In principle, the faithful as such do not possess *potestas* automatically effected by baptism. Power and participation are of two different things. In this case, the sacramental distinction between the ordained and the non-ordained remains the principle for understanding correctly the nature of active lay participation without prejudice to what is prescribed in the Code.

b. Canon 225, §2

Canon 225 serves as a qualifying canon for the laity since it brings out the particular dimension of active lay participation. The first paragraph notes that lay persons are deputed by baptism and confirmation to the apostolate in general.⁵¹

Can. 225 - §2. Each lay person in accord with

women have the same rights as do men..." (J. HERVADA, "Christ's Faithful," p. 186).

⁴⁹ Cf. c. 96.

⁵⁰ Cf. J. HERVADA, "Christ's Faithful," p. 186.

⁵¹ Cf. *LG*, no. 33, in *FLANNERY*, I, pp. 390-391; "Participation of the Laity in the Church's Mission" as the heading of *AA*, no. 2, in *FLANNERY*, I, p. 767; "Foundations of the Lay Apostolate", *AA*, no. 3, in *FLANNERY*, I, p. 768, and "Individual Apostolate in Certain Circumstances", *AA*, no. 17, in *FLANNERY*, I, p. 784; see also *AG*, nos. 21 and 36, in *FLANNERY*, I, pp. 838-839, 850.

their own vocation is bound by a special duty to imbue and perfect the order of temporal affairs with the spirit of the gospel; they thus give witness to Christ in a special way in carrying out those affairs and in exercising secular duties.⁵²

Canon 225, §2 reveals the secular character of active lay participation: "But by reason of their special vocation it belongs to the laity to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will."⁵³ If we were to combine c. 204 §1 with c. 225, a logically accurate description of the laity clearly appears; three conditions are derived from being part of the Christian faithful (incorporation into the People of God through Baptism, sharing in the three *munera* of Christ, and sharing in the Church's mission) and the two others from being a lay person (right and obligation to exercise an apostolate in the Church and the world, and to imbue the temporal order of Christ in the secular sphere).⁵⁴ The 1983 Code does not offer

⁵² "Hoc etiam peculiari adstringuntur officio, unusquisque quidem secundum propriam condicionem, ut rerum temporalium ordinem spiritu evangelico imbuant atque perficiant, et ita specialiter in iisdem rebus gerendis atque in muneribus saecularibus exercendis Christi testimonium reddant" (c 225, §2).

⁵³ LG, no. 31, in FLANNERY, I, p. 389; cf. AA, nos. 2-4, 7, in FLANNERY, I, pp. 767-772, 773-775; SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et spes* (=GS), 7 December 1965, no. 43, in AAS, 58 (1966), pp. 1061-1064 (English translation in FLANNERY, I, pp. 943-945).

⁵⁴ Cf. R.A. DUSTON, *The Rights and Obligations of the Lay Christian Faithful: The Second Vatican Council Through the Revised Code of Canon Law*, p. 217.

a precise definition of the laity, although most of the elements are found in c. 225. Parallel or contextual analysis can help us arrive at a clear description.

The secular dimension of active lay participation also makes the laity even more distinct from the clergy⁵⁵ leaving aside the essential difference of priesthood which both have.⁵⁶ The secular perspective of active lay participation can be further explained through a concrete example when Pope John Paul II admonished the priests in Mexico City:

Do not forget that temporal leadership can easily become a source of division, while the priest should be a sign and factor of unity, of brotherhood. The secular functions are the proper field of action of the laity, who ought to perfect temporal matters with a Christian spirit.⁵⁷

The secular character of the laity is well explained in *Christifideles laici* by updating the ideas found in the foundational council documents.⁵⁸ The element of distinction

⁵⁵ If the secular character is attributed to lay persons, an ecclesial nature is given to sacred ministers. This is possible because there are certain activities which are not proper to the clergy. See *LG*, no. 31, in *FLANNERY*, I, pp. 388-889; see also c. 285; see also *A Text and Commentary*, p. 132.

⁵⁶ See *LG*, no. 10, in *FLANNERY*, I, p. 361.

⁵⁷ JOHN PAUL II, Address to Priests in Mexico City, "A Vision of the Priest's Role," 27 January 1979, in *AAS*, 71 (1979), p. 182 (English translation in *Origins*, 8 [1978-1979], p. 548). The thoughts of this admonition were repeated in his address to the Brazilian Bishops, "Communion, Participation, Evangelization," 10 July 1980, in *AAS*, 72 (1980), pp. 944-961, English translation in *Origins*, 10 (1980-81), p. 135.

⁵⁸ Cf. *LG*, no. 31, in *FLANNERY*, I, pp. 388-389; *AA*, no. 4, in *FLANNERY*, I, pp. 769-772.

between the clergy and the laity as expressed by the words "sets a person apart" and "in different ways" is accompanied by its relatedness as expressed by other terms such as "without bringing about separation" and "all the members." In fact, *christifideles laici* is a much better term to illustrate the distinction which is easily detected in the use of the term *laici*, while their relatedness is founded in *christifideles*.

But among the lay faithful this one baptismal dignity takes on a manner of life which sets a person apart, without, however, bringing about a separation from the ministerial priesthood or from men and women religious. The Second Vatican Council has described this manner of life as the "secular character"; "the secular character is properly and particularly that of the lay faithful" (LG, no. 31).

...Certainly *all the members* of the Church are sharers in this secular dimension but *in different ways*. In particular the sharing of the *lay faithful* has its own manner of realization and function, which, according to the Council, is "properly and particularly" theirs. Such a manner is designated with the expression "secular character" (LG, no. 31).⁵⁹

Furthermore, active lay participation according to *Christifideles laici* has a particular character and emphasis which is

deep involvement and the full participation of the lay faithful in the affairs of the earth, the world and the human community, but also and above all, they tell of the radical newness and unique character of an involvement and participation which has as its purpose the spreading of the Gospel that

⁵⁹ CFL, no. 15, CCCB Edition, p. 34-35.

brings salvation.⁶⁰

Finally, the laity's vocation to sanctify is brought to fulfillment "in a particular way in their *involvement in temporal affairs* and in their *participation in earthly activities*."⁶¹

Therefore, in *Christifideles laici*, the doctrinal basis of active lay participation has evolved at the same time as the laity's involvement is becoming more and more developed to answer the needs of the time. *Christifideles laici* is not actually a "new" document; it is an offshoot of *Lumen gentium* and the earlier documents which pertain to the laity. On the other hand, it is undeniable that the 1983 Code which was promulgated five years before *Christifideles*, takes a slower pace in developing the Vatican II teaching; this is partly due to the stable character of the law. Nevertheless, the Code reflects the spirit of the Council and the scriptural tradition. *Christifideles laici* for instance, may have advanced the theology of the laity, but we must recognize the fact that both Vatican II and the Code contributed to expanding the role of the laity in the Church.

Having established this here, we can now turn to particular law which plays an important role of mediating the doctrinal and legal basis of active lay participation. To do

⁶⁰ CFL, no. 15, CCCB Edition, p. 38.

⁶¹ CFL, no. 17, CCCB Edition, p. 42.

so, we shall examine its role in the Church of the Philippines.

B. Particular Application to the Church in the Philippines

1. The Situation of the Laity

a. Demography

The total population of the Philippines in 1993 is 66,100,00 (1989 - 56,965,108). There are 51,087,000 Catholics (1989 - 46,781,742) which means that they comprise 77% (82% in 1989) of the entire population. The pre-plenary council statistical profile has the following breakdown: the Church hierarchy is composed of 24 archbishops (active and retired) and 96 bishops (active and retired); there are 2,165 religious priests and 3,407 diocesan priests; as for religious, there are 9,856 sisters, 483 brothers, and 1,483 scholastics; the laity are 46,764,225.⁶² To take a look at the world's statistical survey on Catholics, the Philippines represent 5.4% of the 864,379,000 Catholics in the world.⁶³ However, there has been an increase in the non-Catholic populations

⁶² Cf. CBCP, "Towards the Greening of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," in *PCP II Exhibits*, Manila, National Coordinating office, p. 5. Cf. also the graphic illustration of Appendix A which was based on P.S. DE ACHUTEGUI, "Pre-Plenary Council Statistical Profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," p. 229. For the 1993 data, cf. J. KROEGER, "At the Grass Roots," in *World Mission*, 5 (1993), p. 25; see Appendix B for a demographical overview of the Churches in Asia.

⁶³ Cf. CBCP, "Towards the Greening of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," p. 6.

through the past 40 years (still to be projected for 1993 since the present basis is the 1953-1989 survey).

...there has been decline in the percentage of Catholics with a subsequent inversely proportional growth in the percentage of the non-Catholic population.

More significant is the fact that for the recent past 6 years (1983-1989), the average decline in the Catholic population has more than doubled (.283% annually) compared to that of the previous 30 years (1959-1989).⁶⁴

Moreover, there is a relative lack of priests in the Church in the Philippines based on a comparative ratio: "there is 1 Catholic priest for every 2,145 Catholics in the world. In the Philippines, there is 1 Catholic priest for every 8,220 Catholics."⁶⁵ One can probably assume that there are plenty of vocations in the Church in the Philippines but they do not match the relative increase of population.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 9; cf. also Appendix C which is based on P.S. DE ACHUTEGUI, "Pre-Plenary Statistical Profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," p. 224. The cited sources are the 1983 and 1989 Catholic Directories of the Philippines.

⁶⁵ CBCP, "Towards the Greening of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," p. 7; the problem of the serious shortage of priests is aggravated by the problem of uneven distribution (cf. P.S. DE ACHUTEGUI, "Pre-Plenary Council Statistical Profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," pp. 205-209).

⁶⁶ For the differences of profile of the Church in the Philippines between 1953 and 1989 in CBCP, see *Primer on PCP II*, pp. 24-25.

b. Some General Features of Filipino Religious Culture

i. A Predominantly Catholic Culture

The pre-pleenary statistical survey shows that there were 10,183,366 (17.7 %) non-Catholics in the country;⁶⁷ "the majority of the non-Catholic population is Christian - although it is not easy to determine in each case the actual percentage of Christians and non-Christians."⁶⁸ Although quantitatively Catholic,

Studies show that only 2% belong to the Church-related affairs. Only 10% are considered regular churchgoers or 'stockholders' of the Church. Approximately, 88% are the 'invisible laity' unchurched, uninvolved and untouched by the parish.⁶⁹

The problem regarding nominal Christianity will be further explained when we examine the phenomenon of split-level Christianity.

⁶⁷ Cf. P.S. DE ACHUTEGUI, "Pre-Plenary Council Statistical Profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," p. 184.

⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 209. The available percentage breakdown is that of 1970: "...the Aglipayans count the second largest with 5.2% . The muslims in the South represent a good 5% and other Protestants 2.9% . Included in this group are the members of the *Iglesia ni Cristo* [Church of Christ], the Buddhists, and other who follow animistic religious beliefs" (J. CAROLL, *Philippine Social Institutions*, Manila, Solidaridad House, 1970, p. 40; as cited by V. MAYNIGO, *Evangelization and Philippine Culture in the Light of the Second Vatican Council*, p. 21).

⁶⁹ CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, *PCP II Final Draft on the Laity (=FDL)*, Manila, CBCP National Coordinating Office, 1991, p. 3.

ii. Concerning Religiosity amidst Diverse Ethnic Groups and Cultures

"...There are about 56 recognized different ethnic-linguistic groups in the country."⁷⁰ This probably entails different expressions of faith so that the task of evangelization with respect to inculturation faces a more challenging situation. For instance, it has been an ongoing responsibility of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines to determine the use and extent of the introduction of the vernacular into the liturgical celebrations without prejudice to c. 838, §3.⁷¹ In fact, there are only 12 vernacular languages which are officially recognized and accepted for the liturgy by the CBCP.⁷² This is just an example which explains the reality faced by a Church which is composed of diverse ethnic groups and varied cultures.

iii. Folk Catholicism

Folk Catholicism "constitutes the main expression of the faith of the majority of the lay faithful although many

⁷⁰ NCDP, no. 2, pp. 20-21.

⁷¹ Cf. SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum concilium* (=SC), 4 December 1963, no. 63, in AAS, 56 (1964), p. 117 (English translation in FLANNERY, I, p. 21).

⁷² Cf. F. TESTERA, *Canon Law Digest of the Philippine Catholic Church*, p. 130; W. C. PAGUIO, *Notes on Sacraments and Sacramentals According to the Revised Code of Canon Law*, Manila, St. Paul Publications, 1991, vol. 1, p. 14.

negative elements continue to dominate, sometimes tending to overshadow the positive elements of such religiosity."⁷³ Folk Catholicism has both advantages and disadvantages. There are two kinds of Christianity, namely, the "official" one where the beliefs and practices are approved by the Church, and "folk" Christianity, which although not approved, is nevertheless supported and encouraged by tradition in the community.⁷⁴ Furthermore, folk Catholicism is the unconscious blending of the Christian teaching with the old but still popular religious beliefs.⁷⁵ Hence, folk Catholicism should be prudently treated and properly guided by the agents of evangelization so that an integration of faith and culture takes place.

The Church is faithful to its traditions and is at the same time conscious of its universal mission; it can, then enter into communion with different forms of culture, thereby enriching both itself and the cultures themselves.

The good news of Christ continually renews the life and culture of fallen man...⁷⁶

⁷³ *FDL*, p. 7. On the other hand, the PCP II Commission on Christian Life had a similar observation as that of the Commission on the Laity and pointed out that the pre-Christian superstitious and animistic beliefs are practiced especially in rural areas (see *FDCCL*, pp. 4-5).

⁷⁴ Cf. D.J. ELWOOD and P.L. MAGDAMO, *Christ in Philippine Context*, Quezon City, New Day Publishers, 1971, p. 1; see L. N. MERCADO, *Christ in the Philippines*, Tacloban City, Philippines, Divine Word University Publications, 1982, p. 52.

⁷⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

⁷⁶ *GS*, no. 53, in *FLANNERY*, I, p. 958. Pope Paul VI expressed a very sympathetic view on folk Christianity in *EN*, no. 48, in *FLANNERY*, II, pp. 731-732; cf. L.N. MERCADO, *Christ*

Folk Catholicism is expressed in popular religiosity which, according to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines,

is a springboard as well as invitation for the deepening of a more religious consciousness. The valid elements of an authentic faith, which are present in the profound religiosity of our people, need and demand that they be purified, interiorized,⁷⁷ made mature, and brought to bear on daily life.

iv. Marian Devotion

"Marian devotions constitute such an important place in the popular Catholicism of the Filipino."⁷⁸ Marian piety is expressed in praying the rosary, floral offerings, Marian movements, novenas, etc. Mary in her Immaculate Conception is the patroness of the country. More than one fourth of all the parishes in the Philippines have taken the Virgin Mary as their patron.⁷⁹ Besides the fact that the Filipinos have deep respect for women, devotion to the Blessed Mother entails a

in the Philippines, pp. 52-53.

⁷⁷ CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Letter on Mary in Philippine Life Today, *Ang Mahal na Birhen (=MB)*, 2 February 1975, no. 69, in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, vol. 1, p. 113. This document is also published in *Boletín eclesiástico de Filipinas*, 49 (1975), pp. 256-291; one of the suggestions of NCDP for Filipino Catholic spirituality is to "respect the indigenous cultural aspect of popular religiosity that has been purified and elevated to sound Christian devotion" (NCDP, no. 208, p. 115; cited in *PCP II CD*, no. 442, p. 152).

⁷⁸ NCDP, no. 239, p. 128.

⁷⁹ Cf. *MB*, no. 6, in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, pp. 92-93.

psychological explanation of the Filipino practice: a person can approach the mother when he or she cannot approach the father.⁸⁰ Moreover, Marian devotions are rightly considered to be sacramentals and not sacraments.⁸¹ For instance, it is against liturgical principles to pray the rosary while the Eucharist is being celebrated. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines has reflected on certain aspects of Marian religiosity, especially those "which might have deflected from genuineness and purity, and hence are in need of reform and renewal."⁸² Moreover, the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines reiterates that

towards popular religious practices, our attitude has to be one of critical respect, encouragement and renewal. They must lead to the liturgy. They have to be vitally related to Filipino life, and serve the cause of full human development, justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. We must have the courage to correct what leads to fanaticism or maintains people infantile in their faith...⁸³

Hence, one pastoral imperative is to ensure that the Catholic

⁸⁰ See J. BULATAO, "A Socio-Psychological View of Philippine Church," in *Home Life Magazine* (1965), pp. 41-47. This psychological phenomenon can also be explained through a Filipino perception of the inaccessible God who can only be approached by intermediaries. This was already discussed in Chapter I, p. 8.

⁸¹ It is important to note the meaning of sacramentals in c. 1166 as well as the precedence of sacraments over them; see *SC, nos. 59-60*, in FLANNERY, I, p. 20; see also J.T. MARTIN DE AGAR, "Sacramentals," in *Code of Canon Law Annotated*, pp. 732-733.

⁸² *MB*, no. 77, in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, pp. 115-116.

⁸³ *PCP II CD*, no. 175, p. 65.

religion is not simply reduced to saint- or Mary-centered devotion but that it always remains Christ-centered.⁸⁴

v. Split Level Christianity

Jaime C. Bulatao, S.J., a Filipino psychologist, attempted to define split level Christianity as "the existence within the same person of two or more thought and behavior systems which are inconsistent with each other."⁸⁵ The inconsistent personalities are "Christian" and the person's "own way of living and believing" which has become a traditional practice.⁸⁶ Split level Christianity may have a historical explanation since "the syncretic assimilation of traditional religion and of Christianity has contributed to this phenomenon."⁸⁷ There is a grouping together into separate compartments of orthodox elements of Christian life and elements of traditional beliefs. Consequently, moral life frequently is not motivated by Christian faith.⁸⁸ In studying the strengths and weaknesses of the Filipino character, the commission on the laity observed that in spite of the richness and uniqueness of faith expression of a Filipino, there is

⁸⁴ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 174, p. 65.

⁸⁵ As cited in D.J. ELWOOD and P.L. MAGDAMO, *Christ in Philippine Context*, p. 10.

⁸⁶ Cf. P.T. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, pp. 12-13.

⁸⁷ V. MAYNIGO, *Evangelization and Philippine Culture in the Light of the Second Vatican Council*, p. 23.

⁸⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 24.

also an inconsistency that exists between faith and practice.⁸⁹ The observation of tendencies towards the practice of split level Christianity is further confirmed in the tabulation of responses to a questionnaire conducted by the Council of the Laity in the Philippines.⁹⁰

c. Qualitative Interpretation of the Survey⁹¹ regarding the Laity as Presented in the Final Draft

i. The Untapped and Invisible Majority⁹²

A majority of 88% of Filipinos are unchurched, uninvolved, and untouched by the parish. Only 2% are active in

⁸⁹ Cf. *FDL*, p. 7.

⁹⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 8-9; see appendix D. This is one of the four sources concerning the situation of the Filipino Catholic laity which is a collated report on responses gathered by the Council of the Laity from six hundred and six respondents.

⁹¹ "The situation of the Filipino Catholic laity is dealt with in four separate reports which are hereunder collated and summarized. The first and primary source are twenty-three position papers and comments which have been submitted, thirty-two lay organizations, associations and movements affiliated with the Council of the Laity of the Philippines were requested to prepare their respective position papers. The second source is the position paper submitted for the 1987 Synod of Bishops in Rome by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines; each bishop was asked to submit his observations according to a questionnaire distributed to all bishops of the world. The third source are the statements gathered from the national congresses held in the last five years, the statements were the 'results of prolonged discussion and sharing and were approved by the participants of the aforesaid ecclesial events.' The fourth and last source is the collated report on responses gathered by the Council of the Laity from six hundred and six respondents" (*FDL*, p. 2).

⁹² *FDL*, p. 3.

Church-related affairs while the remaining 10% are the regular churchgoers or "stockholders of the Church." The frequent recipients of sacraments are women who are termed as a "highly visible-audible laity" while the majority of men may be termed "reluctant laity."⁹³ The majority of the laity still regard the Church as the bishops and priests and not as the People of God. This phenomenon can be described as a clerical monopoly which consequently discourages the laity from being apostolically active.⁹⁴ The laity comprises the majority of the marginalized poor. "They are not properly oriented and informed about the significance of their participation and involvement as lay faithful..."⁹⁵

ii. The Urgent Need for Re-Evangelization⁹⁶

The first evangelization took place during the Spanish period, but "the Christian religion came to the Philippines as a religion of the colonizers and was accepted by the majority of the people, but the Christian faith was not interiorized deeply by them."⁹⁷ Furthermore, "re-evangelization" is needed

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Cf. *ibid.*; CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, *PCP II Final Draft on Religious Concerns (=FDRC)*, Manila, CBCP National Coordinating Office, 1991, p. 4.

⁹⁵ *FDL*, p. 3. The term used by the commission on religious concerns regarding this phenomenon is "religious ignorance"; cf. *FDRC*, p. 4-5.

⁹⁶ *FDL*, p. 4.

⁹⁷ *FDRC*, p. 4.

because the majority of the Filipino lay faithful must take a more active role in evangelization. This task is urgent because the Word of God, the doctrines of the faith, and the teaching of Vatican Council on the laity have been either misunderstood or wrongly applied.⁹⁸

iii. The Laity-Clergy Relationship⁹⁹

The laity are reluctant to participate in the apostolate of the Church because of the intimidating authority of the clergy and hierarchy.¹⁰⁰ There are three areas where clerical domination is predominant: a) the lay ministry is understood by the laity as competition for the priestly ministry while the priests regard lay ministry not as a role which belongs to the laity by right from their baptism and as a charism from the Holy Spirit, but as a mere instrumental delegation of power; b) the area of communication - the teaching authority of the clergy predominates in transactions between the clergy and the laity; hence, there is only a downward communication; c) the area of decision making - active participation is simply informative in the sense that consultation often takes

⁹⁸ See *FDL*, p. 4.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ See *ibid.* The authoritarian tendency particularly among pastors was also noted by the PCP II commission on Christian life and the commission on the clergy (cf. *FDCL*, p. 6; CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, *PCP II Final Draft on the Clergy (=FDC)*, Manila, CBCP National Coordinating Office, 1991, p. 8.

place after the decision has been reached.¹⁰¹

iv. The Need for Affirmation and Definition of the Laity's Role¹⁰²

The laity are instruments of salvation; they are not mere objects but also subjects of the mission of the Church. There is little coordination (overlapping of functions) among the numerous lay organizations and associations in the parish. Oftentimes, the lay person is a mere passive helper of the priest rather than a co-worker or collaborator in the service of the Church. The main reason for this is that the role of the laity has not been clearly affirmed and defined.¹⁰³

v. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Filipino Character¹⁰⁴

The strengths which are enumerated as examples are:

(a) social sensitivity expressed in "pakikipagkapwa-tao and pakikiramdam"; (b) deep love for the family and group centeredness; (c) cheerful and fun-loving approach to life and its ups and downs; (d) the capability to adjust and adapt to circumstances and environment; (e) a great capacity for endurance in the face of difficult times; (f) a willingness to do hard work and to take risks, and (g) intimate religiosity often based on the tangible and touchable.¹⁰⁵

The weaknesses which are mentioned are

¹⁰¹ Cf. *FDL*, pp. 5-6.

¹⁰² *FDL*, p. 6.

¹⁰³ Cf. *FDL*, p. 6-7; *FDCCL*, p. 6.

¹⁰⁴ *FDL*, p. 7.

¹⁰⁵ *FDL*, p. 7.

(a) extreme personalism which leads to unreasonable preferences as well as graft and corruption; (b) excessive concern for the family which leads to dynasties and factionalism; (c) lack of discipline which results in inefficiency and carelessness; (d) passivity and lack of initiative; (e) lack of sense of nationhood and active awareness, appreciation and love of the Philippines; (f) self-serving attitude that generates a feeling of over competitiveness; (g) tendency to be superficial, lacking in analysis and reflection.¹⁰⁶

vi. The Need for Spirituality of the Laity¹⁰⁷

There is a need to create a spirituality that is proper to the secular character of the laity¹⁰⁸ because the survey reveals that there is a dichotomy between activity "within the Church" and "Church-related activities".¹⁰⁹ The dichotomy as such was already discussed in the phenomenon of split-level Christianity. Therefore, to allow the laity to attain a fuller awareness of their spirituality as well as to assume their active role in the Church, the commission on the laity strongly called for the establishment of centers for the adequate formation of the laity.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ *FDL*, p. 7.

¹⁰⁷ *FDL*, p. 8.

¹⁰⁸ The secular character calls for a spirituality that is concerned with building a better society which is characterized by development, justice, peace, and integrity of creation; cf. T.C. BACANI, *Towards the Third Millennium - The PCP-II Vision*, p. 85.

¹⁰⁹ *FDL*, p. 8; see Appendix D.

¹¹⁰ Cf. *FDL*, p. 8.

2. Cultural Factors as Potential Means to Active Lay Participation

This analysis of Filipino cultural values has three purposes. First, it aims to integrate with the cultural values the doctrinal and the legal teachings regarding lay participation. It anticipates to this extent the task of inculturation. Cultural values offer a possible application of the teaching to the particular situation of the laity in the Philippines. Secondly, it is necessary to take a look at cultural values in order to understand the Filipino laity.¹¹¹ Thirdly, "within Philippine cultural values are found great potentials for growth as well as limitations to development and to the formation of mature Christians..."¹¹² These cultural values comprise a value system which "provides the perspective for decision making and action as the people go through the vicissitudes of time."¹¹³

¹¹¹ See P.T. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 5.

¹¹² *NCDP*, no. 24, p. 28.

¹¹³ V. LIGO-RALPH, "Some Theses Concerning the Filipino Value System," in *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society*, 18 (1990), p. 149; cf. L. QUISUMBING, "The Philippine Cultural Values," in *Sociology in Philippine Setting*, Manila, Alemar's, 1976, p. 69, as cited in R.D. TANO, *Theology in the Philippine Setting*, p. 37.

a. The Influence of *sakop*¹¹⁴ in the Filipino Value System

The National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines presented a neutral description of *sakop* by pointing out both its positive and negative elements. On the other hand, Leonardo N. Mercado gave a detailed description of *sakop* in his attempt at a "Filipino theology." In a wider sense, *sakop* is a part and parcel of Filipino social life because from birth to death a person is expected to have a reference group.¹¹⁵ Hence, it is primarily a social orientation. In the strict sense, "*sakop* is primarily his kinsmen."¹¹⁶ However, if he is away from them he forms or joins his own peer group to make up a new *sakop*. The following are some features of *sakop* as pointed out by Mercado:

1) *sakop* implies a certain sense of sacrifice of interest because one considers the fulfillment of *sakop* as his or her own fulfillment;

2) *sakop* is an informal group which always prevails over the individual; it might exist in an employment agency, an

¹¹⁴ *Sakop* "indicates a close union among all members under the idea of 'belonging'... But the 'belonging' idea implies an experience of submission, excessive dependence and passivity" (NCDP, no. 228, p. 122). It is considered "the basic trait of the Filipino" (P.T. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 6).

¹¹⁵ Cf. L. N. MERCADO, *Elements of Filipino Theology*, p. 54; ID., *Christ in the Philippines*, p. 88; L.R. QUISUMBING, "Religious Psychology of the Filipino Rural Adult," in *Diwa 2* (1977) p. 16; P.T. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 6.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

emotional support group, sports club, etc;

3) *sakop* mentality is reflected in customs such as questioning a person where he is going or where he is coming from;

4) *sakop* has a strong influence on the individual's decision making;

5) *sakop* is authoritarian and hierarchic;

6) *sakop* does not only include the living but also the dead.¹¹⁷

Furthermore, Mercado views *sakop* as reflected in property ownership. Property is *sakop*-oriented which is by nature communal in the sense that it is expected that it will be shared with others.¹¹⁸ Likewise, *sakop* orientation is reflected in marriage which is not just an affair of two persons but a formal merging of two families.¹¹⁹ There are many other wider reflections of *the sakop* orientations which are consciously or unconsciously carried out by Filipinos in their day to day life.

The relationships arising from *sakop* are regulated by the following particular values:

¹¹⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 55-58.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Cf. *ibid.* p. 190; see the wider influence of *sakop* which is an intrinsic factor of broadening family ties through the *kumpadre* (godfather in baptism) system in W.C. PAGUIO, *Filipino Cultural Values for the Apostolate*, Manila, St. Paul Publications, 1991, p. 36.

1) *pakikisama*:

The attitude of sacrificing one's own interest for the sake of the group and its interest. At times it means giving up one's concerns even when it is against one's values and principles.¹²⁰

The meaning is closely identified with *sakop*. This probably implies that Mercado's concept of *sakop* had influenced to some extent the mind of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines. Nevertheless, the National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines had opted for a purified understanding of this value described as something which genuinely expresses personal sincerity and authenticity.¹²¹

2) *amor propio* is commonly known as a high sense of self-esteem which makes one sensitive to personal affronts, insults, and criticisms.¹²² It is governed by the principle of *sakop* because self-esteem is utilized to maintain the social image of the person. One fears the loss of *sakop* when

¹²⁰ *Acts and Decrees of the PCP II*, Appendix III, p. 294.

¹²¹ Cf. *NCDP*, no. 28, p. 30. Some authors simply describe *pakikisama* in the positive sense like "smooth interpersonal relationships" (P.T. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 6) and as "willingness to share with one another the burdens as well as the rewards of living together" (H. de la COSTA, "The Filipino National Tradition," in *The Filipino in the Seventies An Ecumenical Perspective*, p. 27). However, a compromise description like "conformism and camaraderie" is presented by R.D. TANO (*Theology in Philippine Setting*, p. 38) and "smooth personal relationship always accused of conformism or even conservatism if not praised for sociability or agreeability" by W.C. PAGUIO (*Filipino Cultural Values for the Apostolate*, p. 37).

¹²² Cf. *NCDP*, no. 29, p. 30; P.T. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 6; R.D. TANO, *Theology in the Philippine Setting*, p. 38.

self-esteem is, for instance, morally degraded.

3) *hiya* is a value which is closely linked with *amor proprio*. When self-esteem is violated or threatened, the causal effect is embarrassment or shame; this is known as *hiya*.¹²³ This value forces the person as it were to be more conscious of his *sakop* image.

4) *utang na loob* is defined by the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines as a "debt of inner self. A debt of gratitude born out of the acceptance of proffered help in time of need."¹²⁴ It is a negative definition but is primarily based on the official understanding of the National Catechetical Directory and eventually on a similar idea from Rodrigo Tano.¹²⁵ It expresses a kind of reciprocity which demands a feeling of obligation to repay a favor or a service rendered.¹²⁶

b. The Filipino National Tradition

The Filipino national tradition in this context refers "to a shared historic experience from which the nation derives

¹²³ Cf. *ibid*; *NCDP*, no. 29, p. 30; P.T. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 6.

¹²⁴ *Acts and Decrees of the PCP II*, Appendix III, pp. 295-296.

¹²⁵ Cf. *NCDP*, no. 31, p. 31; R.D. TANO, *Theology in the Philippine Setting*, p. 39.

¹²⁶ Cf. *NCDP*, no. 31, p. 31; R.D. TANO, *Theology in the Philippine Setting*, p. 39; P.T. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 6; W.C. PAGUIO, *Filipino Cultural Values for the Apostolate*, p. 183.

the principles and values by which it lives..."¹²⁷ It is the nation's series of historic experiences which still prevails because of cultural accommodation. Tradition particularly regards the values which have been handed down to posterity by the ancestors; these values may be different from modern values.¹²⁸ According to Horacio de la Costa, the Filipino national tradition can be summed up in five principles:

1) *pagsasarili*: the principle of self-reliance or being a person of your own right.¹²⁹ It is "the act of being in one's own."¹³⁰ The Filipinos have struggled in history to be independent from the colonial powers. It is a determination to develop not only as a autonomous nation but also as individual responsible human beings.¹³¹

2) *pagkakaisa*: unity in the building of a national community through forms of social organization which the people had understood and accepted as well.¹³² It is a concerted action of the national heroes, illustrated in the writings of José Rizal and in Andrés Bonifacio's revolutionary

¹²⁷ H. de la COSTA, "Filipino National Tradition," p. 20.

¹²⁸ Cf. W.C. PAGUIO, *Filipino Cultural Values for the Apostolate*, p. xiv.

¹²⁹ Cf. H. de la COSTA, "Filipino National Tradition," p. 21.

¹³⁰ *Acts and Decrees of PCP II*, Appendix III, p. 295.

¹³¹ See H. de la COSTA, "Filipino National Tradition," p. 27.

¹³² Cf. *ibid.*

charism.

3) *pagkabayani*: patriotism; one should be ready to put the common good of the nation above any private interest.¹³³ It is seen as continuous nationalism even after being treated as colonial subjects for almost four hundred years.

4) *pakikipagkapuwa-tao* is a term that is used in its broadest meaning to describe the act of relating with other persons.¹³⁴ It is a concept based on equality and is understood to be a human solidarity which is directed towards national development and total development of mankind.¹³⁵

5) *pakikisama* is not only a cultural value which regulates *sakop*, but it is also one of the principles of national tradition. As a principle, it is the "willingness to share with one another the burdens as well as the rewards of living together."¹³⁶ Furthermore, *pakikisama* is generally described in terms of equitable sharing of goods and services through the spirit of partnership.¹³⁷

¹³³ Cf. *ibid.*

¹³⁴ Cf. *Acts and Decrees of the PCP II*, Appendix III, p. 294.

¹³⁵ Cf. H. de la COSTA, "Filipino National Tradition," p. 27.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

c. The Filipino Family Loyalty Relationships¹³⁸

Loyalty to family relationships is based on the *sakop* philosophy because the family is the first *sakop*. The *sakop* is the nucleus of the family.¹³⁹ The family is considered the basic, traditional, and cultural value of the Filipinos.¹⁴⁰ Even today, the Filipino family orientation is still affirmed by anthropological and sociological studies.¹⁴¹ This loyalty is nourished by the strong sense of *utang na loob* to the family which is kept as a closely knit, personalistic, and protective unit.¹⁴² On the other hand, loyalty might create a tendency to paternalistic authoritarianism if too much dependency is rendered to the elders who control their subjects in return.¹⁴³ Hence, Filipino family loyalty must be properly regulated in order to be the greatest value affecting the whole life of a Filipino.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁸ W.C. PAGUIO, *The Filipino Cultural Values for the Apostolate*, p. 53.

¹³⁹ Cf. L.N. MERCADO, *Elements of Filipino Theology*, p. 56.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 19, pp. 10-11; *NCDP*, nos. 12-23, 283, pp. 25-28, 151.

¹⁴¹ Cf. W.C. PAGUIO, *The Filipino Cultural Values*, p. 41.

¹⁴² Cf. *NCDP*, no. 15, p. 26.

¹⁴³ Cf. P. SWAENEPOEL, *Sociology of Education*, 2nd ed., Manila, University of Sto. Tomas Printing Office, 1985, p. 70.

¹⁴⁴ See W.C. PAGUIO, *Filipino Cultural Values for the Apostolate*, p. 53.

d. An Appraisal of the Filipino Cultural Values and Orientation

i. Interpersonal Values

The *sakop* as well as the family is person-oriented.¹⁴⁵ The National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines asserts that the stress on the value of the person exists more on the intuitively felt level than on the logically rationalized one.¹⁴⁶ This doesn't imply that a Filipino doesn't make use of his reason whenever he relates to others. The emotional drive is but more pervasive in him in order to be united with *sakop*. The National Catechetical Directory finds this strong personalism to be a potential "basis for a genuine human and Christian commitment to others, to authentic freedom of men and women in society and to their basic human rights..."¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, personalism is reflected in the atmosphere of "harmony," a common characteristic that pervades in the whole value system and endures throughout it. "Harmony" implies a proper relationship with nature and persons.¹⁴⁸ For instance, "harmony" is realized in interdependence among familial relationships, although it implies a broader network of

¹⁴⁵ Cf. P.T. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, pp. 5-6; L.N. MERCADO, *The Elements of Filipino Theology*, p. 119.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. *NCDP*, no. 25, p. 29.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ Cf. R.D. TANO, *Theology in the Philippine Setting*, p. 40.

kinship which also demands a wider network of service.¹⁴⁹

ii. Hierarchic

The *sakop* as well as the family is hierarchic.¹⁵⁰ An historical explanation of the hierarchic society of the Philippines was already discussed in Chapter I. The parental rule which is characterized by great respect and obedience is based on traditions and customs. Moreover, as the country was ruled by the *principales*¹⁵¹ who were the noble family, deep respect for the elders was ever present.¹⁵² There was no doubt that there was an element of fear in disobeying because of consequent punishment. However, the attitude of loyalty to the elders had a strong influence on them.¹⁵³ Parental rule was not absolutely authoritarian; this is a premise based on the possible sharing of paternal benevolence to slaves and

¹⁴⁹ See *NCDP*, no. 15, p. 26.

¹⁵⁰ "Within the Filipino family there is hierarchy of authority. Formal authority resides in the father, but decision-making is shared with the mother who also holds the purse-strings. The eldest in the family, whether boy or girl, has the greatest authority next to the parents and is charged with the responsibility of caring for the younger ones. Respect for elders remains a strong value; family solidarity is stressed - brothers and sisters are close to one another and interdependence among them is encouraged" (*NCDP*, no. 19, p. 27); cf. L.N. MERCADO, *Elements of Filipino Theology*, p. 56.

¹⁵¹ They are the pre-Hispanic *datus* or chiefs; cf. J. SCHUMACHER, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, p. 23

¹⁵² Cf. W.C. PAGUIO, *The Filipino Cultural Values for the Apostolate*, pp. 23-25.

¹⁵³ See *ibid.*, p. 25.

servants both in the past and in the present. They are considered as extensions of master's relatives or *sakop*.¹⁵⁴ There is a need to balance the parental rule and benevolence depending on what befits the family situation.

Finally, the Filipino values and orientations are mostly traditional.¹⁵⁵ The interpersonal and hierarchical behaviors are safeguarded by a traditional framework. Tradition does not imply rigorism which hinders dynamism and growth of the value system. On the other hand, *sakop* philosophy has a greater influence on the whole cultural system since most of the cultural values have an element of smooth interpersonal relationships. This particular context challenged the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines to integrate the doctrinal and legal principles of active lay participation into the cultural system of the Philippines.

To sum up, there was a faster development of the theology of active lay participation in the Vatican II and subsequent documents as attested from *Lumen gentium* to *Christifideles laici*, than in real life. However, the Code of Canon Law tried to translate the teachings of Vatican II into canonical language. Secondly, the understanding of active lay participation in *Lumen gentium* and *Apostolicam actuositatem* served as basic teachings for active lay participation

¹⁵⁴ See *ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. *NCDP*, no. 17, p. 26; H. de la COSTA, "Filipino National Tradition," pp. 20-27.

although they were broad in their perspective. *Christifideles laici*, the most recent document on the laity, relates closely the message of the former to the present application of active lay participation. No doubt the 1983 Code in this matter is the "child" of the Vatican II and the 1917 Code. After all, the 1983 Code provides juridical strength and maintains its fidelity in reflecting the basic teachings of Vatican II on active lay participation. The broader nature of active lay participation is founded in the sharing in the three *munera* of Christ (c. 204, §1) while the specific nature is found in the secular dimension (c. 225, §2).

At this stage, we might easily pose a basic question: does active lay participation as an imperative of Vatican II apply to the present status of the laity in the Philippines? The answer is affirmative, and for two reasons: first of all, the situational analysis as verbalized in the final draft on the laity proves that the recommended pastoral orientation is a call towards a participatory Church.¹⁵⁶ Moreover, there is emphasis placed on active lay participation¹⁵⁷ and this intention is reflected in the decree itself with the promotion of the proper role of the laity and its fostering.¹⁵⁸ The

¹⁵⁶ Cf. *FDL*, pp. 18-19 (this is much more extensive than the analysis contained in the Acts and Decrees).

¹⁵⁷ Cf. *Acts and Decrees of PCP II*, Appendix I, pp. 290-291.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 41, p. 245.

second answer is still hypothetical: the cultural value of *pakikisama* may be utilized as a factor to reinforce active lay participation; the *sakop* or family may be taken as agents of evangelization; other cultural values and orientations discussed herein may have influenced the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines in the formulation of its documents and decrees on the laity. The rest of the dissertation examines how the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines treats the issue by stressing active lay participation and the probable cultural influence in the formulation of the teaching and legislation on active lay participation.

CHAPTER III
THE SECOND PLENARY COUNCIL'S TEACHING AND LEGISLATION
ON ACTIVE LAY PARTICIPATION

The Second Plenary Council's emphasis on active lay participation marks the realization in the Philippines of one of the Church's fondest desires. This teaching and legislation will now be analyzed and discussed. The PCP II had followed a threefold format that included a situational analysis, doctrinal orientations, and the formulation of decrees. One of the purposes of the Council was to provide the basis for a new evangelization to take place on a systematic, coordinated, and nationwide scale.¹ Once the teachings and decrees have been presented they will then be briefly evaluated.

A. General Focus of the Conciliar Teaching

1. A Renewed Church

The general focus of the Plenary Council was renewal.² Its teachings encompass three parts: the renewed Church, renewed evangelization, and the community of disciples:

¹ Cf. O. QUEVEDO, "The New Evangelization and the Social Doctrine for the Church (Philippines - A Country Report)," p. 6.

² *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, Conciliar Document (=PCP II CD), nos. 1-7, 32, Manila, CBCP, pp. 5-6, 14-15.*

workers of renewal. These three elements are key concepts of the vision-mission statement of the Church of the Philippines formulated by the 64th Philippine Bishops' Assembly (1992) and adopted by the National Secretariat of Social Action Network (see Appendix E and F).

The doctrinal focus of the Council, taking into account its application in the Philippine context, is "love of preference for the poor."³ This is not a new teaching nor is it an exact copy of the Latin American theology.⁴ The PCP II

³ This concept was used by PCP II instead of the original liberation theology's "preferential option for the poor," a term which raised problems regarding involvement with the poor in the Latin American Church (cf. G. GUTIEREZ, *The Power of the Poor in History*, Quezon City, Claretian Publications, 1985, pp. 156-157). The CBCP also used "preferential option for the poor" but it associated the meaning with *kagandahang loob* which dynamically refers to "loving compassion" (CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Letter on the Eucharist, "To Live in Memory of Him: One Body, One People [=PLE]," 21 March 1988, in *LS*, vol. 2, p. 172). PCP II used the term "love of preference for the poor" three times in the conciliar teaching particularly in the section entitled "A Mission of Preference for the Poor" (*PCP II CD*, nos. 48-52, pp. 22-23); it expresses a meaningful pastoral approach in view of the distinct nature of poverty in the Philippines. According to Teodoro Bacani, "preferential love means two things: a) that the pastors and other Church leaders devote attention and time to the poor by alleviating their poverty and making them recognize the love of the Lord despite their poverty; b) that there is preferential reliance on the poor in the work of evangelization which means that they are not only evangelized but they themselves become evangelizers (cf. T. BACANI, *Towards the Third Millennium - The PCP-II Vision*, Manila, CBCP, 1991, pp. 26-27).

⁴ The Church in the Philippines, however, may have more than a few similarities with the Church in Latin America (cf. CBCP, Pastoral Letter on Mary in Philippine Life Today, *Ang Mahal na Birhen (=MB)*, no. 69, in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, p. 113).

chose the first beatitude "Blessed are you poor!"⁵ to follow the pattern based on Jesus' way because the Council also opted to maintain the Christocentric thrust in its approach.⁶ The poor include the "little" in society of Jesus' time: children and women.⁷ This theological theme applies to the situation of poverty in the country because of the demographic dominance of the poor in the Church in the Philippines. Moreover, the Church, as noted in the conciliar decrees, is primarily characterized as a missionary community of disciples and a Church of the poor.⁸ Hence, the response to this love of preference should be one of faith characterized by the following factors:

1) It is to be informed and communitarian – a faith which is based on revealed truths which draws one to community.⁹

2) A missionary and maturing faith – one that impels

⁵ Lk. 6, 20.

⁶ See *PCP II CD*, no. 48, p. 22.

⁷ Cf. Lk. 18, 15-117; Lk. 8,1-3; Lk. 24, 1-10; Mt. 28,1-10. These texts are quoted in *PCP II CD*, no. 50, pp. 22-23.

⁸ Cf. T. BACANI, *Towards the Third Millennium – The PCP II-Vision*, pp. 24-25: "no single idea captivated the Council participants and won their assent as completely as the vision of the Church in the Philippines being the Church of the Poor"; L. LEGASPI, "Message of the Council to the People of God in the Philippines," in *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines*, Manila, CBCP, 1992, pp. xvi-xvii.

⁹ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 65-66, pp. 27-28.

a person to evangelize while it deepens itself because it is a life-giving faith.¹⁰

3) Loving – a faith that finds its concrete expression in love.¹¹

4) Inculturated – a faith that is personally valued in one's particular culture and inculcates the good News through the use of tools, methods, and expressions arising from the culture itself.¹²

2. Renewed Evangelization

Our knowledge of the pastoral imperatives of the Church in Asia helps us understand better the kind of evangelization envisioned by the Plenary Council.

Based on the Federation of Asian Bishops' conference's [FABC] V [1990] final statement, the present stage of FABC thinking on evangelization of which six pastoral imperatives have come to the fore which are to pervade the evangelizing mission of the Church in Asia: 1) the centrality of Jesus Christ; 2) sensitivity to pluralism in Asian societies; 3) empowerment of people for mission, ministry, and integral liberation; 4) the encouragement of micro-level initiatives; 5) credibility in lifestyles and deeds; 6) the re-envisioning and replanning of formation processes with particular attention to cultural values and structural factors.¹³

¹⁰ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 67, pp. 28-29.

¹¹ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 69-71, pp. 29-30.

¹² Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 72-73, p. 30.

¹³ This is quoted during the SEAMS VIII Congress (held in Hua, Hin, Thailand on June 16, 1992) by Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, FABC member (O. QUEVEDO, "Notes on the Evangelization

It seems that the FABC is the body to have most influenced the mind of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines. It is also worth noting that the FABC final statement regarding this matter was formulated one year before the opening of the Second Plenary Council. The faith reflection based on the situational analysis of PCP II led to the formulation of pastoral decisions for renewal. Three elements of this renewed evangelization will now be discussed: renewed catechesis, renewed social apostolate, and renewed worship.

a. Renewed Catechesis

A renewed evangelization necessitates a renewed catechesis which is the principal priority of the Church in the Philippines. The idea was presented as such in a pastoral letter proclaiming 1990 to be national catechetical year.¹⁴ The Council retained the characteristics of catechesis; it should be Christocentric, rooted in the Word of God, authentically Filipino, and systematic.¹⁵ This kind of catechesis is certainly necessary since the Council makes a

in Asia in the Context of the Religious," in FABCOHD, p. 4).

¹⁴ Cf. CBCP, Pastoral Letter, "To Form Filipino Christians Mature in their Faith," (=FFCMF) 31 January 1990, in *LS*, p. 27.

¹⁵ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 157-164, pp. 60-62. The original references are: *FFCMF*, p. 216 and CBCP, EPISCOPAL COMMISSION ON EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTIONS, *National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines, Maturing in Christian Faith* (=NCDP), nos. 77-87, Manila, St. Paul's Publication, pp. 53-57.

challenging observation on the contemporary catechetical situation:

For most of our people today the faith is centered on the practice of the rites of popular piety. Not on the Word of God, doctrines, sacramental worship [beyond baptism and matrimony]. Not on community. Not on building up our world unto the image of the Kingdom. And we say it is because the 'unchurched,' the vast majority of our people, greatly lack knowledge of and formation in the faith.¹⁶

Likewise, the National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines observes that "the basic problem of the Church in the Philippines is a problem of catechesis, not of initial proclamation."¹⁷ The maturation stage that causes the catechized to be truly converted is inadequate.

b. Renewed Social Apostolate

A renewed evangelization implies a renewed social apostolate. The Bishops' Conference was seeking for a radical proclamation of the Good News; it accepted both a task and a mission which implement Vatican II's imperative regarding liberation from everything oppressive to humanity and renewing society in all its strata.¹⁸ Hence, this idea is verbalized

¹⁶ *PCP II CD*, no. 13, p. 8.

¹⁷ *NCDP*, no. 64, p. 47.

¹⁸ See PAUL VI, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii nuntiandi* (=EN), 8 December 1975, no. 9, in AAS, 68 (1976), pp. 6-9 (English translation in A. FLANNERY [ed.], *Vatican Council II: More Postconciliar Documents* [=FLANNERY, II], Grand Rapids, Michigan, B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982, vol. 2, p. 714; for the acceptance of the task and mission for

in the promotion of social justice as a very significant thrust of evangelization.

That is why the Church has not hesitated to promote total human development, integral liberation, justice and peace in society and the integrity of creation. *In the Philippines this facet of renewed evangelization needs to be emphasized.* For while the majority of our people are Catholics and our churches are filled on Sundays, our society remains a sick society.¹⁹

The social apostolate has been an enduring activity of the Church in the Philippines. Even before the convocation of the Council, the social apostolate was emphasized:

Admittedly, three decades of Church social action apostolate especially after Vatican II have been very fruitful. In every diocese, a social action center ministers to raise the social consciousness of people, deliver relief and rehabilitation in time of disasters, help the poor train and organize themselves towards economic self-reliance, form peoples' consciences with regard to fundamental human rights, and defend the rights of the poor...

But we must also sadly admit that this social action apostolate has seemingly not produced the desired social impact on the macro-level as evidenced by our national situation.²⁰

Furthermore, the Bishops' Conference has been consistently active in formulating letters and statements whenever the socio-political situation of the country so demanded. These

evangelization and renewal of society, cf. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Letter, "The Bond of Love in Proclaiming the Good News," 25-29 January 1977, in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, p. 145; this document is also published in *Boletín eclesiástico de Filipinas*, 51 (1977), pp. 31-34; PCP II CD, no. 166, p. 62.

¹⁹ PCP II CD, no. 192, p. 70.

²⁰ PCP II CD, nos. 258 & 260, p. 91.

are records of the bishops' walking with their people through events of profound historical significance, such as the Church's contribution in the post-Marcos era.²¹ Even before the establishment of the Bishops' Conference, the Catholic Welfare Organization, which was the pioneer organization of the Church hierarchy, exercised its social role; it was vigilantly conscientious in addressing the needs of war victims.

The social apostolate should also be rooted in an integrated spirituality because this is another aim of renewed evangelization.²² This element is linked with the Council's understanding of a "spirituality of social transformation."²³ The following are some elements of this spirituality:

1) "Confrontation with sinfulness as [a] root problem"²⁴ – at the outset, there are three common fundamental problems which beset Philippine society, namely, feudalism, bureaucrat capitalism, and imperialism. These are considered

²¹ L. LEGASPI, "Introduction to Letters and Statements (1989-1990)," 30 September 1990, in *LS*, p. xii. Archbishop Leonardo Z. Legaspi was the president of the CBCP during this time.

²² Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 187, p. 69. The integrated spirituality is described to be "...a spirituality that seeks for change not only in exterior attitudes but in ecclesial and societal structure..." (ibid., but originally in CBCP, "One People, One Mission," Reflection Paper of the Tagaytay Echo Seminar on the Synod of Bishops, Manila, in CBCP Archives).

²³ *PCP II CD*, no. 262, p. 92.

²⁴ Ibid.

as some of the causes of poverty, conflict, and injustice.²⁵ The theological reflection of the Plenary Council viewed these problems as being beyond the range of ideologies and temporal perspectives. "It is sinfulness that is at the root of our socio-economic and political problems, and we need to name the problems by their true name of sin."²⁶

2) "Conversion and social transformation"²⁷ - the acceptance of sinfulness must lead to conversion and social transformation. Hence, conversion touches the renewal of people's relationships with each other and of their social structures.²⁸

3) "Following Jesus-in-mission"²⁹ - conversion and social transformation are lifelong tasks. The message of

²⁵ Cf. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Reflections on Pope John Paul II's Addresses, "On Social Justice," Appendix II, in R. P. HARDY, 1968-1983, p. 309.

²⁶ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 266, p. 93.

²⁷ *PCP II CD*, no. 270, p. 94.

²⁸ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 271-274, pp. 94-95. Jaime Cardinal Sin, Archbishop of Manila makes a theological reflection about conversion and social transformation: the code COR foresees a "social translation": 1) "To turn to the alleviation of mass poverty as a first priority is an effort at social CONVERSION... 2) Secondly, when we generate more jobs for the millions of our unemployed or underemployed... we enable them to offer their lives and tasks to God. This becomes the "social translation" of the objective of the OFFERING of our daily lives and duties to the Lord... 3) Lastly, as we work toward a more equitable sharing of the fruits of development we do a work of REPARATION. We foster the rule of justice..." ("A Message from His Eminence Jaime L. Cardinal Sin," 6 June 1986, Appendix II, in *LS*, pp. 87-88).

²⁹ *PCP II CD*, no. 275, p. 95.

social transformation will be realized if we pattern ourselves after that which Jesus preached.³⁰

4) "Some characteristics of following Jesus"³¹ – a Christ-centered spirituality of social transformation should be inspired by preferential love for the poor. It is a spirituality that shares the Good News in the midst of deprivation, poverty, and oppression. Hence, it is a radical one because it demands listening to and heeding the voice of the powerless.³²

The purpose of this spirituality of social transformation is to form a "social" conscience which is often lacking among Filipinos.³³ The social doctrines of the universal Church serve as guidelines for developing a social conscience in the area of moral conduct.³⁴ It is also in this

³⁰ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 275-276, p. 95.

³¹ *PCP II CD*, no. 276, p. 95.

³² Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 277, pp. 95-96.

³³ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 283, p. 97.

³⁴ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 283-289, pp. 97-98. The National Social Action General Assembly (NASAGA) exists to implement the universal social teaching in the Church in the Philippines as well as to safeguard orthodoxy in the social apostolate and fidelity to the universal teaching. "In the Philippines, the 1991 National Social Action General Assembly was devoted to a recall and application of the Church's social teachings to the Philippine situation. There, it became obvious that even to social action practitioners the Church's social teachings remain 'her best kept secret.' Hence, the assembly ended with the following reflection: 'All these actions and responses [designated to meet social problems] find their support and inspiration in the social teachings of the Church. Thus, there is a need to study them and share them with the people'" (O.

line that the Church's relationship with the political community is redefined; this reiterates Vatican II's consideration of such a relationship which is characterized by autonomy and cooperation.³⁵ However, "the basic differences as well as the essential corporation [cooperation] between the two institutions have given rise to the Bishops' position of critical solidarity vis-a-vis the government."³⁶ Moreover, "the clergy can teach moral doctrines covering politics but cannot actively [be] involve[d] in partisan politics."³⁷ On the other hand, the teaching that the "laity have competence in active and direct partisan politics is a good rule of thumb to follow."³⁸ However, this is not an absolute rule because

the distinction between moral principles governing politics on the one hand and partisan politics on the other is not always clear-cut in real life and they sometimes become inextricably linked - as when the bare enunciating of moral principles becomes, because of circumstances, in actuality an act of partisan politics.³⁹

QUEVEDO, "The New Evangelization and the Social Doctrine of the Church" [Philippines - A Country Report], Nov. 9-13, 1992; this is a report submitted to the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, p. 7; also quoted in "Social Ministry Towards the Third Millennium: Dreams and Vision," NASAGA, 1991, p. 14).

³⁵ Cf. *GS*, no. 76, in FLANNERY, I, p. 388. This is quoted in *PCP II CD*, no. 336, p. 115.

³⁶ *PCP II CD*, no. 337, p. 115.

³⁷ *PCP II CD*, no. 340, p. 116.

³⁸ *PCP II CD*, no. 342, p. 117.

³⁹ *PCP II CD*, no. 344, p. 117.

There is an urgent call for the lay faithful to participate more actively in political affairs for it is through the laity that the Church has a direct involvement in politics.⁴⁰ To safeguard active lay participation in politics, the Plenary Council enumerated the following guidelines:

a) that the basic standard for participation be the *pursuit of the common good*; b) that participation be characterized by a *defence and promotion of justice*; c) that participation be inspired and guided by the *spirit of service*; d) that it be imbued with a *love of preference for the poor*; and that empowering people be carried out both as a process and as a goal of *political activity*.⁴¹

c. Renewed Worship

"In the Philippines worship has, unfortunately, been often separated from the totality of life."⁴² The Second Plenary Council emphasized the need to connect worship with social, economic, and political life.⁴³ Renewal also deals with the promotion of prayer movements and groups like the charismatic renewal, perpetual eucharistic adoration, etc.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 348, p. 119. The bishops also said: "Our Plenary Council stands on record to urge lay faithful to participate actively and lead in the renewing of politics in accordance with values of the Good News of Jesus" (*PCP II CD*, no. 350, p. 120).

⁴¹ *PCP II CD*, no. 351, pp. 120-121.

⁴² *PCP II CD*, no. 167, p. 63.

⁴³ Cf. *ibid.*; *PCP II CD*, no. 168, p. 63.

⁴⁴ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 169-171, pp. 63-64.

However, the approach of the PCP II to the renewal of popular piety settles for "the critical and fervent use of popular religious practices."⁴⁵ It encourages their frequent use which is accompanied by a critical attitude so as not to underestimate liturgical provisions. The National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines formulated guidelines regarding how a catechist should deal with problems of popular religiosity in relation to the liturgy; for instance, how to harmonize popular religiosity with liturgical seasons.⁴⁶ Likewise, to include Marian devotions as being in consonance with the liturgical seasons, there are concrete guidelines formulated by the Bishops' Conference.⁴⁷

Regarding the renewal of liturgy in general, the Plenary Council emphasized three vital areas:

1) Pre-sacramental catechesis - the sacraments (especially baptism, confirmation, and matrimony) are not administered unless accompanied by a catechesis on the meaning of the sacrament.⁴⁸

2) The renewal of the sacrament of penance - that there be greater appreciation in the sacrament on the part of both

⁴⁵ *PCP II CD*, no. 172, p. 64; cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 175, p. 65.

⁴⁶ Cf. *NCDP*, nos. 331-342, pp. 181-184.

⁴⁷ Cf. *MB*, nos. 16-22, in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, pp. 95-98.

⁴⁸ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 178, p. 66.

laity and clergy. The creative use of community penitential celebrations give rise to greater enthusiasm in celebrating the sacrament.⁴⁹

3) The Sunday celebration of the Eucharist - "the importance of the Sunday Eucharist cannot be overestimated";⁵⁰ there is a need to foster a dynamic relationship with Christ, the celebration is not to be hurried, and there is to be more animation on the part of priests who preach the word of God.⁵¹ The Bishops' Conference had two objectives in proclaiming 1986 as the national Eucharistic year, something reechoed in this aspect of renewal: to deepen eucharistic spirituality and develop ways of bringing people to the Eucharist as well as bringing the Eucharist more closely to their lives.⁵² Furthermore, renewal in the area of popular religiosity involves orienting popular piety to Filipino life; it has to "serve the cause of full human development, justice, peace and the integrity of creation."⁵³

We have seen how the Council focussed on three principal areas of renewed evangelization: catechesis, social

⁴⁹ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 179, pp. 66.

⁵⁰ *PCP II CD*, no. 180, p. 67.

⁵¹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁵² Cf. CATHOLIC BISHOP'S CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, A Pastoral Letter on the National Eucharistic Year, "One Bread, One Body, One People," 23 November 1986, in *LS*, pp. 101-102.

⁵³ *PCP II CD*, no. 175, p. 175.

apostolate, and worship. Although these are inter-related, "the most basic area of renewal, and the one that must receive priority is catechesis."⁵⁴ On the other hand, the absence of any reference to social apostolate in catechesis implies a lack of Christian witnessing and transformation. Furthermore, if there is no worship, catechesis will be reduced to indoctrination. Lastly, without worship, the social apostolate will lose its source of strength.⁵⁵

d. Special Pastoral Concerns

i. Ecumenism

There have been relatively few ecumenical activities since 1964, when Vatican II's decree on ecumenism was implemented. Although common efforts for the defence of human rights and the promotion of justice and peace are relatively frequent, there should be more effort to working together for Christian unity.⁵⁶ More importance should be given to "spiritual ecumenism" in the Church in the Philippines; this implies activities such as common prayer, penance and self-renewal which can draw Catholics nearer to their separated

⁵⁴ *PCP II CD*, no. 183, p. 68; see *NCDP*, no. 64, p. 47; for the many reasons underlining the focus on catechesis in the Philippines (cf. *FFCMF*, in *LS*, pp. 213-214).

⁵⁵ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 185-186, p. 68.

⁵⁶ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 216, p. 78.

brethren.⁵⁷

ii. *The Iglesia ni Kristo* and the Fundamentalists

a) *The Iglesia ni Kristo* is akin to Arianism because "it is an indigenous semi-Christian group that does not believe in the divinity of Christ."⁵⁸ This heretical sect was founded 76 years ago by a Filipino, Felix Manalo. Because it is growing in the Philippines, it has become a rather important political force. The members are very united and disciplined so that their attacks on the Catholic Church have been more virulent than those from other groups in the Philippines.⁵⁹ Their name is derived from the biblical term *iglesia* (church);⁶⁰ this is the reason why the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines adds to its translation of the local Church, *santa* (holy) in order to avoid confusion of identity.⁶¹

b) Fundamentalists are aggressive groups with biases against both the Catholic Church and the mainline Christian

⁵⁷ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 217, p. 79.

⁵⁸ *PCP II CD*, no. 220, p. 80.

⁵⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁶⁰ Cf. Romans 16, 16. "In Romans, Paul uses *ekklesia* only in chapter 16 [letter to the Romans] and always in the sense of the 'local church' (vv. 1,4,5,16,23)" (R. BROWN, J. A. FITZMYER and R. E. MURPHY, *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary, Student Edition*, Great Britain, Geoffrey Chapman, 1993, p. 867).

⁶¹ Cf. *NCDP*, no. 227, p. 122.

communities. They rather came recently to the Philippines; according to the records of the Securities and Exchange Commission, before 1980 there were 228 Protestant groups which entered the country; but from 1980-89, 1448 Protestant groups, mostly fundamentalists, came to the Philippines.⁶² However, the Bishops' Conference notes in particular that the fundamentalists are not mainline Protestant Churches like the Lutherans, Episcopalians, Methodists, and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.⁶³ Rather, they profess that the Bible is the one and only source of teaching for our salvation and we must not believe what is not explicitly taught in it. Other main characteristics, errors, and pastoral challenges regarding these groups were listed in the 1989 pastoral letter of the Bishops' Conference.⁶⁴

It has been extremely difficult to dialogue with the *Iglesia ni Kristo* and the fundamentalist groups. Hence, Church leaders have been very careful in allowing any contact between Catholics and these groups. In this sense, parish priests must encourage and support the training of the laity to defend the faith.⁶⁵

⁶² Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 219, p. 80.

⁶³ Cf. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Statement on Fundamentalist Groups (=FG), "Hold Fast to What is Good (1 Thes. 5:2)", 27 January 1989, in *LS*, pp. 190-191.

⁶⁴ Cf. *FG*, in *LS*, p. 190-195.

⁶⁵ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 221-222, pp. 80-81.

iii. Masonry – because the 1983 Code dropped the word "freemason"⁶⁶ and there have been some changes in Masonic attitudes, many Catholics think they could join Masonic associations. However, the Plenary Council reiterated the prohibition against Catholics joining masonic lodges.⁶⁷ Although "Catholics who belong to a masonic lodge are not *ipso facto* (automatically) excommunicated from the Church...",⁶⁸ there is still a need to deal firmly with problems arising from the membership of Catholics in Masonic lodges; moreover, there is a need to formulate pastoral guidelines on this matter.⁶⁹ The First Plenary Council of the Philippines had a

⁶⁶ An indirect reference however, is provided in the 1983 Code (cf. c. 1374).

⁶⁷ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 230, p. 83. The stand of PCP II is based on the position taken with the Declaration of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on November 26, 1983 (cf. *AAS*, 76 [1984] p. 300 [English translation in *Canon Law Digest* (1983-1985), p. 285). Prior to PCP II, the issue of Philippine masonry was a subject of discussion for several decades (cf. F. TESTERA, *Canon Law Digest of the Philippine Catholic Church*, p. 185). In 1970, the CBCP mandated the Episcopal Commission for the doctrine of the faith to study Catholic experts' views on Philippine masonry which did not always seem to be inimical to the Catholic Church, hence to petition for the lifting of excommunication against Filipino Catholic members of the Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines. The CBCP agreed to submit the petition to the Holy See. The Vatican's reply: "In accordance with the circular letter dated July 18, 1974, which recalls a strict interpretation of c. 2335, the excommunication applies only to persons who are members of associations who militate against the Church. It is on the basis of this principle that the position of the members of the different groups must be judged in each particular case" (*ibid*, p. 188).

⁶⁸ *PCP II CD*, no. 232, p. 84.

⁶⁹ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 233, p. 84.

norm which directly prohibited the faithful from joining Masonic sects because these were designed to militate against the Church.⁷⁰ This was a supplementary legislation to the 1917 Code which forbade Catholics under pain of excommunication from joining masonry.⁷¹

iv. Prisoners - the Plenary Council underlined the urgency of the Church's apostolate for prisoners.⁷² The Church is asked to intensify its advocacy for more humane conditions in prisons and more humane treatment of prisoners. Spiritual assistance to prisoners must also be ensured by the Church.⁷³

⁷⁰ "Denique moneantur crebro fideles de obligatione qua tenentur legitimis potestatibus civilibus obediendi; absterreantur a societatibus anarchisticis, communisticis, socialisticis, et precipue a sectis massonicis et associationibus quae contra Ecclesiam vel legitimas potestates machinantur" (*Acta et Decreta Primi Concilii Plenarii Insularum Philippinarum [=Acta of PCP I]*, no. 273, Manila 1957, p. 95).

⁷¹ Cf. CIC 2335; masonry as directly opposing the Church is indicated by the dependent clause "quae contra Ecclesiam" (cf. C. AUGUSTINE, *A Commentary on the New Code of Canon Law*, vol. III, book V, 32nd ed., St. Louis, Mo., B. Herder Book Co., 1931, p. 339). Furthermore, "the aim of these societies [with particular reference to masonic sects] must be, as the text says, "plotting either against the Church or the legitimate civil power" (ibid., p. 342). This canon is to be interpreted strictly: "The censure is incurred if the society is one which plots against Church or State, openly or secretly, whether members are secret or not, bound by oath or not..." (T.L. BOUSCAREN and A.C. ELLIS, *Canon Law: A Text and Commentary*, 4th rev. ed., Milwaukee, The Bruce Publishing Company, 1966, p. 940).

⁷² Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 234, p. 84.

⁷³ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 237, p. 86.

3. The Community of Disciples

The third part of the general focus of the teaching of the Plenary Council is on the community of disciples. This refers to the agents of renewal: laity, religious, clergy, and communities of renewal. In this section the particular teaching on the laity and the theological basis of lay participation are discussed in more detail.

a. The Second Plenary Council's Particular Teaching on the Laity

There were four points of discussion:

1) the definition and the nature of the laity in *Lumen gentium* -- the Plenary Council enumerated the two fundamental aspects of the lay vocation: a) the full belonging of the lay faithful to the Church and its mystery; b) the secular character of the lay vocation.⁷⁴

2) the foundation of the lay apostolate in *Apostolicam actuositatem* -- the Plenary Council recognized three points: a) the apostolate of the laity is of divine right; b) Christ calls the laity to full participation in the life of the Church and full commitment to its mission; c) the call is by virtue of baptism and confirmation.⁷⁵ The Plenary Council was inspired by the biblical image of the Church, "You too go into

⁷⁴ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 404-406, pp. 139-140.

⁷⁵ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 408, p. 141.

my vineyard";⁷⁶ it reechoes *Christifideles laici's* claim that this is also addressed to the laity who occupy the greater portion of the community of disciples.⁷⁷ The inclusion of the laity is indicated by the word "too". Hence, this new emphasis placed on the element of "lay participation" inspired the mind of the Plenary Council.⁷⁸ The ecclesiology of *communio* which was one of the key concepts of the conciliar documents is also reflected here.⁷⁹ However, this understanding does not overshadow the hierarchical nature of the Church because the teaching refers to the element of collaboration between the laity and the hierarchy.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Mt. 20,7 is a text taken from the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. It is a story of God's generosity, his love for the needy and justice without any class vindictiveness (cf. R. BROWN et al., *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, p. 663).

⁷⁷ Cf. CFL, no. 2, in CCCB Edition, p. 4.

⁷⁸ " 'You go to the vineyard, too,' the call is a concern not only of the bishops, clergy, men and women religious, but also of the laity. The call of the Lord is addressed to all to become agents of Christian renewal. It is in this context that the Filipino Catholic laity's vocation and mission must be understood. This call signifies the Lord's clarion call to the Catholic Laity to work in God's vineyard together with the Bishops, priests and religious, to contribute in equal measure to the work, and to make for a more abundant and plentiful harvest" (FDL, p. 1; in CFL, no. 2, in CCCB Edition, p. 4).

⁷⁹ Cf. The SECOND EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS (1985), *Ecclesia sub Verbo Dei mysteria Christi celebrans pro salute mundi: Relatio finalis*, II, C, 1 as quoted in CFL, no. 19, in CCCB Edition, p. 48. See PCP II CD, no. 411, p. 142.

⁸⁰ Cf. PCP II CD, nos. 409-411, pp. 141-142; CBCP, *Primer on the PCP II*, Manila, CBCP National Coordinating Office, 1989, p. 21.

3) the priesthood of the faithful, based on the theological reflection of the Plenary Council, has three dimensions: a) through baptism, the faithful live the priesthood as a *consecration*; b) the priesthood is a *mediation* of the purpose or plan of God for the transformation and eventual salvation of the world; c) the priesthood is a *sacrifice* of life which is an act of participation in the paschal mystery.⁸¹ These three dimensions imply the root of participation which is baptism (consecration), as well as the reflection of social apostolate (mediation), and the image of Church of the poor (sacrifice).

4) the four aspects of the laity's role and life: a) the laity are called to a community of families; strong family ties should be the model of relationships in the Church renewed and of mature Christian life;⁸² b) the laity are called to Christian presence; they act as sacrament in the world because of their secularity. They are the presence of the Church in the world;⁸³ c) the laity are called to ministry and evangelization; this is a universal call to service and evangelization through the use of individual charisms. The broader scope of the laity's evangelizing activity comprises

⁸¹ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 413, p. 143.

⁸² Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 419-422, pp. 144-146.

⁸³ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 423, p. 146.

education, politics, society, and economics, etc.⁸⁴ d) the laity are called to social transformation; they are called to heal and transform society, to prepare the temporal order for the final establishment of the kingdom of God. Hence, they are the promoters of integral liberation both in the temporal and spiritual spheres.⁸⁵

The teachings on lay participation in the life and mission of the Church in the Philippines are concluded by a discussion on lay spirituality. The spirituality of the laity should be the very core of lay secularity since it creates a lifestyle that reflects the kind of Christian the Church in the Philippines should have.

Lay spirituality consists in being able to see the will of God operating, precisely in one's secular duties, in ordinary things that one does... Lay spirituality is deeply rooted in the secular, in the 'Father's business' in the fields, in the factories, in schools, in offices and homes.⁸⁶

The teaching of the Plenary Council enumerates some traits of lay spirituality based on the National Catechetical Directory which suggested an ideal Filipino Catholic spirituality,⁸⁷ and

⁸⁴ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 428-434, p. 148-150.

⁸⁵ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 435-437, pp. 150-151.

⁸⁶ *PCP II CD*, no. 441, p. 152.

⁸⁷ "The Filipino Catholic spirituality should (a) respect the indigenous cultural aspect of a popular religiosity that has been purified and elevated to sound Christian devotion; (b) include social concern for justice and the poor as an integral component; (c) unify all dimensions of daily life - personal, families; (d) stress the training of lay leaders to participate with clergy and religious in conducting retreats,

the position paper submitted by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines on the occasion of the 1987 Synod on the laity which also came out with the elements seen as necessary for lay spirituality.⁸⁸ They are neither superimposed traits nor are they stereotyped; their purpose is to guide the Filipinos in search for a spirituality of their own.

B. The Decrees of the Plenary Council

Sixteen decrees out of 132 are formulated for the laity. They are found in title X and refer to seven areas of concern. The first speaks of the general pastoral orientation of the laity while the others are sectoral concerns.⁸⁹

recollection, etc.; and (e) bring out the missionary consciousness indicative of the Philippine Church, and its openness to Asian ways of prayer and mysticism that are consonant with authentic Christian worship" (*NCDP*, no. 208, pp. 115-116. As quoted in *PCP II CD*, no. 442, p. 152).

⁸⁸ *PCP II CD*, no. 443, pp. 152-153.

⁸⁹ *De laicis* of the First Plenary Council of the Philippines is found in *Titulus V* with five sections and thirty eight decrees: 1. *de fidelium associationibus in genere* 2. *de actione Catholica* 3. *de juvenum Catholicis associationibus* 4. *de actione sociali* 5. *de precipuis fidelium vitiis corrigendis* (cf. *PCP I*, no. 236-273, pp. 83-95).

Section 1 - Pastoral Orientation:

Towards Active Lay Particippation

The opening section reveals the sources of the decrees since the first decree calls for the promotion of the proper role of the laity as provided in the universal teaching and legislation.

Article 41. #1. The proper role of the laity in the Church and the world should be continually promoted on the basis of the Church's teaching, particularly as found in the Second Vatican Council, Canons 224-231 of the Code of canon Law and the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*.⁹⁰

Secondly, it demonstrates the responsibility of the Bishops' Conference in fostering a more active role for the laity.

Article 41. #2. The CBCP will take steps to foster a more active role of the laity in the Church and to provide, where appropriate, full time, professionally trained pastoral workers to foster the growth of the Church.⁹¹

Hence, this introductory decree points out the basis of lay participation as provided by the universal and particular teachings.

The second decree introduces the network of relationships between the clergy and the laity. It refers to the clergy's responsibility in fostering active lay participation in the apostolate of the Church.

Article 42. #1. Efforts should be exerted, particularly by the clergy, to help the lay

⁹⁰ PCP II D, no. 41 #1, p. 245.

⁹¹ PCP II D, no. 41 #2, p. 245.

faithful to foster their awareness that the theater of their apostolate is the world in which they properly belong, so that they may actively and responsively participate precisely as lay faithful in the common concerns and projects of their communities.⁹²

The following are some of the areas of participation:

a) Article 42. #2. The lay faithful should also be encouraged and helped to assume their duty and responsibility to participate in public life and reform it according to the Gospel values.⁹³

Reform takes on a more radical implication for the laity's role. This decree implements one aspect of the laity's role and life which is to be "called to social transformation."⁹⁴ Furthermore, this decree is based on the introductory decree of the First Plenary Council of the Philippines under *De actione sociali* which is the fourth section of *titulus V, de laicis*. The First Plenary conciliar version particularly concerns pastors and clergy who are to bring about unity between the public and the private life of the laity in accordance with the doctrine of the Gospel.⁹⁵ Hence, the First Plenary Council noted a certain difficulty with full lay participation, referring especially to the expression of

⁹² PCP II D, no. 42 #1, pp. 245-246.

⁹³ PCP II D, no. 42, #2, p. 246; cf. cc. 225, §2.

⁹⁴ PCP II CD, no. 434, p. 150.

⁹⁵ "...parochi et sacerdotes omnes id sibi primarium gravissimumque munus his temporibus incumbere intelligant, ut pro sua parte allaborent ut denuo tota vita publica et privata ad Evangelii doctrinam componatur et perditae oves ovile Christi reducantur" (PCP I, no. 259, p. 91).

responsibility in public life.

b) Article 42. #3. To this effect, a special injunction should be issued for them to assume leading roles and responsibilities in temporal works.⁹⁶

It reiterates the secular character of a lay person whose special talent is to be used for the temporal affairs of the Church.

c) Article 42. #4. Catholics in non-sectarian organizations like civic groups, NGOs [non-government organizations], and POs [people's organizations], should proclaim their faith in Christ, as his witnesses. Such organizations are fertile grounds for such a witnessing evangelization.⁹⁷

The third introductory decree expresses the need for dialogue between the clergy and the laity.

Article 43. Dialogue – one that is open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit – should be

⁹⁶ *PCP II D*, no. 42, #3, p. 246; see cc. 227, 228 and 537.

⁹⁷ *PCP II D*, no. 42, #4, p. 246. The NGOs and the POs are offshoots of cause-oriented groups in the late 1970s, known to be the harbinger of "people power"; they reached their most dramatic expression in the EDSA revolution of 1986. Since then the NGOs and the POs have emerged (cf. O. QUEVEDO, "The New Evangelization and the Social Doctrine of the Church, [Philippines – A Country Report], p. 3-4). NGOs and POs "have taken up issues that are not only related to them professionally [such as women's groups advocating women's rights] but also common good issues, such as freedom from debt, nuclear free zones, human rights, ecological concerns, monitoring of government projects, etc. They are taking the position that the common good is not the concern only of leaders and politicians but of the people. They are waking up consciences, organizing alliances and networks among themselves, and forming themselves into a powerful voice 'of the people.' The new local government Code acknowledges this development and provides official representation of NGOs and POs in local government decision making processes" (ibid.).

encouraged between clergy and laity.⁹⁸

Lack of dialogue hinders the possibility of active lay participation; it eventually perpetuates authoritarianism on the part of pastors;⁹⁹ it also leads to the problem of confusing activities, lack of over-all organization and coordination in the Christian life of the laity especially at the parochial level.¹⁰⁰

The fourth introductory decree is concerned with the ongoing academic formation for an effective lay participation, lay leadership formation, and sanctification as well as pastoral care of people in their places of work through the lines of basic ecclesial communities (BECs).

Article 44. #1. Education for effective lay participation should be ongoing. It should be integrated, related to one's life situation and based on the teachings on the Church.

#2. Special efforts are to be made at sanctifying people in their places of work [offices, schools, factories, etc.]. Direct pastoral care of employees in their work places can be made along the lines of BECs.

#3. Lay faithful and particularly lay leaders should acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to defend and explain the faith to others.¹⁰¹

The third paragraph informs lay leaders as to who can defend

⁹⁸ *PCP II D*, no. 43, p. 246.

⁹⁹ Cf. *FDCL*, p. 6.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *PCP II D*, no. 43, p. 246.

and explain the faith to others;¹⁰² it is a legal reaction against the problems caused by the proliferation of the fundamentalists, *Iglesia ni Kristo*, etc.

The last introductory decree points out a very important obligation in every parish in order to maximize participation of the laity.

Article 45. There should be a system of registration in every parish for all Church members to increase the involvement of the laity in the community and heighten their sense of belonging.¹⁰³

This was often neglected by pastors because of the large number of parishioners which makes acquaintance and the possibility of personal contact rather difficult. (For the decrees not directly quoted in the following sectoral concerns, see Appendix G)

Section 2: The Family

The section on the family contains four decrees, the longest among the sectoral concerns. The first decree in each section usually mentions the basic universal teaching of the Church.

Article 46. #1. A continuing education for Filipino families in accordance with *Catechesi Tradendae* and *Familiaris Consortio*, should be undertaken and Family Life seminars like Pre-Cana, Pro-Life, Marriage Encounters should be made part

¹⁰² See cc. 225, §1, 226, §2, 229, §1.

¹⁰³ *PCP II D*, no. 45, p. 246.

of diocesan/parish pastoral programs.¹⁰⁴

The remaining paragraphs deal with concrete measures to realize the goal mentioned in the first paragraph: to establish family diocesan centers and to organize a competent team which would help promote effective pastoral care of the family and provide pastoral counseling.¹⁰⁵ The last paragraph is addressed to Christian families who should be a countersign to the manipulative anti-life culture and should also be promoters of pro-life based family spirituality.¹⁰⁶ The most

¹⁰⁴ *PCP II D*, no. 46, #1, p. 247; cf. cc. 528, §2, 529, §1, 851, §2, 1063, §§1-4.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 46 #2-3, p. 247.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 46, #4, p. 247. The CBCP has issued a number of documents regarding respect for life. The content of the pastoral letter "Let there be Life" is summed up as follows: Life is being cheapened by murder for political reasons and the easy killing of common criminals by armed clashes approximating a state of war. As Christians, we cannot accept the bleaker future view posed by economic crises, the breakdown of families, and danger of hunger, etc; cf. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, "A Joint Pastoral Letter on the Sacredness of Human Life and its Defense, 'Let there be Life,'" 11 July 1984, in *LS*, pp. 6-16. Prior to this document there was another pastoral letter against violence; cf. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Letter, "Exhortation Against Violence," 7 October 1979, in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, pp. 207-212; this document was also published in *Boletín eclesiástico de Filipinas*, 53 (1979) pp. 523-528. Another pastoral letter is primarily about the eleven guiding principles of the CBCP on population control. In conclusion, the CBCP quoted a statement from the Holy See to the World Health Organization - sponsored International Conference on the Ethics and Values of Family Planning held in Bangkok in June, 1988: "There are no 'value free' methods of family planning. Research scientists, medical personnel, government officials and welfare agents should reflect seriously on the consequences of their activities, on the assumptions they hold, and on the goals they pursue on family planning" (CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES,

recent pastoral letter of the Bishops' Conference calls for an explicitly radical stand:

We, the Bishops, wish to register strong objection to actions of the government which work toward the destruction of the Filipino family.

The promotion of contraception and sterilization is contrary to the will of God. The acceptance of abortion, the breakdown of families, the encouragement of pre-marital sex, the increased incidence of sexually transmitted diseases are some of the evil consequences.¹⁰⁷

Principles relating to the defence and respect of life are also to be applied in the preservation of the beauty of the Philippine lands and seas because of the deteriorating ecological conditions of the country.¹⁰⁸ Copies of this pastoral letter were sent by the Bishops to the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Forestry, and to the

"Guiding Principles of the CBCP on Population Control," 10 July 1990, in *LS*, pp. 232-233). Prior to this document two other regarding population problems, family life and abortion were issued: cf. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Letter, "On the Population Problem and Family life," 8 December 1973, in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, pp. 78-83; this document was also published in *Boletín eclesiástico de Filipinas*, 48 (1974) pp. 11-16. Cf. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Letter, "On the Life of the Unborn Child, 'Thou Shalt not Kill,'" in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, pp. 201-206; this document was also published in *Boletín eclesiástico de Filipinas*, 53 (1979) pp. 318-323.

¹⁰⁷ CBCP, EPISCOPAL COMMISSION ON FAMILY LIFE, Pastoral Letter (abbreviated form), "Save the Family Life," Manila, CBCP Office, 1993, pp. 1-2.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, A Pastoral Letter on Ecology, "What is Happening to our Beautiful Land," 29 January 1988, in *LS*, pp. 129-130.

media.¹⁰⁹

In line with the norms outlined in *Familiaris consortio* nos. 83 and 84, the Church in the Philippines is also called to formulate pastoral programs for those in broken homes and families.¹¹⁰

The family, which is the basic unit of Christian life should be given a place in catechesis; this helps to foster basic ecclesial communities.¹¹¹

The final decree on the family contains three areas of pastoral care related to the family and Christian morality:

a) promotion of greater cooperation for the formation of Christian values between schools and families;¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 127.

¹¹⁰ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 47, p. 247.

¹¹¹ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 48, pp. 247-248.

¹¹² There was a difficulty in coordinating with public school administrators and teachers concerning religious instruction, in addition to other problems related to religious education in public schools; see *NCDP*, nos. 4 and 10, pp. 21-24. This was an ongoing problem until the CBCP in its pastoral letter opted for "educational revolution" with respect to catechesis in public schools: "With special mention, we are sincerely appreciative of the open cooperation of the public school administrators and teachers. With a certain note of joy we convey to you dear parents, our warm commendation for the fidelity with which you help build up the Church in faith" (CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Letter, "Religious Instruction in Public Schools: An Opportunity and a Challenge," 15 July 1987, in *LS*, pp. 125-126); cf. also CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Letter, "Education for Justice," 14 September 1978, in R.P. HARDY, *1968-1983*, pp. 182-183; this document was also published in *Boletín eclesiástico de Filipinas*, 52 (1978) pp. 677-704. However, the PCP II opts to maximize coordination regarding religious instruction in

b) implementing programs for the prevention of exploitation of women and children;¹¹³ c) reinforcement of pastoral norms of *Homosexualitatis problema* of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 1 October 1986, regarding problems affecting homosexuals.¹¹⁴

Section 3: Youth

The section on youth begins by considering the effectiveness of the youth in the Church.

Article 50. #1. The strength, vitality and relevance of the Church as sacrament of the Kingdom implies a laity fully come of age, that is, laity who, imbued with and animated by the Gospel of Christ, shall have assumed consciously, actively, and fully their role and responsibility in Church and society.

#2. Since youth constitutes a large and dynamic portion of the laity, the youth ministry should be assured of the fullest attention and highest priority in every way by all in the Church.¹¹⁵

The First Plenary Council had also given special attention to

public schools, hence, "greater cooperation" (see *PCP II D*, no. 49, #1, p. 248.

¹¹³ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 380-389, pp. 130-133.

¹¹⁴ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 49, p. 248.

¹¹⁵ *PCP II D*, no. 50, #1, p. 248; for the youth occupying the highest and most expanding number of population, cf. *NCDP* no. 9, p. 24; *PCP II CD*, no. 380, pp. 130-131; CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Letter on the "World Youth Day," "As the Father Sent Me, So am I Sending You (Jh. 20, 21)," 30 January 1994, Manila, 1994, p. 1, in CBCP Archives.

youth. However, its decrees had a polemic tone¹¹⁶ rather than providing principles for a systematic pastoral care of the youth. In fact the Bishops' Conference has been very keen to formulate teachings for youth in view of their pressing problems.¹¹⁷ The First Plenary Council had formulated four decrees which dealt with associations of youth, *De juvenum catholicis associationibus*, under the heading *De laicis*.¹¹⁸ In accordance with the mind of the Second Plenary Council, youth ministry should be given the "fullest attention and highest priority."¹¹⁹

A systematic and comprehensive program should be set

¹¹⁶ PCP I warned youth not to join Protestant youth movements such as The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) (see PCP I, no. 245 #2, p. 86). It recommended Catholic youth associations: "...Inter enixe omnibus consociationes Don Bosco's Boys Association, Catholic Youth Organization, Young Christian Workers, Students' Catholic Action, etc..." (PCP I, no. 256, p. 90).

¹¹⁷ For some teachings concerning the youth of the Philippines, cf. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, "Statement on Drug Abuse," 28 July 1972, in R.P. HARDY, pp. 41-43; this document was also published in *Boletín eclesiástico de Filipinas*, 46 (1972) pp. 240-242; CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, EPISCOPAL COMMISSION ON VOCATIONS, "Position Paper for the 1981 International Vocation Congress," Appendix I, in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, pp. 246-282; this document was also published in *Boletín eclesiástico de Filipinas*, 55 (1981) pp. 460-495.

¹¹⁸ Cf. PCP I, nos. 255-258, pp. 90-91.

¹¹⁹ PCP II D no. 50, #2, p. 248; cf. cc. 528, §1, 776, 795, 799 and 1063, §1. The final draft used "serious attention" (FDL, p. 22) but the present text expresses pastoral urgency which can better explain the necessity based on the number of the youth vis a vis the whole Philippine population (below twenty-five years of age).

up by every diocese to mobilize the young to become involved in diocesan or parochial life. The establishment of the office of episcopal vicar for youth, youth centers, and diocesan campus ministry programs facilitate better involvement in this area.¹²⁰ The diocesan youth center under the direction of the bishop would have three tasks: to create and elaborate a diocesan pastoral youth program, to ensure that the youth in the parish grow in authentic spirituality, and to help the young become involved in socio-economic and political action for social transformation.¹²¹

Finally, the resolutions of the Bishops' Conference on youth ministry should be implemented immediately and their effectiveness evaluated eventually. Two other concerns were pointed out: the formulation of a national program of catechesis for out-of-school youth¹²² and parish youth programs for those in crisis, like the street children,

¹²⁰ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 51, ##1-2, p. 249.

¹²¹ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 51, #3, p. 249; *PCP II CD*, no. 384, p. 132.

¹²² Although the CBCP "urges the Catholic Schools to provide biblical formation for the young" (CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Joint Pastoral Letter, "On the Biblical Apostolate," February 1985, in *LS*, p. 24), there is minimal attention given to catechesis for the out-of-school children and youth (CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, "Position Paper on the Synod Theme Catechetics in our Time with Special Reference to Catechetics for Children and Adults," 13 July 1977, in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, p. 161).

migrants, etc.¹²³

Section 4: Women

The introductory decree of the section on women deals with the promotion of their leadership.

Article 53. #1. The leadership training for women is to be promoted with leadership with emphasis on the dignity and role of women in the Church, especially as outlined in *Christifideles laici* and *Mulieris dignitatem*. Special attention should be given to the domestic helpers.¹²⁴

Mulieris dignitatem stated that the teaching on the dignity and the vocation of women from the various documents of Vatican II, has been "a subject of constant human and Christian reflection."¹²⁵ The purpose of the final draft was originally to defend the rights of Filipina women working abroad and to recognize the continuing importance of the presence and collaboration of men and women in order to enrich

¹²³ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 52 #1-3, p. 249; for the pressing problem of street children, cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 381, p. 131.

¹²⁴ *PCP II D*, no. 53, #1, p. 250. Concern for the domestic helpers has been a key idea in the teaching on women. Besides the fact that it is integrated into the first decree, the section on "women" was formerly placed after the section on the "family" (cf. *FDL*, p. 21); it is probably so because domestic helpers are under the care of the family; "the welfare as well as the unique role of domestic helpers must also be of special concern by the family centers" (*FDL*, p. 22).

¹²⁵ JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter on the Dignity and Vocation of Women on the Occasion of the Marian Year, *Mulieris dignitatem* (=Md), 15 August 1988, no. 1, in *AAS*, 80 (1988), p. 1653 (English translation as published by Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Ottawa, 1988, p. 3).

active lay participation in the mission of the Church.¹²⁶ This is a need which surfaces in the Church in the Philippines since "on both the diocesan and parish levels, leadership training for women as well as men must be promoted in addition to the almost exclusive spiritual function."¹²⁷ The Plenary Council also notes that promotion of women's "liberation" is not to be based solely on foreign models but also on both the Christian and Filipino heritage.¹²⁸ The family center should conduct a study on various aspects of women's participation in the mission of the Church.¹²⁹ In this case, the Bishops' Conference should make an effort to include women in community discernment and the implementation of pastoral responses, especially for matters closely affecting the lives of

¹²⁶ Cf. *FDL*, p. 21. The teachings of the Plenary Council underline the same observation regarding overseas women workers (cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 388, pp. 132-133). The phrase "especially Filipinas working abroad" (*FDL*, p. 21) makes a particular reference to the original idea (overseas Filipina workers) but after further reflection, the PCP II included domestic helpers within the country. There is an awareness of the CBCP about "many serious problems of morality, poverty, and injustice that affect people, especially women, who migrate from the provinces to the big cities in our own country..." (CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Letter, "Protect our Filipino Migrants and Overseas Workers" [=PFMOW], 29 January 1988, in LS, pp. 144-145).

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹²⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

¹²⁹ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 53, #2, p. 250.

women.¹³⁰

The second decree builds on the first one since it deals with details regarding violation of women's rights through varied forms of discrimination, abuse, and exploitation. This decree is also addressed to those in the entertainment world. There is a need for special pastoral concern for women who engage in the flesh (sex) trade.¹³¹

Section 5: Catechists

The section on catechists contains only one decree because the Plenary Council recognized the provisions contained in the National Catechetical Directory whose final edition was approved by the Congregation for the Clergy in Rome in October 1984. Furthermore, the matter was again reiterated in the pastoral letter of the Bishops' Conference proclaiming 1990 as National Catechetical Year.¹³² There is an urgent need for full time and volunteer catechists for children and youth in public and non-sectarian schools and for

¹³⁰ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 53, #3, p. 250. In urging the CBCP to make an effort to include women in community discernment, the PCP II calls for particular involvement in matters "that closely affect the lives of women" (*ibid.*).

¹³¹ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 54, p. 250.

¹³² Cf. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Letter, "To Form Filipino Christians Mature in Their Faith," 31 January 1990, in *LS*, pp. 212-217.

out-of-school children and youth.¹³³ Hence, there should be training for professional catechists¹³⁴ with adequate compensation which will ideally come from the parishioners. Moreover, catechists should be trained in line with the Church's thrust of forming basic Christian communities.¹³⁵

Section 6: Migrant Workers

The decree on migrant workers deals mainly with their protection and their missionary role.

Article 56. #1. Special attention should be given to migrant workers not only to protect them but also to make them more aware of and prepare them for their missionary role of witnessing to the Gospel in their employment overseas.¹³⁶

Hence, it is the duty of the Bishops' Conference Commission on Migration and Tourism to promote a special apostolate to assist workers to defend their fundamental rights and live up to their Christian vocation.¹³⁷ On the other hand, the Bishops' Conference had already taken steps regarding this matter by issuing a pastoral letter on the occasion of

¹³³ Cf. *FDL*, p. 23. The lack of professional catechists was already noted in *NCDP* (cf. *NCDP*, nos. 485-487, pp. 257-258).

¹³⁴ Numerous catechetical institutes on the national, regional and diocesan levels have been established to prepare more catechists (cf. *NCDP*, no. 488, pp. 258-259).

¹³⁵ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 55, pp. 250-251.

¹³⁶ *PCP II D*, no. 56, #1, p. 251.

¹³⁷ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 56, #2, p. 251; c. 568.

National Migration Day, February 21, 1988.¹³⁸ Bishops and religious superiors should cooperate in this program by providing personnel for the apostolate to overseas Filipino workers and families.¹³⁹ Statistics showed in 1988 that there were an estimated three million Filipinos abroad: permanent migrants, overseas workers, seamen, and other kinds of expatriates.¹⁴⁰ Hence, the Bishops' Conference was keenly aware of the need for pastoral care for Filipino migrants and overseas workers.

Over the last year [1987], we have witnessed not only a record number of people leaving for work overseas but also an upsurge of cases of exploitation and abusive treatment of our workers abroad. We earnestly urge that our government, through its official representatives, take stronger and more effective measures in protecting the rights of our Filipino expatriates.

We support the decision of Her Excellency the President [Corazon Aquino] to ban temporarily the deployment of Filipina domestic helpers abroad until protection for them is assured. The temporary ban deployment should also apply to our Filipina entertainers with regards to countries where a considerable number of them are subjected to inhuman abuse and exploitation.¹⁴¹

This pastoral letter had a great influence in the formulation of this decree.

¹³⁸ Cf. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral Letter, "Protect Our Filipino Migrants and Overseas Workers" (=PFMOW), in *LS*, pp. 144-147.

¹³⁹ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 56, #3, pp. 251.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. *PFMOW*, in *LS*, p. 144.

¹⁴¹ *PFMOW*, p. 146.

Section 7: Lay Evangelizers

The decree on lay evangelizers is the shortest one on the laity. It is not a well-elaborated decree nor is it very explicit in the final draft.¹⁴² Actually there are only five sectoral concerns of the final draft, namely, a) family, b) women, c) youth, d) catechists, and f) professional groups and other sectors of Filipino community.¹⁴³ The last sector ended up being divided into two: migrant workers and lay evangelizers.

Article 57. As part of their formation married lay evangelizers are to be invited to participate in family life seminars which include a treatment of *Familiaris Consortio*.¹⁴⁴

The final draft opted for two structural adaptations: a) institution of diocesan and parochial councils geared towards parish renewal programs;¹⁴⁵ b) lay formation centers which are directly related to the formation of married lay

¹⁴² The only indirect reference is: "Seminaries with qualified and skilled professors must look into the possibility of offering lay persons a theology program that is fit for their status, not only in order to grant degrees but more importantly *to form the laity for the evangelical work*" (FDL, p. 26).

¹⁴³ Cf. FDL, pp. 20-25.

¹⁴⁴ PCP II D, no. 57, p. 251.

¹⁴⁵ "Such program must include among others: (a) re-orientation of lay religious organizations according to the emerging thrust of the Church; (b) defining specific charisms needed for various ministries; (c) drawing up policies on membership of Lay religious organizations in view of subscribing to the Church's pastoral program" (FDL, p. 25).

evangelizers.¹⁴⁶

C. Brief Appraisal of the Second Plenary Council's Teaching and Legislation on Active Lay Participation

The stress on active lay participation in the mission of the Church in the Philippines has been attested to in the pastoral orientation of the decrees on the laity.¹⁴⁷ This leads us to ask whether this emphasis reflects the teachings (Vatican II documents) and legislation (Code of Canon Law) of the universal Church on lay participation.

For an adequate participation in ecclesial life the lay faithful absolutely need to have a clear and precise vision of the particular Church with its primordial bond to the universal Church.¹⁴⁸

The years following Vatican II were indeed years of development of a theological understanding on emerging lay participation in the life and mission of the Church. However, such teachings needed an *aggiornamento* (updating); this was the first of the four listed reasons why the Bishops' Conference decided to hold the Second Plenary Council.¹⁴⁹ It is for this reason that the teachings on the laity of the

¹⁴⁶ Lay formation centers in some ecclesiastical jurisdictions and the National Training Center for Catholic evangelists have been established to respond to the need for genuine Catholic evangelizers (cf. *FDL*, p. 26).

¹⁴⁷ Cf. *PCP II D*, nos. 41-45, pp. 245-247.

¹⁴⁸ *CFL*, no. 67, in *CCCB Edition*, p. 68.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. *Primer on the PCP II*, p. 39; *PCP II Acts of the Council*, p. lxix; *PCP II CD*, no. 5, p. 6.

Plenary Council have constantly referred more directly than indirectly to basic documents such as *Lumen gentium* (six times), *Apostolicam actuositatem* (eight times), and *Christifideles laici* (nine times).¹⁵⁰ In addition, the decrees of the Plenary Council on the laity indicate particular reference to cc. 224-231.¹⁵¹ There are thirty six references to canons of the 1983 Code.¹⁵² Such repetitions of Vatican II's and the Code's imperatives may probably annoy some readers, especially those who have a greater knowledge of theology. However, the format of the text indicates a fidelity to the universal teachings and laws in order to fulfill the Plenary Council's role of being an "arm" of stressing active lay participation. Besides, there are plenty of Christian faithful who have little knowledge of the ecclesiological teachings of Vatican II and some are even ignorant of them.¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 402-447, pp. 139-154.

¹⁵¹ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 41, #1, p. 245.

¹⁵² Cf. *PCP II D*, nos. 41-57, pp. 245-251.

¹⁵³ "At the '87 Synod, Bishop Devine, of Motherwell, Scotland remarked: 'The real problem is that the spirit of the Council has not yet sufficiently affected the fundamental attitudes of many of the clergy and the great majority of the laity. Central to that issue is the vision we have of the Church. It is our experience that such a common vision is lacking. Instead in practice, there is a widespread and uneasy co-existence between a pre-Vatican II outlook and a range of visions of the Church inspired by the Council. This is true especially at the level of the parish,'" (quoted in P. COUGHLAN, *The Hour of the Laity*, p. 40). This is taken as the reason why we should be encouraged to read the full text of

There are two main themes which recur in the legislation and decrees based on the general thrust of the Plenary Council: the Church's preferential love for the poor¹⁵⁴ and the renewal of the Church's social apostolate.¹⁵⁵ The themes explore one area of pastoral activity in which lay participation is to be intensely oriented. Moreover, the themes are verbalized into decrees which call for attentiveness to the pastoral needs of a particular Church.¹⁵⁶ Both themes are causally linked since a "Church of the poor" (with specific reference to Plenary Council's term *kahirapan*) is certainly a church which needs liberation from social injustices.¹⁵⁷ Among the three elements of renewed

Christifideles laici (cf. *ibid.*); for a more contextual observation (Filipino setting), cf. J.M. TINOKO, "The Ministry of Laity," in *Philippiniana sacra*, 26 (1991), p. 435.

¹⁵⁴ See T. BACANI, *Towards the Third Millennium - The PCP II - Vision*, pp. 25-29; *ibid.*, pp. 39-52; *Acts and Decrees of PCP II*, Message of the Council, pp. xvi.

¹⁵⁵ See O. QUEVEDO, "The New Evangelization and the Social Doctrine of the Church," pp. 11-12.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. c. 445.

¹⁵⁷ The Plenary Council's understanding regarding the "Church of the Poor" builds on the idea of Pope John Paul II: "Before today's forms of exploitation of the poor, the Church cannot remain silent. She also reminds the rich of their precise duties. Strong with the Word of God, she condemns the many injustices which unfortunately, even today are committed to the detriment of the poor" (English edition in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 21 January 1985, p. 8); also quoted in *PCP II CD*, no. 131, p. 50). Hence, "pastors and members of the Church will courageously defend and vindicate the rights of the poor and the oppressed, even when doing so will mean alienation or persecution from the rich and powerful" (*ibid.*).

evangelization, renewed social apostolate has been given more emphasis by the teaching of the Plenary Council.¹⁵⁸

Cultural influences on the formulation of the teachings and decrees of the Plenary Council can be traced through the emphasis on family orientation that springs from the *sakop* mentality. In fact, the family occupies the lengthiest sectoral concern in the decree itself.¹⁵⁹ The influence of the *sakop* mentality will be explained further in the next chapter when considering the existence of basic ecclesial communities. Hence, the analysis herein partly answers the problem raised in the second chapter.

Although some universal teachings and legislation on lay participation are repeated in the Plenary Council texts, the ideas found in the pastoral letters, statements, and the National Catechetical Directory of the Bishops' Conference are also transparent in the teachings and legislation.¹⁶⁰ It would be sad to learn that the success of the present-day conferences of bishops may have been one of the causes of

¹⁵⁸ See *PCP II CD*, no. 166, p. 63; see also *PCP II CD*, nos. 256-401, pp. 91-138.

¹⁵⁹ See *PCP II D*, nos. 46-57, pp. 247-251.

¹⁶⁰ The teachings of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines have a strong pastoral intent. It is in this context that the bishops of the Philippines (75.3%) opted before the convocation of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines for a strong pastoral orientation of the council (cf. *PCP II Acts of the Council*, p. xxvii).

disuse of particular councils.¹⁶¹ Nevertheless, the Second Plenary Council marks one further step in having the local teachings implemented. While the Plenary Council "must always respect the universal law of the Church, it has the power of governance, especially legislative power..."¹⁶²

In principle, the teachings of the Philippine Bishops are reflected in the decrees of the Council. However, the decrees are very limited in scope as can be seen by the sectoral concerns; other special concerns such as tribal Filipinos, peasants, the urban poor, fisherfolk, and the disabled were not included.¹⁶³ The same can be said for the special pastoral concerns of ecumenism, the fundamentalists and members of *Iglesia ni Kristo*, masons, and prisoners.¹⁶⁴ This needs special attention since the decree also refers to migrant workers.¹⁶⁵ The First Plenary Council was more specific in this matter than the second one since it bluntly addressed polemical concerns in its decree on the laity.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ Cf. A. CORIDEN, *An Introduction to Canon Law*, p. 91.

¹⁶² c. 445.

¹⁶³ See *PCP II CD*, nos. 375-401, pp. 129-138.

¹⁶⁴ See *PCP II CD*, nos. 216-237, pp. 78-86.

¹⁶⁵ See *PCP II D*, no. 56, p. 251.

¹⁶⁶ See *PCP I*, nos. 245-246, 256, 273, pp. 85-86, 90, 95. "The scope of the Plenary Council is described by the Council of Trent as extending to 'regulation of morals, the correction of abuses, the settling of controversies, and such other purposes as are allowed by the sacred canons.' Among these purposes, one of the most vital and important is that of

To sum up, the teachings and legislation of the Plenary Council are verbalized in line with the teachings of Vatican II and in view of the pastoral priorities (basic areas of renewal) of the Church in the Philippines. On the other hand, the Council is a compendium of teachings and legislation of both the universal and particular. The decrees may not be able to reflect entirely the teachings of the Bishops as in the case with the 1983 Code and the Vatican II teachings. Nevertheless, the teachings can always serve as the point of reference for the decrees. Although the teaching on lay participation is clear enough to comprehend, it always has to be read in the light of its sources.¹⁶⁷ A deeper understanding of active lay participation will hopefully be achieved as the following chapter attempts to describe the mission of the Filipino Catholic laity in basic ecclesial communities, and to define the concept of "participation" itself.

regulating ecclesiastical discipline, by the prudent application of the wholesome principles of the Church's common law to the especial circumstances and requirements of the particular country..." (*Acta of PCP I, Appendix Quarta, "Allocutio E.mi Cardinalis Legati in Congregatione praeparatoria Concilii,"* p. 305). Ecclesiastical discipline referred to religious indifferentism among youth caused by the spread of communism, etc; see PCP I, Appendix Quarta, "Oratio salutatoria Exc. mi et Rev.mi D. Julii Rosales, Archiepiscopi Caebuani, in Congregatione praeparatoria Concilii," pp. 295-296.

¹⁶⁷ This approach is patterned after the relationship between the 1983 Code and the Vatican II Council: "To understand the canons properly, one must seek their meaning in their sources, the documents of the council. Those conciliar teachings rule and guide the interpretation of the canons" (J.A. CORIDEN, *An Introduction to Canon Law*, p. 38).

CHAPTER IV
THE FILIPINO CATHOLIC LAITY IN THEIR MISSION
IN BASIC ECCLESIAL COMMUNITIES

Having analyzed the teaching and legislation of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, this dissertation now focusses on the active participation of the Filipino laity in the local Church as conceived by universal law and the particular law of the Second Plenary Council. The present chapter comprises two main parts: a) an overview of the rights and obligations of the laity in the 1983 Code and their particular application in the Plenary Council through basic ecclesial communities; b) the elaboration of a definition of the concept of participation and the enumeration of guidelines to facilitate the spontaneous exercise of active lay participation; this section attempts to inculturate canon law. The purpose is to present a clearer presentation of the role of the laity in the life and mission of the Church in the Philippines.

A. A Revitalized Role for the Laity

1. The Code in General

The 1917 Code barely touched the laity's rights and obligations.¹ Nevertheless, it would be incorrect to assert that there was no treatment of the laity in the 1917 legislation.² We know that the 1917 Code "did not list what these rights and duties might be, however, except in passing reference that lay persons were not to be denied the sacraments without cause (CIC, c. 682)."³ The section on the obligations and rights of the lay faithful is a new title in the 1983 Code.⁴ The growth of interest of empowering the laity in the mission of the Church was noted in the promulgation of

¹ CIC, cc. 118-144 treated *de iuribus et privilegiis clericorum* and CIC, cc. 592-631 *de obligationibus et privilegiis religiosorum*.

² See *De laicis*, CIC, cc. 682-725.

³ J. H. PROVOST, "The People of God," in *A Text and Commentary*, p. 134. It is also to be noted that the 1917 Code was drafted in a period of absolutist monarchical government whose influence greatly affected the way "rights" were viewed: "rights were considered a concession of the sovereign, and in that sense they were privileges granted to certain persons but not to others. Nineteenth-century political theory recognized other understandings of rights, including rights as based in one's social class rather than individual as such. The canonical tradition reflects the experience of the Church in the nineteenth century, warding off the encroachments of liberalism and the *Risorgimento* that deprived the pope of his temporal domain even as it unified the country of Italy. Under such circumstances it would not be unusual to find the law more congenial to theories of rights that resonated with the *ancien régime*" (ibid.).

⁴ Cf. ibid.; J. M. HUELS, *The Faithful of Christ, The New Canon Law for the Laity*, Chicago, Franciscan Herald Press, p. 22.

the Code when Pope Paul VI identified several reasons for having canon law in the Church.⁵ Among these is the organization of a procedure which envisions the appropriate safeguarding of the subjective rights of persons.⁶ *Lumen gentium* had established the basis of subjective rights in baptism: "there is a common dignity of members deriving from their rebirth in Christ."⁷ These rights help integrate the individual more completely into the overall organization of the community and also help preserve the person's dignity and

⁵ See *Communicationes*, 1 (1969), pp. 77-87.

⁶ Cf. *Communicationes*, 1 (1969), p. 83.

⁷ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium* [=LG], 21 November 1964, no. 32, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* [=AAS], 57 [1965], p. 38, [English translation in A. FLANNERY, [ed.], *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents* [FLANNERY, I], 1992 rev. ed, Northport, NY, Costello Pub. Co., 1992, vol. 1, p. 389; cf. c. 208. The theological and canonical understanding is based on the principle of the radical and fundamental equality of the People of God (the baptized are equal members of the faithful or one is to avoid an understanding that one is higher by virtue of receiving the sacrament of orders or an ecclesiastical office) (see J. HERVADA, *The Code of Canon Law Annotated*, p. 190). Likewise, A. del Portillo explains this principle of radical and fundamental equality arising from LG 32 before discussing the principle of functional inequality in the People of God by saying "that all persons who belong to the Church have a common legal status, because they all share one and the same theological condition and belong to the same primary common category... Therefore it follows logically that within the Church all members have certain fundamental rights and obligations in common" (A. DEL PORTILLO, *Faithful and Laity in the Church, The Bases of their Legal Status*, trans. from the Spanish by Leo Hickey, Shannon, Ireland, Ecclesia Press, 1972, p. 19). The principle of radical and fundamental equality precedes any differentiation (cf. *ibid.*, p. 27; as also quoted by O. SEMMELROTH, "La Chiesa, nuovo popolo di Dio," in *La Chiesa del Vaticano II*, Florence, 1965, p. 447).

freedom.⁸ Baptism creates the bond which holds the People of God together as a social group.⁹ Moreover, it entitles a person to acquire duties and obligations which vary according to diverse circumstances, such as the state of life (lay, religious or clerical state).¹⁰ On the other hand, "the People of God is a social community with a legal structure"¹¹ that implies the possession of certain subjective rights.¹² "The state of this people (the messianic people) is that of the dignity and freedom of the sons of God, in whose hearts the Holy Spirit dwells as the temple."¹³ The word *dignitas* does not refer only to a natural individual membership in the

⁸ Cf. R.A. DUSTON, *The Rights and Obligations of the Lay Christian Faithful: The Second Vatican Council Through the Revised Code of Canon Law*, Romae, Pontificia Studiorum Universitas a S. Thoma Aq. in Urbe, 1986, p. 237.

⁹ Cf. DEL PORTILLO, *Faithful and the Laity in the Church*, p. 25.

¹⁰ See c. 96.

¹¹ DEL PORTILLO, *Faithful and the Laity in the Church*, p. 32.

¹² "To define a subjective right we must first of all remember that the fact of being a person involves possession of a certain measure of incommunicability: a person who is free and master of his actions. And this measure of dominion implies certain spheres of autonomy, responsibility and freedom" (DEL PORTILLO, *Faithful and Laity in the Church*, p. 30).

¹³ LG, no. 9, in FLANNERY, I, pp. 359-360.

People of God, but also to a supernatural personality whose rights and duties are reflected in the church law.¹⁴

There exists an intimate and complimentary relationship between rights and obligations by the mere fact that they both arise from the sacraments. The 1983 Code used the order "obligations and rights" when speaking of them. There was a question regarding which word would precede the other. The Code Commission did not consider the arrangement that important because both rights and obligations proceed from the sacraments.¹⁵

The inclusion of the lists of obligations and rights of the faithful (cc. 208-223) and of the laity (cc. 224-231) in the 1983 Code is something which had been lacking in the canonical tradition to date; this is a product of the Vatican II ecclesiology. On the other hand, the new lists serve as means to a broader and clearer understanding of the role of the laity in the life and mission of the Church. Hence, one purpose of proclaiming these obligations and rights is to provide for the salvation of the individual and to foster the mission of the Church. We should not think that the rights and

¹⁴ See DEL PORTILLO, *Faithful and Laity in the Church*, p. 32.

¹⁵ "Loco de obligationibus et iuribus dictatur de iuribus et obligationibus, quia est locutio traditionalis [cfr. Codex a. 1917] et melius fundata in ipsa constitutione sacramentali Ecclesiae [unus Pater]." Response: "*potest recipi, sed non videtur necessarium: re vera ex sacramentis profluunt sive iura sive obligationes*" (*Communicationes*, 15 [1982], p. 168).

obligations of the laity as something found exclusively in these canons. "There is a continual reference to all sorts of rights and obligations spread throughout the conciliar documents."¹⁶ Furthermore, the obligations and rights of the laity are listed in the new Code under various headings: those mentioned as obligations and rights of the faithful, the obligations and rights of lay faithful, those of the clergy, those of religious, and those noted in other scattered canons of the Code.¹⁷ The inclusion of the seven canons (cc. 224-231) under the title of the laity should not be regarded as superfluous since these obligations and rights pertain in a

¹⁶ DUSTON, *The Rights and Obligations of the Lay Christian Faithful*, p. 232.

¹⁷ Cf. c. 224. The *coetus de laicis* stated that there are other scattered canons on the obligations and rights of the laity: "multa quae ad laicos spectant in Codice venire debent non sub titulo de laicis, sed aliis in locis. Sic, ex. gr., laici ius habent ad pastoralement curam recipiendam, quae respondeat eorum peculiari conditioni ac necessitatibus, itemque facultate gaudent ad munera ecclesiastica gerenda quae sacerdotium ministeriale non requirunt, cuiusmodi sunt munera iudicis in tribunalibus ecclesiasticis, membri vel consultoris in organis a hierarchia constitutis aliaque id genus. Attamen de omnibus his rebus magis determinatis non ibi agendum est, ubi de iuribus personalibus in genere tractatur, sed contra in aliis Codicis partibus, quales sunt canones de sacramentis, de officiis ecclesiasticis, de structuris iurisdictionalibus hierarchiae, etc., quae normae apte respondere debent iuribus, officiis ac facultatibus quae tum in statuto laicorum enumerantur ac proponuntur. Eadem consideratio applicari valet ad normas condendas de processibus ac de recursibus administrativis, ad structuram bonorum patrimonialium Ecclesiae, ad normas processuales atque ad alia multa" (*Communicationes*, 2 [1970], p. 95-96).

special way to the laity.¹⁸ The following are the seven obligations and rights which are listed in the 1983 Code under the title "The Obligations and Rights of the Lay Christian Faithful":

- 1) participation in the mission of the Church (c. 225);
- 2) for those lay persons who live in the married state: to work for the upbuilding of the people of God through the witness of married life and the development of the Christian family (c. 226);
- 3) recognition of freedom in the affairs of the earthly city as belonging to all citizens (c. 227);
- 4) capability of being assigned to those ecclesiastical offices that the law permits lay persons to exercise (c. 228);
- 5) acquisition of formation in Christian doctrine suited to their capacity and condition (c. 229);
- 6) explicit recognition given to several ways in which lay persons may exercise special roles in liturgical services (c. 230);
- 7) responsibilities for formation and continued professional competence on the part of lay persons devoted in a special manner to church service and their right to a decent

¹⁸ "Continet praeterea statutum laicorum necessarias specificationes quas pro laicis assumunt aliqua iura et officia in statuto generali omnium christifidelium contenta, necnon aliquae normae proponuntur quae, licet pari ratione cunctis fidelibus applicari valeant, expresse pro laicis declarandae sunt, utpote quod pacifice pro clericis admittantur, sed quandoque in dubio positae sint quod laicos" (*Communicationes*, 2 [1970], p. 94).

remuneration suited to their condition (c. 231).

2. The Second Plenary Council in its Particular Application

a. Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs), an Expression of Renewal and Means of Evangelization

Universal canonical legislation must frequently be adapted to the particular situation of the local Church. Hence, the PCP II mediates as well as makes choices of means whereby active lay participation can become effective; it ventures into an area where the role of the laity is to be revitalized. The PCP II links the term "revitalization" with "renewal"¹⁹ and "re-evangelization."²⁰ It regards the BECs as an expression of renewal.²¹ The PCP II considers the BEC to be the venue for renewal and re-evangelization. In a wider

¹⁹ "Revitalization" and "renewal" are key words of the PCP II (cf. *Acts of PCP II*, p. lxxviii). For associating the two terms, see *ibid.*, p. lxxxix; see also the prior document regarding renewal and revitalization of basic ecclesial communities in CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, A Pastoral Letter on the National Eucharistic Prayer (=PLNE?), "One Bread, One Body, One People," 23 November 1986, in *LS*, p. 106.

²⁰ See *Message of PCP II*, p. xcv.

²¹ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 136, p. 52. The idea of BECs as an expression of renewal can be traced in CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Position Paper, "On the Synod Theme Catechetics in our Time with Special Reference to Catechetics for Children and Adults," 13 July 1977, in *R.P. HARDY*, p. 150; this document was also published in *Boletín eclesíastico de Filipinas*, 52 (1978), pp. 101-115.

sense, the BEC is thus a particular application of the prescriptions of the Code.

"In the formation of BECs, evangelization shall be given the highest priority."²² In fact, the first general pastoral decree of the PCP II mentions the existence of the BECs as particular means of evangelization:

Article 1. #3. Christian witness and proclamation of the Word in the daily circumstances of one's life must be recognized and fostered as a main means of evangelization called for by the Plenary Council. These efforts are to be undertaken by the Church from the national down to the regional,²³ diocesan, vicarial, and small community levels.

BECS have existed in the Philippines for almost two decades.²⁴

²² PCP II D, no. 111, #1, p. 267.

²³ PCP II D, no. 1, #3, pp. 232-233. Regarding the implementation of a five-to-ten year National Pastoral Plan as stated in this decree: "The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines will propose to the individual bishops of the Philippines, for the implementation in their dioceses, a pastoral management and administration system that can be made operative at all levels - from the national level all the way down to the small community" (PCP II D, no. 1, #4, p. 233).

²⁴ Cf. P.S. de ACHUTEGUI, "Pre-Plenary Council Statistical Profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," p. 197. Three documents brought about the establishment of the BECs in the Philippines: "In January 1977, on the local scene, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines [CBCP] declared that 'the implantation of a Local Church that is self-reliant is a sign of that maturing process... The establishment of Basic Christian Communities, whose members are united in one Faith and Hope, and bound together by Love and Service, springs from the mandate of Evangelization'" [CBCP, Joint Pastoral Letter; *Boletín eclesiástico de Filipinas*, vol. 51, (1977), p. 33].

"On a larger scale, in March 1977, the [Federation of] Asian Bishops' Conferences [FABC] stated that "the basic fact is that today in our Asian context we are in the process of re-discovering that the individual Christian can best survive,

It was in the late seventies when the BECs made an initial breakthrough in the Philippines. The idea had a Latin American origin,²⁵ and, it is worth noting that the unique history of Latin America paved the growth of Basic Christian Communities.²⁶ The BECs in the Philippines are not an exact

grow and develop as a Christian person in the midst of self-nourishing, self-governing, self-ministering and self-propagating Christian community' (FABC, Conclusions of the Asian Colloquium on Ministries in the Church, *Boletín eclesiástico de Filipinas*, vol. 52 [1978], p. 21).

"Then in October 1977, the Synod of Bishops, meeting on the theme of Catechesis, declared that the customary place or setting of catechesis is the Christian community... Today many other communities are slowly evolving, among which are small ecclesial communities" (Appendix I, "Position Paper for the 1981 International Vocation Congress," in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, p. 259).

²⁵ "Although church base communities exist on other continents, it is in Latin America that they acquired their key status in the contemporary church" (D. BARBÉ, "Church Base Communities," in C. CADORETTE, et al., eds., *Liberation Theology, An Introductory Reader*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1992, p. 181).

²⁶ "These Christian communities spring up from ever growing involvement with the Latin America liberation process. Workers, professional persons, farmhands, bishops, students, priests have all begun to 'get involved.' It is only a beginning, and it calls for many a clarification and skimming off of excesses, for it is a call to take a free, critical process that oversimplifies reality, any political outlook that fails to take into account all the dimensions of a human being" (G. GUTIERREZ, *The Power of the Poor in History*, Quezon City, Claretian Publications, 1985, p. 71). The situation of 1950's in Latin America played a preparatory role for armed struggle while the year 1965 marked the high point of armed struggle. This is the historical factor which brought about the growth of Basic Christian Communities (see *ibid.*, p. 190). "A great deal of reflection is being done in Latin America in the area of ecclesiology in an effort to interpret (as a second act) the new pastoral praxis of communities which are concerned with liberation" (R. GIBELLINI, *The Liberation Theology Debate*, London, SCM Press Ltd., 1987, p. 27).

copy of Latin American prototype because the Church in the Philippines has a different historical context. The name "Basic Christian Community"²⁷ was even changed by the CBCP into "Basic Ecclesial Community" in order to bring out a distinct character of the situation; moreover, the ecclesial nature of these communities is maintained and never regarded as political movements or social groups.

There is a great difference between these two types. Those groups which estrange themselves from the church by the spirit of opposition and impair her unity may certainly be called basic communities but only in the strictly sociological sense. They cannot in the true sense of the word be called *ecclesial basic communities* even though they claim that they remain within the unity of the church, but yet in opposition to the hierarchy.

This title belongs properly to those other groups which come together within the church so that they may be closely united with her and contribute to her development. These latter groups will be nurseries of evangelization and will be of great service to larger communities, especially to individual churches.²⁸

²⁷ *Redemptoris missio* and *Evangelii nuntiandi* accept the fact that these communities have no official name although known by other names. Both documents, however, refer to them as "ecclesial basic communities" (JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter on the Church's Missionary Mandate, *Redemptoris missio* [=RM], 7 December 1990, no. 51, in AAS [1991], p. 298 (English edition in *L'Osservatore romano* [=ORE], 4 [28 January 1991] p. 13; *EN*, no. 58, in FLANNERY, II, p. 739). The Latin America's liberation theology uses the term "Christian communities," (G. GUTIERREZ, *The Power of the Poor in History*, p. 71) although the final document "Evangelization in the Latin American Church: Communion and Participation," used the term "base-level communities" (J. EAGLESON and P. SCHARPER, eds., *Puebla and Beyond, Documentation and Commentary*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1979, p. 210).

²⁸ *EN*, no. 58, in FLANNERY, II, p. 739.

b. What is BEC?

Three words need to be explained. First, *communities* are human sized groups which generally range between 20 to 150 persons; the life of these communities is intense because the members jointly bear the struggles for survival or for the improvement of living; they are communities and not groups because they comprise all generations from all walks of life.²⁹ Secondly, these communities are *ecclesial* because the motivation is religious, that is, spiritual formation of the members is enhanced; moreover, it is ecclesial because they are connected with the hierarchical structure of the Church.³⁰ Thirdly, they are *base communities* because they are "composed of relatively few members as a permanent body, like a cell of the larger community."³¹ Furthermore, they are generally made up of people from rural grassroots.

They take root in less privileged and rural areas, and become a leaven of Christian life, of care for the poor and neglected, and of commitment to the transformation of society.³²

²⁹ See D. BARBÉ, "Church Base Communities," p. 181.

³⁰ See *ibid.*

³¹ A.T. HENNELLY, "Puebla Final Document, 'Base-Level Ecclesial Communities (CEBs), The Parish, and the Local Church,'" in *Liberation Theology A Documentary History (=Puebla Final Document, CEBs)*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1990, p. 249.

³² *RM*, no. 51, in *ORE*, p. 13. The term "grass roots" in the context of the Church in the Philippines also includes the urban poor (cf. F. CLAVER, "The Basic Ecclesial Community:

The organisation of BECs in the Philippines varies from region to region, from milieu to milieu. Philippines has diverse cultures with different forms of poverty. For instance, the urban poor like street children or slum dwellers have different situation of *kahirapan* (suffering) compared to the rural poor like the fisherfolks, sugar plantation tenants, or coconut plantation tenants. Organizing these groups into BECs incurs not only in spiritually forming the members but also in helping them in their innermost needs. It is in this sphere, that the BECs have played tremendously an active role in social apostolate. On the other hand, there has been a difficulty for the CBCP to come up with written statutes because the application of BECs in each ecclesiastical region varies.

The BECs are informal groups introduced by the pastors in his parish and are supervised intensively by trained lay leaders.³³ The members come from the parish where they belong and they are organized according to their geographical

Vehicle par Excellence for Inculturation," in *Discovery*, 3 [1993], St. Louis, Mo, The Institute of Jesuit Sources, p. 15).

³³ The lay leaders undergo training through seminars in the parish or in diocesan lay formation centers. In some cases, these lay leaders are at the same time extraordinary ministers of the eucharist, parish catechists, or any of the active members of the parish mandated organizations.

location³⁴; this will allow accessibility for regular meetings for Bible service, prayer sessions, discussion of social, political, economic, moral issues, etc. One of the recommendations of the CBCP where the laity is badly needed to participate actively in order to serve as an ecclesial support system is "to ensure dialogue between the Church and the government about social justice issues."³⁵ The BECs exercise an intensive social apostolate since they share material goods especially for the needy members. Rich parishes offer loans to their BECs, and these serve as capital for income generating industries like bamboo crafts, pottery, fishing, farming, cooperatives, etc. They are trained to be self-sufficient communities with respect to material resources. On the other hand, they are also trained to pray together as a community even without the presence of the clergy. In some occasions or areas where it is impossible for a priest to celebrate the Eucharist, the BECs manage to conduct a priestless Bible service.

Hence, BECs have no fix form of activities but the distinctive and common operation of BECs is their social

³⁴ The parishes are originally divided into barrios (*barangays* or smaller portions of municipality) but because of increasing population, the barrios are divided into *puroks* (comprising 30-80 families) which have already a potential number for BEC groupings.

³⁵ CBCP, A Pastoral Letter on the Eucharist, "To live in Memory of Him, One Body, One People," (=PLE), 21 March 1988, in *LS*, p. 178.

apostolate especially to the members. As a community, they also helped needy ones of the society.

Likewise, we desire to become eucharistic communities active in the defense and promotion of the downtrodden, ready and willing to give of ourselves eucharistically to others, struggling in the building of a just, peaceful and loving society.³⁶

The social apostolate of the laity is the closest answer to the problems and needs of the laity in relation to their secular activities; "But by reason of their special vocation it belongs to the laity to seek the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will."³⁷

Theologically, the term "BEC" has sprung from the ideas of Vatican II.³⁸ It is particularly brought about by the

³⁶ *PLE*, in *LS*, p. 180. Likewise, the BECs in the Latin American setting "are a favourable atmosphere for the rise of new lay-sponsored services" (*Puebla Final Document, CEBs*, p. 249).

³⁷ *LG*, no. 31, in *FLANNERY, I*, p. 389.

³⁸ See *ibid*, p. 14.

mandate of evangelization³⁹ as stated in the following documents; *Evangelii nuntiandi* and *Redemptoris missio*,

1) *Evangelii nuntiandi*

This document provides the direct reference for the BECs. It is "certainly the *magna carta* of evangelization for this last quarter century. It is one of the most notable documents of the magisterium of Paul VI."⁴⁰ It provided seven conditions to a proper implementation of BECs:

They draw their nourishment from the word of God and do not allow themselves to become the prisoners of extreme political factions or of popular ideologies which are always eager to exploit their immense human potential.

They resist the ever present temptation of offering a systematic challenge to the established order and of subjecting it to unbridled criticism under the pretext of serving truth and seeking to be helpful.

They are firm in their loyalty to the church of the district in which they are established and to the universal church. In this way they are preserved from the danger which only too easily arise of becoming introspective and of thinking that they represent the only true church of Christ, rejecting the other ecclesial communities.

³⁹ In line with the mind of *Evangelii nuntiandi*, the CBCP declared that "the implantation of local Church that is self-reliant is a sign of that maturing process... The establishment of Basic Christian Communities, whose members are united in the Faith and Hope, and bound together by love and service, springs from the mandate of Evangelization" (*Boletín eclesiástico de Filipinas*, 51 [1977], p. 33; as cited in CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Appendix I, Position Paper for the 1981 International Vocation Congress, in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, p. 259; this document was also published in *Boletín eclesiástico de Filipinas*, 55 [1981], pp. 460-495).

⁴⁰ JOHN PAUL II, Address to the Bishops of Brazil, "Communion, Participation, Evangelization," 10 July 1980, no. 5, in AAS, 72 (1980), p. 948, English translation in *Origins* 10 (1980-1981), p. 132.

They maintain close and sincere relation with their pastors to whom the Lord has confided the church and with the magisterium which the Spirit of Jesus has entrusted to them.

They never entertain the illusion that the gospel has been announced to them alone, that they alone have the task of proclaiming it or are its sole custodians. On the contrary, realizing that the church has a much wider extension and is much more diversified, they accept the fact that she must find expression in other forms and not solely through them.

They make constant progress in their sense of responsibility, in their religious ardor and in their solicitude and missionary zeal for others.

They adopt an open attitude to all men, in no way favoring any special categories of people.⁴¹

Furthermore, *Evangelii nuntiandi* mentions the following characteristics of the BECs according to the reports heard in the synod:

i. They develop differently from one region to another.

ii. They participate in the life of the church while they are nourished by her teaching and are loyal to their pastors.

iii. They arise because men want to live the life of the Church with greater fervor and seek a more human way of life which the larger ecclesial communities cannot easily provide.

iv. They can be extensions in their own fashions of both spiritual and religious activities: worship, deeper understanding of faith, fraternal charity, etc.

⁴¹ *EN*, no. 58, in *FLANNERY*, II, pp. 739-740.

v. They may come together to read or study the Bible, for the reception of the sacraments or to foster community.

vi. They gather to promote justice, to give fraternal help to the poor, or to further social progress.

vii. They serve to bring Christians together when the scarcity of clergy makes it difficult to organize the community life of the parish.

In some places, these groups come together animated by a spirit of bitter criticism of the church which do not hesitate to describe as 'institutional.'⁴²

2) *Redemptoris missio*

It is a document which recently touches on the nature of the BECs. It updates as well as reiterates the teachings of *Evangelii nuntiandi* as summed up in the following:

These are groups of Christians who, at the level of the family or in a similarly restricted setting, come together for prayer, scripture reading, catechesis, and discussion on human and ecclesial problems with a view to a common commitment. These communities are a sign of vitality within the Church, an instrument of formation and evangelization, and a solid starting point for a new society based on a 'civilization of love'.

These communities decentralize and organize the parish community, to which they always remain united. They take root in less privileged and rural areas, and become a leaven of Christian life, of care for the poor and neglected, and of commitment to the transformation of society. Within them, the individual Christian experiences community and therefore senses that he or she is playing an active role and is encouraged to share in the common task. Thus, these communities become a means of evangelization and of the initial proclamation

⁴² Cf. *EN*, no. 58, in *FLANNERY*, II, pp. 738-739.

of the Gospel, and a source of new ministries. At the same time, by being imbued with Christ's love, they also show how divisions, tribalism and racism can be overcome.⁴³

Likewise, *Redemptoris missio* respects the effectivity of BECs in the mission of the Church. It echoes the ecclesial character of the BEC in the sense that it serves the parish in its goal towards evangelization. Though BECs are not parishes they "decentralize and organize the parish community, to which they always remain united."⁴⁴ Furthermore, BECs are not parishes due to the fact that they don't possess the conditions provided by the juridical concept of a parish:

Can. 515 - §1. A parish is a definite community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a particular church; the pastoral care of the parish is entrusted to a pastor as its own shepherd under the authority of the diocesan bishop.⁴⁵

There are two distinctive elements of a parish: a) a *community of the faithful* characterized by its being a part of a particular Church and by its stability that is appropriate to the ecclesial organization: b) the pastoral care is conferred on a priest as its proper pastor but it has a

⁴³ *RM*, no. 51, in *ORE*, p. 13.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

⁴⁵ "Paroecia est certa communitas christifidelium in Ecclesia particulari stabiliter constituta, cuius cura pastoralis, sub auctoritate Episcopi diocesani, committitur parochi, qua proprio eiusdem pastori" (c. 515, §1).

dependent relationship with the diocesan bishop.⁴⁶ On the other hand, the BEC is a means to facilitate this pastoral care and it is lay centered. This does not imply autonomous power of governance endowed on a lay leader but all the activities are still supervised by the pastor. A complementary relationship exists between a parish and BECs to effect the same purpose: pastoral care.

The parish carries out a function that is, in a way, an integral ecclesial function because it accompanies persons and families throughout their lives, fostering their education and growth in the faith. It is a center of coordination and guidance for communities, groups and movements. In it the horizons of communion and participation are opened up even more. The celebration of the eucharist and other sacraments makes the global reality of the church present in a clearer way. Its tie with the diocesan community is ensured by its union with the bishop, who entrusts his representative (usually the parish priest) with the pastoral care of the community...⁴⁷

Furthermore, a BEC, although parish based, is quantitatively smaller than a parish because the BECs are small groups representatives of a parish.

Redemptoris missio states implicitly the significance of the BECs in the social apostolate of the Church.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Cf. J. CALVO, "Parishes, Parish Priests and Assistants Priests," in *Code of Canon Law Annotated*, p. 378.

⁴⁷ A.T. HENNELLY, "Puebla Final Document, 'Base -Level Ecclesial Communities (CEBs), The Parish, and the Local Church,'" p. 249.

⁴⁸ Cf. *RM*, no. 51, in *ORE*, p. 13.

The BECs must be socially active by the mere fact that "they are communities of faith - discernment and - action."⁴⁹ Hence, to develop Francisco Claver's definition of BECs in the context of the Church in the Philippines, the *BECs* are *informal lay centered communities of a parish which have enormous task for the spiritual (faith - discernment) and social (action) upbringing of Christians.*

c. The CBCP's Reasons for Fostering BECs

The second decree does not oblige the CBCP to take BEC as the only means of evangelization of the Church in the Philippines.

Article 2. #1. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines should encourage the various dioceses to study the models of the Church under which they operate in such a way that the parish becomes a center of Church renewal and a community of Christian communities and families.⁵⁰

Hence, the PCP II does not actually impose a new model of the Church, namely the BECs, but it is merely stating an exemplary model of Church which have successful results in many ecclesiastical regions of the Philippines.⁵¹ The BECs should not replace or compete with the different mandated religious

⁴⁹ F. CLAVER, "The Basic Ecclesial Community, Vehicle par Excellence for Inculturation," p. 19.

⁵⁰ *PCP II D*, no. 2, #1, p. 233.

⁵¹ See *PCP II D*, no. 1, #4, p. 233; see also *NCDP*, nos. 280 and 343, pp. 150, 185-186.

organizations⁵² which have been considered to be traditional means of evangelization.

Article 116. #2. The participatory process of BECs shall be integrated into parish associations and movements, as well as into both diocesan and parochial pastoral councils.⁵³

Furthermore, it should not diminish the function of a priest whose role has been exclusively and traditionally regarded to be cultic.⁵⁴

The CBCP teachings presented the following reasons for fostering the BECs:

1) Catholics in the Philippines comprise the majority of the population. The communal dimension of the Church must also

⁵² "The mandated organizations should be renewed with a more total vision of Church and collaborate with and promote the growth of the BECs" (PLE, in *LS*, pp. 176-177).

⁵³ *PCP II D*, no. 116 #2, p. 269. There was a lack of directional framework of the various Church apostolates. "The plethora of programs, organizations, and movements seem to compete with each other in a stream of confusing activities" (CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, *Final Draft on the Commission on Christian Life (=FDCCL)*, Manila, CBCP National Coordinating Office, 1991, p. 6). The CBCP wanted to solve this problem through an arduous task of building BECs (cf. Appendix I, "Position Paper for the 1981 International Vocation Congress," in R.P. HARDY, *1968-1983*, p. 258).

⁵⁴ "Confusion of roles afflicts both clergy and laity. To a large extent this is an ecclesiological problem, inasmuch as the image people have of priests stems from their understanding of the Church itself. And most people seem more comfortable with the institutional model of the Church as a perfect society. The majority of laity who responded to the working paper wanted their priests to dress in roman collars or soutanas, and to conform in general to a strictly sacramental model of priesthood" (CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, *PCP II Final Draft on the Clergy (=FDC)*, Manila, CBCP National Coordinating Office, 1991, p. 7).

be experienced in small grassroot groups.

This is not to understand [sic] the theological importance of the bigger dimensions of the local church, but rather to state that on the experiential level, the community dimension of Church is most aptly expressed in the smaller groupings where people can know one another and work together to deepen their consciousness of their being brothers and sisters of Jesus. The ideal expressed in Acts 4:32, where all were of one heart and one mind is more easily realized at the grassroots. In such a manner are individuals and society itself changed and improved.⁵⁵

2) The BEC adapts to the cultural orientation of the Filipinos.

Basic ecclesial communities have promoted unity and solidarity among families in the parish and diocesan levels. Because they are based on traditional Filipino values like *bayanihan* [fellowship], *damayan* [compassionate sharing], and *pakikisama*, the basic ecclesial communities have empowered people to take responsibility for their own lives and to exercise co-responsibility. They have also helped people to become aware of the plight of those less fortunate than themselves and, because of a strong scriptural base, prayer and a deepened eucharistic consciousness, promoted

⁵⁵ *PLE*, in *LS*, p. 175. In line with this, are practical and theological reasons: "The very practical reason for the choice of the BEC as a top priority for the Philippine church is simple enough: the lack of priestly and religious personnel. If the whole Church is to be a real community of disciples, renewed and re-evangelized, there is no way this can be done without the fuller and wider participation of the laity. Hence, the importance of the BECs.

"The deeper theological reason - valid even if a sufficiency of vocations to the priestly and religious life becomes available - is that the Church mission of evangelization is not the responsibility of clerics and religious alone, but the whole Church, laity included" (F. CLAVER, "The Basic Ecclesial Community, Vehicle par Excellence for Inculturation," p. 15).

solidarity in the task of bringing about a more Christian society.⁵⁶

The BECs as compatible with the cultural behavior of the Filipinos serve as effective force for renewal. The Church is recognized especially through

Basic Ecclesial Communities in remote areas rarely reached even by the government. It has a high degree of credibility with the people and a message to communicate, which is another way of saying that it is a significant cultural force.⁵⁷

d. BEC according to the Decrees of PCP II

The teaching of the Council has a tone of encouragement as expressed by the word "to foster":

Our vision of the Church as communion, participation, and mission, about the Church as a priestly, prophetic, and kingly people and as a Church of the poor -- a Church that is renewed -- is today finding expression in one ecclesial movement. This is the movement to foster Basic Ecclesial Communities.⁵⁸

One of the general goals of catechesis as noted in the National Catechetical Directory of the Philippines is to develop the sense of belonging and the active participation of members in the Church; the existence of BECs marks progress in

⁵⁶ *PLE*, in *LS*, p. 175-176; cf. *supra* p. 85.

⁵⁷ *PCP II CD*, no. 247, pp. 88-89.

⁵⁸ *PCP II CD*, no. 137, p. 52. The term "to foster" the BECs was already used with respect to catechesis in the local Church (cf. *NCDP*, no. 237, p. 127). However, the final draft on Christian life strongly recommended for the establishment of BECs: "Basic Ecclesial Communities should be vigorously established and promoted as necessary for the full living of the christian vocation of everyone" (*FDCL*, p. 22).

the new awareness of the Philippine Church and in its provision for active participation.⁵⁹

The PCP II document makes a very positive affirmation on the BECs in the Philippines:

In many dioceses today, Basic Ecclesial Communities are a pastoral priority. Though there are many other forms of small faith communities today, Basic Ecclesial Communities are visibly a significant expression of ecclesial renewal. The rapidity of their growth in various parts of the Philippines augurs well for the poor. Their potential for evangelization is a great hope for the Church in the Philippines.⁶⁰

The BEC is listed in the PCP II decrees under title XIII - Institutions; this title contains four decrees of which the first offers strong encouragement because the BECs "must be vigorously promoted for the full living Christian vocation in both urban and rural areas."⁶¹

⁵⁹ Cf. *NCDP*, no. 84, p. 56-57.

⁶⁰ *PCP II CD*, no. 140, pp. 52-53. However, the CBCP accepts the fact there is no claim that the BECs are the only effective context of catechesis (cf. *PLE*, in *LS*, p. 168).

⁶¹ *PCP II D*, no. 109, p. 267. The reason why the BECs are to be promoted in both rural and urban areas is that the Basic Christian Community is not widespread in the Archdiocese of Manila (see GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 100). Giordano claims that the problem partly lies with the failure of the priest to break out of the traditional parish structure, while another reason is the lack of concerted effort to reach the marginalized poor (cf. *ibid.*). However, "the effort to form Basic Christian Communities has been more successful in Mindanao than in the other regions of the Philippines" (see DE ACHUTEGUI, "Pre-Plenary Council Statistical Profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," p. 197-198). "One of the main reasons is that Mindanao is a frontier church and has been able to implement new approaches without the burden of the traditional structures of the established dioceses. The formation of the BCCs [Basic Christian Communities, the

The second decree mandates the CBCP to prepare an official document on BECs:

Article 110. #1. The CBCP shall issue an official statement on BECs, on their nature and function as recognized by the Church, making it clear that they are not simply another organization.

#2. This official statement of the CBCP shall be among other things, for the proper orienting of priests and seminarians. Training for work with BECs shall be made part of seminary formation.⁶²

Prior to formulating an official statement on the nature and function of the BEC, the CBCP, as recorded in its pastoral letter, felt the need to clarify its concept in relation to catechesis.⁶³

The third decree notes the relationship between the formation of BECs and re-evangelization:

Article 111. #1. In the formation of BECs, re-evangelization shall be given the highest priority.

#2. A formation program for BEC workers and missionaries, including a common manual, shall be developed and made available to the dioceses through the CBCP.⁶⁴

There was a very strong recommendation made by the CBCP concerning the significant role of BECs in the task of evangelization:

original title of the BECs] has enabled the Church to move to the grass roots in a more effective manner" (GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 112).

⁶² *PCP II D*, no. 110, p. 267. The original document includes the training of parish leaders (lay persons are also included); cf. *PLE*, in *LS*, p. 176.

⁶³ Cf. *PLE*, in *LS*, p. 167.

⁶⁴ *PCP II D*, no. 111, p. 267.

We should view the BECs as the major pastoral means of evangelization and of building eucharistic communities, parishes, and dioceses. Besides the strong encouragement and support of the Bishops' Conference, materials should be provided on the national level for the formation and continued growth of these communities. Regular regional conferences can help foster these communities and provide a forum for the sharing of experiences.⁶⁵

The fourth decree outlines the obligation to mobilize lay participation by making BECs a means of evangelization:

Article 112. #1. The laity should be mobilized to participate in the task of evangelization and look upon BECs as a means of evangelization.

#2. Truly discerning communities shall be formed to prevent the faith from being instrumentalized by political and other groups and to ensure that the principles and activities of various groups shall always be guided by Gospel values.⁶⁶

It is in this line that the BECs are means to facilitate a deeper understanding of collegiality and co-responsibility in the Church as essential to the maturation of the Church in the Philippines.⁶⁷ The decree further issues a strong warning against BECs being used by political or other groups.⁶⁸ The

⁶⁵ *PLE*, in *LS*, p. 176.

⁶⁶ *PCP II D*, no. 112, p. 267.

⁶⁷ See *PLE*, in *LS*, p. 177.

⁶⁸ Cf. *PCP II D*, no. 112 #2, p. 267; GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, p. 113. Here is an example illustrating a successful BEC formation with a strong caution against political involvement: Bishop Francisco Claver of the Prelature of Malaybalay (capital of the province of Bukidnon, Mindanao of the Southern Philippines, known for unjust wages for the pineapple plantation tenants) made a significant contribution to fostering the BECs; he had been creating discerning communities that are critical and socially aware. He trained the *alagads* (lay leaders in a wider sense) who had given themselves for the good of the greater community. The

CBCP is also aware of the fact that in many cases during the seventies, the BECs were misunderstood to be a subversive group and this led to the arrest of foreign missionaries.⁶⁹ Likewise, the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi* on evangelization states in this context that the BECs

will be a source of hope for the universal Church in so far as they draw their nourishment from the word of God and not allow themselves to become the prisoners of extreme political factions or of popular ideologies which are always eager to exploit their immense human potential.⁷⁰

alagads lead in the celebrations of the Word and in Bible reflections, distribute communion, baptize new members in the Church and bless the dead. They receive a mandate from the bishop for their service which is usually for a definite period of time, a year or two. However, in the strict sense the *alagads* are the trained lay leaders who work for their communities without being paid. The problem which endangered the BECs was the involvement of some priests, sisters and lay leaders in politics and ideologies which they thought would be helpful in the promotion of social justice. Claver's contribution to the Church in the Philippines was the development of the creative and innovative pastoral approaches of building BECs. Although he maintained the need for dialogue and lay participation, he is aware of the dangerous tendency which can be solved only through the initiative of the authority especially in a polarized, heavily politicized situation (cf. GIORDANO, pp. 100-104, p. 113; PLE, p. 177; DE ACHUTEGUI, "Pre-Plenary Council Statistical Profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," p. 197).

⁶⁹ See CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, Pastoral, "The Bond of Love in Proclaiming the Good News," 29 January 1977, in R.P. HARDY, 1968-1983, p. 147. This document is also published in *Boletín eclesiástico de Filipinas*, 51 (1977), pp. 31-34.

⁷⁰ EN, no. 58, in FLANNERY, II, p. 739.

e. The Role of the Priest in BEC

"We should view the BECs as a major pastoral means of evangelization and of building eucharistic communities, parishes, dioceses."⁷¹ There is a strong recommendation of the CBCP that each parish establish BECs within its boundaries.⁷² BECs is parish based and not an independent association.

These communities are united with their pastors but are ministered to regularly by lay leaders. The members know each other by name, and share not only the Word of God and the Eucharist but also their concerns both material and spiritual. They have a strong sense of belongingness and responsibility for one another.⁷³

Strict supervision is demanded from the pastors so that

the BECs are not just seen as another parish group, but as a pastoral strategy by which the mission of the Church can be carried out. The dioceses can also monitor the growth and development of its BECs to insure that they are solidly based on the Scriptures, and not simply discussion groups.⁷⁴

On the other hand, the prudent guidance is required of a pastor in establishing the BECs.

One of the particular signs of our times is the movement to establish Basic Ecclesial Communities under the prudent guidance of pastors within the communion of the parish and the diocese, even of the universal Church.⁷⁵

⁷¹ *PLE*, in *LS*, p. 176.

⁷² Cf. *PLE*, in *LS*, p. 177.

⁷³ *PCP II CD*, no. 138, p. 52.

⁷⁴ *PLE*, in *LS*, p. 176.

⁷⁵ *FDCL*, p. 13. "The lay apostolate, individual or collective, must be set in its true place within the apostolate of the whole Church" (AA, no. 23, in *FLANNERY, I*,

Besides the basic role of the priests as credible builders of communities,⁷⁶ their responsibility in relation to BECs is to assist the laity in the exercise of their role as well as to coordinate their apostolates.

Article 81. Priests should assist the laity to fulfill their proper role in the Church, thus helping to effect the coordination of all for the common good.⁷⁷

Hence, BECs have always been the responsibility of pastors. The BECs are of clerical origin, i.e., organized by a priest or a sister, eventhough the purpose of BECs is to decentralize the highly institutional Church and to establish a lay centered Church.⁷⁸ There is a restructuring of the Church since the BECs are trained to be self-sufficient while they mature spirituality, they become socially conscious, and they strive to be materially productive. The role of a priest is that of facilitator and not a leader since BECs purposively eliminates clerical monopoly and excessive authoritarianism. He withdraws slowly his "authority" while the BECs integrally mature - although he maintains his supervisory role in all

p. 789). Moreover, the Church hierarchy properly supervises lay apostolate: "The hierarchy's duty is to favor the lay apostolate, furnish it with principles and spiritual assistance, direct the exercise of the apostolate to the common good of the Church, and see to it that doctrine and order are safeguarded" (AA, no. 24, in FLANNERY, I, p. 789).

⁷⁶ See P. T. GIORDANO, *Awakening to Mission*, pp. 102-103.

⁷⁷ *PCP II D*, no. 81, p. 260.

⁷⁸ See D. BARBÉ, "Church Base Communities," p. 183.

their activities. Despite of the fact that it is an informal group, the BECs is not a highly structured group. A lay leader is designated by the pastor to act as coordinator of their activities.

The parish allots funds for the initial operation of BECs until the communities become self-sufficient in their material resources. In a highly organized BEC parish, a regular allowance is given to the lay leaders. However, the monetary problem has always beset the establishment of BECs since majority of the parishes in the country are poor.⁷⁹

f. The BEC Participants' Recognized Rights and Responsibilities

As provided in the PCP II decree, the CBCP will issue an official statement on BECs regarding its nature and functions as recognized by the Church.⁸⁰ The rights and responsibilities will eventually be listed. They will only serve as guidelines which will depend on the discretion of the diocesan bishops since the PCP II fosters BECs but not make the establishment

⁷⁹ The problem of funding BECs is connected with the minimal compensation received by the catechists. The PCP II states that "the Christian community should be aware of this financial burden and should be asked for support. A certain percentage of the parish income could be devoted to catechesis, and special collections could be made periodically to support the catechetical apostolate" (*PCP II CD*, no. 649, p. 219).

⁸⁰ See *PCP II D*, no. 110, p. 267.

mandatory.⁸¹ At present, the link of the leaders and members to their pastors occupies an important role among the existing BECs eventhough the CBCP has not yet defined the rights and responsibilities.

It is necessary, however, that the members and leaders of such communities remain in communion with the pastors of the Church, who should see to it that prudent and systematic means are used to make BECs flourish smoothly.⁸²

The rights and responsibilities which are presently binding are those listed in the 1983 Code and those implied in the Vatican II teachings with particular reference to *Evangelii nuntiandi*.⁸³ The Second Plenary Council did not provide any list of rights and responsibilities but it promotes BEC as a pastoral priority. Moreover, it assigned to the Bishops' Conference the task of the proper promotion of BECs among the dioceses. The National Pastoral Plan allotted one to three year implementation program of BECs:

To issue an official CBCP statement on the nature and function of BECs and to develop a common manual for BEC workers and as a help to seminary and religious sisters formation [## 110.1, 111.2].

Time: 1 to three years

⁸¹ See *PCP II D*, no. 2, #1, p. 233.

⁸² *FDRC*, p. 17; cf. *EN*, no. 58, in *FLANNERY*, II, pp. 738-740. The PCP II gives extra care in the proper coordination of social apostolate in both parish and diocesan levels: "Coordination on a common pastoral vision among the various ministries and apostolates shall be set up to address socio-economic problem" (*PCP II D*, no. 129, p. 271).

⁸³ Cf. *EN*, no. 58, in *FLANNERY*, II, pp. 738-740.

Lead agent: CBCP
Partners: diocese/ BEC experts⁸⁴

g. The Future of BECs

There is indeed a recurring pastoral demand for the formation of BECs.

In the various proposals of the diocesan congresses and the national Eucharistic Congress itself, more emphasis was given to the basic ecclesial communities than any other area. There was a clear conviction that they were not only a vehicle for expressing what eucharistic communities were all about, but they were also seen as an excellent way to bring about needed inculturation, to provide for far flung areas, and to impart the eucharistic catechesis that will enable the Church in the Philippines to prosper, despite the shortage of priests.⁸⁵

The BECs serve as "vehicles of inculturation"⁸⁶ because they facilitate more active participation of the laity in the mission of the Church.

It is a fact, however, that at the level of the BECs we can truly say the participation of every member of the Church is possible and actualizable. It is also at that level that the most ordinary representatives of a cultural group are provided the possibility of doing inculturation

⁸⁴ Cf. CBCP, *In the State of Mission, Towards a Renewed Evangelization*, p. 71.

⁸⁵ *PLE*, in *LS*, p. 176. It is worth noting at this point that the BECs as they pave the way to active lay participation, attempt to solve the problem of shortage of priests in the Church in the Philippines.

⁸⁶ F. CLAVER, "The Basic Ecclesial Community, Vehicle par Excellence for Inculturation," p. 16 and p. 19.

themselves – not a small thing in a Church which for so long has been synonymous with hierarchy.⁸⁷

The PCP II considered BEC as a basic arm for renewal of the Church in the Philippines.

The rapidity of their growth in various parts of the Philippines augurs well for the widespread activation of God-given charisms among the poor. Their potential for evangelization is a great hope for the Church in the Philippines.⁸⁸

However, do BECs have a theological basis in accordance with *Christifideles laici* and a legal basis in the new Code? *Evangelii nuntiandi* and *Redemptoris missio* provide the direct reference for the BECs. *Christifideles laici* provides "criteria of ecclesiality" for evaluating lay groups:

- 1) The primacy given to the call of Christian to holiness.
- 2) The responsibility of professing the Catholic faith.
- 3) The witness to a strong and authentic communion.
- 4) Conformity to and participation in the Church's apostolic goals.
- 5) A commitment to a presence in human society.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 19.

⁸⁸ PCP II CD, no. 140, p. 53. "The Second Plenary Council of the Philippines thus makes much the empowering of the laity for mission, because historically their part in and responsibility for the task have not always been given the weight they should have had all along" (F. CLAVER, "The Basic Ecclesial Community, Vehicle par Excellence for Inculturation," p. 16).

⁸⁹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles laici* (=CFL), 30 December 1988, no. 30, in AAS, 81 (1989) pp. 446-448 (English translation as published

Christifideles laici also describes group forms of participation:

In recent days the phenomenon of lay people associating among themselves has taken on a character of particular variety and vitality. In some ways lay associations have always been present throughout the Church's history as various confraternities, third orders and sodalities testify even today. However, in modern times such lay groups have received a special stimulus, resulting in the birth and spread of a multiplicity of group forms: associations, groups, *communities* [emphasis added], movements. We can speak of a new era of group endeavors of the lay faithful.⁹⁰

Pope John Paul II also acknowledges "'ecclesial basic communities' as a force for evangelization."⁹¹ However, there is no direct referral to BECs in the 1983 Code. Implicitly they are included among associations of Christ's faithful:

Can. 299 - §1. The Christian faithful are free, by means of a private agreement made among themselves, to establish associations to attain the aims mentioned in can. 298, §1, with due regard for the prescriptions of can. 301, §1.⁹²

by Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops [=CCCB Edition], Ottawa, pp. 82-85.

⁹⁰ CFL, no. 29, in CCCB Edition, p. 79.

⁹¹ RM, no. 51, in ORE, p. 13.

⁹² "Integrum est christifidelibus, privata inter se conventionione inita, consociationes constituere ad fines de quibus in can. 298, §1 persequendos, firmo praescripto can. 301, §1" (c. 299, §1). The two quoted canons serve as guiding criteria for establishing the association. C. 298 §1 provides the aims "to promote a more perfect life or to foster public worship or Christian doctrine or to exercise other apostolic works, namely to engage in efforts of evangelization, to exercise works of piety or charity and to animate the temporal order with the Christian spirit." C. 301, §1 states that "competent ecclesiastical authority alone has the right to erect associations of the Christian faithful which set out to

According to the criteria found in the Code, the individual BECs are *de facto* private associations because a) they are established by the members although these associations are informally and pastorally recognized (c. 299, §1); b) they have not been erected by competent ecclesiastical authority. "Such associations are called private associations even though they are praised or recommended by ecclesiastical authority;"⁹³ Furthermore, the BECs are the examples of the faithful's innate and fundamental right to form associations on their own initiative for the ends related to the mission of the Church;⁹⁴ c) however, the BECs are not officially recognized because they do not have statutes which have been reviewed by competent authority. In fact, they do not have written statutes. "No private associations of the Christian faithful in the Church is recognized unless its statutes are reviewed by competent authority."⁹⁵ The element of the

teach Christian doctrine in the name of the Church or to promote public worship or which aim at other ends whose pursuit by their nature is reserved to the same ecclesiastical authority."

⁹³ C. 299, §2: "Huiusmodi consociationes, etiamsi ab auctoritate ecclesiastica laudentur vel commendentur, consociationes privatae vocantur."

⁹⁴ See c. 215.

⁹⁵ c. 299 §3: "Nulla christifidelium consociatio privata in Ecclesia agnoscitur, nisi eius statuta ab auctoritate competenti recognoscantur." "Recognition" and "reviewing" are the key elements of understanding this canon. "Although these terms are neither defined, generally the first at least implies a somewhat modified acceptance and approval of the condition in which the body presents itself. The second at

ecclesiastical authority's necessary link with the lay associations is already found in the key documents of Vatican II regarding the laity.⁹⁶ In the wider sense, the BECs are part of a movement which seeks on a grassroots level to have the faithful to pray together, work together, discuss and plan together to bring about a more Christian environment. However, in the strict sense, they are *de facto* private associations which exist like any other parish organization.

B. An Attempt at Inculturation of Canon Law

1. What is Meant by Participation?

"Participation" in relation to the laity's role in the life and mission of the Church varies according to the particular Churches, as well as to places and time.

The lay faithful participate in the life of the Church not only in exercising their tasks and

least implies, and perhaps strongly, careful scrutiny. In any event a direct statement by the authority that the disputed statutes are *not* recognized would effectively deny approval to the petitioning body" (E. KNEAL, "Associations of the Christian Faithful," in *A Text and Commentary*, p. 245). Since the term used to indicate the nature of this "review" (*recognoscantur*) is similar to that of c. 455, §2 regarding the Holy See's examination of general decrees with the force of law issued by the conference of bishops, this review is intended to verify that the statutes are in harmony with the doctrine of the Church and with the prescriptions of common and particular law, and where necessary, to order the inclusion of required amendments (cf. *Code of Canon Law Annotated*, p. 246). For further understanding of competent authority regarding erection of associations of Christian faithful, see cc. 301 and 312.

⁹⁶ See AA, no. 19, in FLANNERY, I, p. 786; LG, no. 37, FLANNERY, I, p. 395.

charisms, but also in many other ways.

Such participation finds its first and necessary expression in the life and mission of the particular Church, in the diocese in which the Church of Christ, one, holy, "catholic and apostolic, is truly present at work" (CD, no. 11).⁹⁷

This post-Vatican II teaching on lay participation has a very broad scope since it doesn't specify the particular tasks of the lay faithful. *Lumen gentium* has a general understanding of lay participation which is interpreted as a sharing in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ by virtue of baptism.⁹⁸ In line with *Lumen gentium*, *Apostolicam actuositatem* considers, in the context of lay participation, that no member of the People of God "plays a purely passive part, sharing in the life of the body it shares at the same time in its activity."⁹⁹

In the Philippines, participation largely means enabling the laity to participate more fully in the life of the Church and its task of mission. That life and task have been, for too long, looked at almost exclusively as the special responsibility of the appointed pastors, the priests and bishops of the Church (this is a historical problem which is linked with the colonial experience). This narrow understanding has effectively reduced the laity to being mere objects of pastoral care, passive and compliant recipients of the clergy's evangelizing effort. In truth the lay faithful are, by right, subjects of evangelization, active [with emphasis added] workers of the Gospel, tasked with

⁹⁷ CFL, no. 25, in CCCB Edition, p. 67.

⁹⁸ Cf. LG, no. 31, in FLANNERY, I, p. 388.

⁹⁹ AA, no. 2, in FLANNERY, I, p. 768.

basically, the same mission as the Church's pastors.¹⁰⁰

The PCP II has put into context its concept of "participation" because, first and foremost, the meaning stemmed from the problem of clerical monopoly¹⁰¹ (or from a greater identification of the Church with its hierarchical dimension) with respect to the task of mission in the Church. Secondly, it established its own pastoral priorities in which lay participation is to be maximized. The PCP II decree is selective in the sense that it identifies its pastoral priorities concentrating on the seven sectoral concerns,¹⁰² although other special concerns are also mentioned.¹⁰³ This understanding of PCP II has not distorted Vatican II's view of participation, but instead it has better contextualized the idea. For instance, active lay participation has been badly needed in the area of the social apostolate "in the context of

¹⁰⁰ *PCP II CD*, no. 99, p. 39.

¹⁰¹ The problem is not only attributed to the Church hierarchy in the Philippines but it is also the laity in their misconceived role. Hence, the PCP II provides a better way for conscientizing for active lay participation. "Lay formation centers must be established in every diocese or region under the authority of the local Ordinary" (*PCP II D*, no. 113, p. 268).

¹⁰² Cf. *PCP II D*, nos. 46-57, pp. 247-251.

¹⁰³ For instance, evangelization in general has special concerns (cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 377-401, pp. 129-138).

our society today, where the poor and marginalized have little genuine participation."¹⁰⁴

2. Important Elements of Active Lay Participation

Exemplary lay participation should be exercised keeping the following important elements in mind:¹⁰⁵

a. The 1983 Code

If theology identifies Christian values, canon law is formulated to serve these values.¹⁰⁶ It is in this understanding that lay participation has been revolutionized by the teachings of Vatican II; hence, it should be taken as a value being preserved and provided for in the 1983 Code. The teaching on lay participation in the 1983 Code provides the basis for lay participation and enumerates the rights and obligations of the lay faithful. Such provision serves as a skeletal framework for any exercise of lay participation in particular churches.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ *PCP II D*, no. 325, p. 112.

¹⁰⁵ An exemplary lay participation means herein "theological and legal soundness."

¹⁰⁶ Cf. L. ORSY, *Theology and Canon Law*, p. 109. "To support a theological or human value is the purpose of every ecclesiastical law" (*ibid.*, p. 80).

¹⁰⁷ Any dealing with and promotion of the role of the laity in the Church has to be particularly based on the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, the new Code, cc. 224-231, and the *Christifideles laici* (cf. *PCP II D*, no. 41 #1, p. 245).

b. The Second Plenary Council of the Philippines

The decrees of the PCP II do not establish particular law without relation to the 1983 Code. Rather the meaning of any norm must be derived from the context of the whole legal system of the Church.¹⁰⁸ The PCP II as a particular council "must always respect the universal law of the Church."¹⁰⁹ Hence, its legislation can be seen as an extension and application of the norms of the Code since both share in the same legislative power.

Legislative power devolves upon the Roman Pontiff and an ecumenical council with regard to the universal Church; upon the particular councils and conferences of bishops within the scope of their competence, for particular Churches of their area; and on each diocesan bishop for his own diocese.¹¹⁰

In fact, the Code recognizes that the power of governance is divided into legislative, executive, and judicial power.¹¹¹

Plenary councils first came into being to allow a larger number of Church leaders to come together to resolve certain

¹⁰⁸ Cf. L. ÖRSY, *Theology and Canon Law*, p. 81.

¹⁰⁹ c. 445.

¹¹⁰ J.I. ARRIETA, "Power of Governance," in *Code of Canon Law Annotated*, p. 149. The plenary council belongs to the sphere of each conference of bishops, regardless of whether the conference covers one or several countries; cf. *Communicationes*, 12 (1980), p. 256; as cited in *ibid.*, p. 333.

¹¹¹ See c. 135, §1.

current problems and eventually to arrive at a single view.¹¹² As mentioned in the first chapter, synods and councils in the first centuries frequently condemned heresies or settled controversies; councils and synods formerly often dealt with questions of faith and discipline.¹¹³ It was only in the Middle Ages that the plenary councils came to serve as national assemblies for the purpose of discussion and settlement of political issues.¹¹⁴ Hence, the radical concern for the social and political condition of the Church was already an age-long thrust of the plenary council. In this vein, the PCP II calls for the laity's active involvement and leadership in politics.

In the Philippines today given the general perception that politics has become an obstacle to integral development, the urgent necessity is for the lay faithful to participate more actively, with singular competence and integrity, in political affairs. It is through the laity that the Church is directly involved.¹¹⁵

The PCP II provides guidelines for responsible lay participation in political life.¹¹⁶ On the other hand, the PCP I though somewhat pastorally careful in the field of

¹¹² See H.J. SIEBEN, "Episcopal Conferences in Light of Particular Councils During the First Millennium," in *The Jurist*, 48 (1988), pp. 31-32.

¹¹³ See H. AYRINHAC, *Constitution of the Church in the New Code of Canon Law*, New York, Longmans Green, 1930, p. 113.

¹¹⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 105.

¹¹⁵ *PCP II CD*, no. 348, p. 119.

¹¹⁶ Cf. *PCP II CD*, no. 351, pp. 120-121.

political involvement, was aware of the social apostolate and actively promoted it.¹¹⁷ Furthermore, the PCP II's persistent encouragement of the establishment of BECs in the Church encourages and promotes for fuller lay participation in its life and mission. The BECs are especially significant 'places' of building up the local Church.¹¹⁸ The pre-plenary council survey on BECs attests to the fact that "a marked trend was observed towards more social involvement among these small communities."¹¹⁹

c. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines

Particular councils are closest in character to episcopal conferences.¹²⁰ The following definition provides for a better understanding of the differences between the two:

Can. 447 - The conference of bishops, a permanent institution, is a grouping of bishops of a given nation or territory whereby, according to the norm of law, they jointly exercise certain pastoral functions on behalf of the Christian faithful of their territory in view of promoting that greater good which the Church offers humankind, especially through forms and programs of the apostolate which are fittingly adapted to the

¹¹⁷ Chapter IV *De actione sociali*, which is under Title V *De laicis*, contains eleven decrees (cf. *PCP I*, nos. 259-269, pp. 91-94).

¹¹⁸ See O.B. QUEVEDO, "Notes on the Evangelization in Asia in the Context of the Religious," p. 8.

¹¹⁹ P.S. DE ACHUTEGUI, "Pre-Plenary Council Statistical Profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," p. 197.

¹²⁰ See H.J. SIEBEN, "Episcopal Conferences in Light of Particular Councils During the First Millennium," p. 30.

circumstances of the time and place.¹²¹

The conferences are considered as a modern approach for deliberations carried out through assemblies of bishops, considering the fact that their legislative role stems from Second Vatican Council.¹²² "It was at Vatican II that the need was felt to endow conferences with an adequate discipline of universal law."¹²³ Hence, the episcopal conference is to fulfill collegial responsibilities for the Church in the light of the teaching of universal law. However, as distinct from plenary councils, the general rule-making authority of episcopal conferences is quite limited as attested in the 1983 Code.¹²⁴ The conferences were not actually designed as legislative bodies.

An episcopal conference is a form of assembly

¹²¹ Theologically there is not necessarily a difference between the episcopal conferences and particular councils. The episcopal conferences fill in the vacuum left between particular councils and other non-conciliar episcopal assemblies (see H.J. SIEBEN, "Episcopal Conferences in light of Particular Councils During the First Millennium," p. 65).

¹²² Cf. J.A. CORIDEN, *An Introduction to Canon Law*, p. 82. Looking into the relationship with the particular council, the episcopal conference is of relatively recent vintage (cf. H.J. SIEBEN, "Episcopal Conferences in Light of Particular Councils during the First Millennium," p. 30; J. H. PROVOST, "Groupings of Particular Churches," in *A Text and Commentary*, p. 363).

¹²³ G. FELICIANI, "Episcopal Conferences from Vatican II to the 1983 Code," in *The Jurist*, 48 (1988), p. 11.

¹²⁴ The decisions of the episcopal conference have juridically binding force once legitimately approved by at least two thirds of the votes of the members; these decisions are subject to review by the Holy See before they can be promulgated by the Conference (cf. c. 455).

in which the bishops of a certain country or region exercise their pastoral office jointly in order to enhance the Church's beneficial influence on all men, especially by devising forms of the apostolate and apostolic methods suitably adapted to the circumstances of the times.¹²⁵

At any rate, the decrees or pronouncements of the national conference of bishops constitute an important source of legislation for the local church. This explains the fact that a number of teachings and the legislation of the PCP II are most often a reiteration of the CBCP pastoral letters and statements.

The first PCP II decree on the laity highlights the responsibility of the CBCP with respect to lay participation.

Article 41. #2. The CBCP will take steps to foster a more active role of the laity in the Church and to provide, where appropriate, full time, professionally trained pastoral workers to foster the growth of the Church.¹²⁶

The BECs as a means of evangelization provide a proper atmosphere for lay participation. The PCP II decrees that "the

¹²⁵ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, *Christus Dominus (=CD)*, 28 October 1965, 38, in *AAS*, 58, (1964), pp. 693-694, (English translation in *FLANNERY*, I, p. 587). "The revised code devotes thirteen canons to the episcopal conference. This conference has a major role in the local church as a clearing house for ideas and policies. The episcopal conference is a planning institute on a national level for pastoral activity and the apostolate" (B.F. GRIFFIN, "Supra-Diocesan Structures," in E.G. PFNAUSCH, ed., *Code, Community, Ministry, Selected Studies for the Parish Minister Introducing the Code of Canon Law*, 2nd rev. ed., Washington, D.C., CLSA, 1992, p. 42. For an episcopal conference as not basically a legislative body, cf. *ibid.*, p. 44.

¹²⁶ *PCP II D*, no. 41 #2, p. 245.

CBCP shall issue an official statement on BECs, on their nature and function as recognized by the Church, making it clear that they are not simply another organization."¹²⁷ The role of the CBCP in this matter is to supplement what was not provided in the PCP II decree. Moreover, the CBCP has been active in dealing with the moral, social, and political issues of the country because it has the *munus docendi*.¹²⁸

d. Diocesan Bishops

Despite the "powers" entrusted to episcopal conferences, the 1983 Code takes steps to guarantee the autonomy of the diocese.¹²⁹ The permanency of the institution of the episcopal conference does not imply excessive limitation of the authority of individual bishops.¹³⁰ Indeed the diocesan bishop is given great authority because of his great

¹²⁷ PCP II D, no. 110 #1, p. 267.

¹²⁸ However, if the conference makes too many statements, this can eventually diminish its moral authority especially when dealing with social or political questions (cf. F.G. MORRISEY, "Episcopal Conferences and the Three Munera," in *The Jurist*, 48 (1988), p. 27). Nevertheless, it is important to note that the faithful owe a "sense of religious respect" (c. 753) to the authentic magisterium of the bishops.

¹²⁹ "In cases where neither the universal law nor a special mandate of the Apostolic See gives the Bishops' Conference the power mentioned in §1, the competence of each diocesan Bishop remains intact. In such cases, neither the Conference nor its president can act in the name of all the Bishops unless each and every Bishop has given his consent" (c. 455, §4).

¹³⁰ Cf. G. FELICIANI, "Episcopal Conferences from Vatican II to the 1983 Code," p. 19.

responsibilities.¹³¹ Furthermore, the renewed emphasis on the particular church in Vatican II was also linked to a reevaluation of the power of the diocesan bishop.¹³²

The PCP II decrees also recognize the authority of diocesan bishops because it frequently mentions "under the direction of the bishop" with respect to the concrete implementation of a particular program.¹³³

e. Cultures and Mentality

Cultures and mentality are probably rare terms in the

¹³¹ See J. A. CORIDEN, *An Introduction to Canon Law*, p. 76.

¹³² Cf. H. MULLER, "The Relationship between the Episcopal Conference and the Diocesan Bishop," in *The Jurist*, 48 (1988), p. 120. Stemming from the bishop's ordinary and immediate power which is necessary for the exercise of his pastoral office in the dioceses (cf. *CD*, no. 8, in FLANNERY, I, p. 567) and by the fact that bishops govern their Churches as vicars and ambassadors of Christ and not as vicars of the Roman Pontiff (cf. *LG*, no. 27, in FLANNERY, I, p. 383: where the terms "proper, ordinary and immediate power" are used together), this power is also provided in the following: "In the diocese entrusted to his care, the diocesan Bishop has all the ordinary, proper and immediate power required for the exercise of this pastoral office, except in those matters which the law or a decree of the Supreme Pontiff reserves to the supreme or to some other ecclesiastical authority" (c. 381, §1). The term "proper" was not used in CIC 1917: "Episcopi sunt Apostolorum successores atque ex divina institutione peculiaribus ecclesiis praeficiuntur quas cum potestate ordinaria regunt sub auctoritate Romani Pontificis" (CIC 329, §1).

¹³³ For instance, on the section of the laity: cf. *PCP II D*, nos. 46, #3, 51, #3, pp. 247 and 249; for an immediate response of bishops to a needful situation, cf. *PCP II D*, no. 56, #3, p. 251. Regarding the establishment of lay formation centers which must be under the authority of the local Ordinary, cf. *PCP II D*, no. 113, p. 268.

canonical tradition¹³⁴ but they play a crucial role in guiding lay participation for they reveal the context as well as the proper approach for the implementation of a canonical principle. The Second Vatican Council describes culture in a general sense: it "refers to those things which go to the refining and developing of man's diverse mental and physical endowments."¹³⁵ On the other hand, the PCP II affirms: "there is indeed a common culture and a common social structure that we can truthfully call Filipino."¹³⁶ The PCP II decree is a legislation which proximately reflects the Filipino culture. It points out the strengths and never avoids to enumerate the weaknesses of Filipino culture.¹³⁷ Finally, the PCP II takes steps to deal with the deficiencies of Filipino culture: "We must look to the creating of structures that punish, not reward, the excessive and the deficient in our cultural mindset and behavior."¹³⁸ This is in line with the conciliar text of the Vatican II: "It is one of the properties of the human person that he can achieve true and full humanity only by means of culture, that is through the cultivation of goods and

¹³⁴ There is no direct canonical reference to "culture"; however, the 1983 Code emphasizes the respect for culture regarding the exercise of the teaching role of the Church; see cc. 248, 787, §1, 807, 821, 1136.

¹³⁵ *GS*, no. 53, in *FLANNERY*, I, p. 958.

¹³⁶ *PCP II CD*, no. 19, p. 11.

¹³⁷ See *PCP II CD*, nos. 21-22, pp. 11-12.

¹³⁸ *PCP II CD*, no. 22, p. 12.

values of nature."¹³⁹ In this case, the PCP II looks for a stricter option as expressed by the term "punish"; it implies radical means that promote structures which counteract weaknesses of culture and mentality. The CBCP in convoking PCP II sought the following purpose:

1. The needed *aggiornamento* (updating) after Vatican II. The signal pronouncements of the Supreme Pontiffs and of several synods of Bishops held in Rome. 3. The significant developments of Ecclesiology and the promulgation of the new Code of Canon Law. 4. The social and religious changes in our time.¹⁴⁰

This can be done only through action to eradicate defective mentality and cultural behaviors.¹⁴¹ "The legislator cannot speak except within his cultural context."¹⁴² Therefore, the PCP II had formulated the teachings and decrees by first conducting a situational analysis of the Filipino culture and situation.

The law always reflects the cultural milieu in which it was made. No wonder, therefore, that there is a relative element in every law, since it represents the cultural mentality of the legislator and the impact of his environment.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ GS, no. 53, in FLANNERY, I, p. 958.

¹⁴⁰ CBCP, *Primer on the PCP II*, Manila, CBCP National Coordinating Office, 1989, p. 39.

¹⁴¹ One of the reasons for the convocation of the PCP II is the socio-cultural change of Philippine society, "a worsening of the culture of corruption" (T. BACANI, *Towards the Third Millennium - The PCP-II Vision*, p. 8).

¹⁴² L. ÖRSY, *Theology and Canon Law*, p. 79.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

The use of this approach is attested by the mere fact that part I of the PCP II conciliar document dealt with the various contexts of the Philippines.¹⁴⁴

The second chapter presented some cultural factors which have influenced the PCP II. Moreover, these cultural factors can be utilized to facilitate lay participation. For instance, the *sakop* philosophy which brings a strong family orientation to Filipinos has the PCP II decrees concentrate on the family.¹⁴⁵ The *sakop* philosophy serves also as a "nest" for the building of basic ecclesial communities. The *sakop* may have already been Christianized but it is not yet organized as a basic ecclesial community. However, crucial to this cultural orientation is the purification of the role of the patron or the leader of the *sakop* who will be a potential facilitator of BECs.¹⁴⁶ Likewise, the cultural value of *pakikisama* is

¹⁴⁴ Cf. *PCP II CD*, nos. 8-33, p. 7-15.

¹⁴⁵ See *PCP II D*, nos. 46-49, pp. 247-248.

¹⁴⁶ The PCP II speaks of servant leadership for priests in relationship to the problem which hinders lay participation namely, clerical monopoly, and authoritarianism: "certainly the servant-leadership of the ordained reaches its culmination in the Eucharist; but from the Eucharist, servant leadership flows into other areas. The priest is a servant and leader when he reaches out to all classes of people in the community with great kindness after the manner of the Lord. He inspires, leads, and coordinates the members of the community so that they will become what they are supposed to be as Christians. Very special among his concerns are once again the poor, the young people [of whom we have very many in our land], and parents who are special evangelizers to their children" (*PCP II CD*, no. 529, p. 181). For the idea on how a priest properly deals with authority as a ruler of God's people, cf. SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests,

compatible with the exercise of lay participation; it is a sincere participation in the life and mission of the Church. This new ecclesiological understanding as imbibed by the PCP II marks a new way of presenting the Church in the Philippines.

The PCP-II vision of the Church as a community of believers is a very big advance over the conception of the Church as primarily a social institution. With this new way of presenting the Church, PCP II has moved from the *Sila* (They = bishops, priests, and religious) Church to the *Tayo* (We, All of us together) Church. The pyramid ceases to be the dominant image of the Church. The circle has taken its place.¹⁴⁷

At this point, the PCP II is making an attempt towards inculturation.¹⁴⁸ Secondly, "basic ecclesial communities are

Presbyterorum ordinis (=PO), 7 December 1965, no. 6, in AAS, 58 (1966), pp. 999-1001 (FLANNERY, I, pp. 872-875). Furthermore, the BECs intend "to correct the former common misunderstanding of identifying the Church with the bishops, priest and religious. Today's new stress on the local Church brings down to the grass roots, the active responsibility of fostering Christian living" (NCDP, no. 85, pp. 56-57). "Authoritarianism is still evident among some pastors, hindering the maturation of the people and even closing in of the parish on itself. Happily, the renewal of both clergy and laity becomes manifest in the recent development of the basic ecclesial communities in which the faithful can live a full Christian life" (FDCCL, p. 6).

¹⁴⁷ T. BACANI, *Towards the Third Millennium - PCP II Vision*, p. 25).

¹⁴⁸ "Inculturation means inserting the Gospel into a culture and expressing it through the elements of that culture" (PCP II CD, no. 207, p. 75). Inculturation involves two essential elements: the dialogue between faith and culture (see F. GEORGE, *Inculturation and Ecclesial Communion, Culture and Church in the Teaching of John Paul II*, Rome, Urbaniana University Press, 1990, p. 31). The PCP II envisions a mature faith which is inculturated (cf. PCP II CD, no. 72, p. 30).

significant 'places' of inculturation."¹⁴⁹ Thirdly, the process of inculturation is not achieved in a short span of time:

The process of the Church's insertion into peoples' cultures is a lengthy one. It is not a matter of pure external adaptation, for inculturation "means the intimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration in Christianity and the insertion of Christianity in the various human cultures." The process is thus a profound and all-embracing one, which involves the Christian message and also the Church's reflection and practice. But at the same time it is a difficult process, for it must in no way compromise the distinctiveness and integrity of the Christian faith.¹⁵⁰

Today's urgent need for inculturation was enunciated by Pope John Paul II:

As she carries out missionary activity among the nations, the Church encounters different cultures and becomes involved in the process of inculturation. The need for such involvement has marked the Church's pilgrimage throughout her history, but today it is particularly urgent.¹⁵¹

Inculturation will be successful and Christian if the following three conditions are present: 1) it is marked by fidelity to the Christian message and tradition, 2) there is fidelity to the positive, valid insights of a particular culture or tradition; and 3) it can be lived out by the

¹⁴⁹ O. QUEVEDO, "Notes on the New Evangelization in Asia in the Context of the Religious," p. 8.

¹⁵⁰ *RM*, no. 52, in *ORE*, p. 13.

¹⁵¹ *RM*, no. 52, in *ORE*, p. 13.

pastoral agent or agents and their communities of faith.¹⁵²

Since canon law upholds Christian values,¹⁵³ the PCP II attempts to inculturate canon law; in fact, inculturation has been encouraged by PCP II.¹⁵⁴ In other words, to inculturate canon law means that the PCP II has made the provision of canon law more realizable within the cultural context of the Church in the Philippines.

To conclude this chapter is to answer at this point the question: "What is the present role of the Filipino laity?" The Code gives a very broad but clear answer providing a frame of reference in the obligations and rights of the lay faithful. The 1983 Code leaves the significant national issues to be determined by particular law, such as the PCP II as in the case of the Philippines. The provision of a new title for the lay faithful through the listing of general obligations and rights is an important achievement of the 1983 Code. Furthermore, the Code allows particular councils, episcopal conferences, diocesan bishops, and a purified culture and mentality to contribute creatively to the salvation of souls, the supreme law of the Church.¹⁵⁵ This is the common end

¹⁵² Cf. P. SCHINELLER, "Inculturation and Syncretism: What is the Real Issue?", in *Sedos Bulletin*, 25 (1993), p. 7.

¹⁵³ Cf. L. ÖRSY, *Theology and Canon Law*, p. 80.

¹⁵⁴ "There should be more formation on inculturation and the integration of Filipino values with Gospel values" (*PCP II D*, no. 17, #1).

¹⁵⁵ Cf. c. 445.

which binds together all the guidelines for lay participation. These guidelines operate on the principle of a team so that any inadequacy of the part of one member has to be compensated by another. Lay participation, broadly interpreted as service, is a Christian activity which needs legal structure to be duly coordinated. This is the reason why forms of lay participation are governed by these various guidelines.

Just as the 1983 Code offers a very broad basis, the PCP II provides a practical means of concrete application of the obligations and rights to the Filipino laity: the basic ecclesial communities, the future shape of the Church in the Philippines. The BECs are encouraged by the PCP II although the CBCP is working arduously on its official document. The BECs are more recent than Vatican II and they are now in their maturation stage. Though the BECS are options of the universal Church, they are generally believed to be significant 'places' for inculturation and active lay participation in the mission of the Church in the Philippines. Furthermore, the role of the Filipino laity is explored in the concept of "participation" as described in the PCP II: more involvement in the Church's social apostolate, participation in BECs, better implementation of its pastoral priorities, eradication of clerical monopoly and authoritarianism, a better understanding of lay participation in the light of cultural tradition, etc. The term "lay participation" is a comprehensive one which combines the teachings of Vatican II and of the Code, as well

as the prudent consideration of the socio-cultural orientation of the particular Church. For this reason, the PCP II offers a significant legal insight which results in the integration of the universal teachings and legislation, local ecclesiastical teachings and legislation of the past, and a reflection of the religious-cultural, socio-political, and economic situation of the Church in the Philippines today.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

1) The dissertation has explored the development of the concept "active lay participation" as found in the teachings and decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines. Active lay participation is clearly understood as defined in its context: the sum of the varied influences from the early time to the contemporary period is what constitutes the Philippines. Specifically, the historical context provides the distinct character of a Church maturing both in faith and in means of evangelization, as it moves from a highly institutional Church (one identified with the bishops and the clergy) to a Church centered on the faithful. Different councils and synods evolved to protect and promote the life and mission of the Church but these did not change the image of the institutional Church. Despite the changes introduced by Vatican II, the transition to a Church centered on baptism has been slow since at the beginning it was a hierarchical society; it even became more hierarchic because of the long rule of colonial powers. In fact, a very subtle form of slavery was even found in the early periods. Hence, active lay participation was basically impeded by the mentality of authoritarianism which influenced the attitudes of pastors; this influence was likewise apparent in the political and economic structuring of society.

Nevertheless, the cultural context reveals the potential asset for active lay participation because it is compatible with Philippine cultural values and orientations: *sakop* (informal social group), *pakikisama* (interpersonal relationships), strong familial relationships, etc. The religious context as indicated through demographical dominance of Catholics and the relative shortage of priests, for instance, calls for stress on active lay participation.

The degrading economic and political context enabled PCP II to reflect on an ecclesial thrust based on a preferential love for the poor. A comprehensive socio-pastoral analysis during the preliminary survey brought awareness of the harsh *kahirapan* (sufferings) found in society. Conscious of this situation, active lay participation is, according to the provisions of the Council, to be exercised especially in the sphere of social apostolate. PCP I and a number of CBCP documents prior to the convocation of PCP II attest to this fact.

2) The CBCP documents strongly influenced the formulation of the PCP II texts while Vatican II and the 1983 Code provided the general framework for active lay participation. This dissertation places special emphasis on the fundamental documents (*Lumen gentium*, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, and *Christifideles laici*) and key canons (204, §1 and 225, §2) which serve as the legislative basis for active lay participation. If the

universal teachings about active lay participation slowly become recognized as is demonstrated in the systematic listing of rights and obligations in the 1983 Code, PCP II in the same manner, opts for a well coordinated lay apostolate. Unlike the previous particular councils, PCP II is first to offer comprehensive provisions regarding the laity and its role. There is constant reference to the CBCP teachings and most especially to the NCDP. PCP II's teachings and decrees on the laity are to be read in the light of their sources, especially Vatican II and the 1983 Code. On the other hand, the analysis of the cultural, social, political, and economic conditions oriented the CBCP in selecting different agenda for renewal. Hence, PCP II is a compendium of both universal and particular teachings and legislation through the arduous effort of the CBCP.

3) The six sectoral concerns of the decree on the laity imply that PCP II was somewhat selective regarding its pastoral priorities. The decrees are very concise and in most cases are introduced in accordance with Vatican II and the 1983 Code. The teaching of PCP II, however, reflects other pastoral concerns which are not included in the decree of the laity. It is for this reason that the task of the CBCP is to evaluate these concerns and to issue letters and statements when greater concern calls for it.

4) The Basic Ecclesial Community is a particular application of the principles regarding active lay

participation in the life and mission of the Church in the Philippines. The BEC as fostered by the CBCP and PCP II is the "seedbed" for evangelization and inculturation. It is the "seedbed" for evangelization because it is one of the means whereby the Church of the poor can grow in active participation. Furthermore, the BEC, as a *de facto* private association, aims "to engage in efforts of evangelization, to exercise works of piety or charity and to animate the temporal order with the Christian spirit."¹ Hence, it works as a means for Church renewal. The BEC is a "seedbed" for inculturation because its operation coincides with the cultural behavior and orientations of the Filipinos. The *sakop* (informal social group) that is marked by *pakikisama* (smooth interpersonal relationship) serves as a basis for building BECs because they still need to be correctly oriented before they can act as active agents of evangelization. Although there is no particular systematic listing of the rights and responsibilities of the members of BECs, their link with the hierarchy has to be maintained. *Evangelii nuntiandi* and *Redemptoris missio*, documents mandating evangelization, stated the key teachings on BECs. BECs are spreading fast in the Church today; hence, the CBCP should continue an intensive follow-up to this program in line with the National Pastoral Plan. It is in this context that active lay participation is

¹ c. 298, §1.

best exercised while the participation of BECs in the mission fosters the ideal role of the Filipino Catholic laity. Besides fulfilling the task for educational formation of the laity, there is an urgent need to translate the Acts and Decrees of PCP II into Tagalog, the Philippine national language: this will enable the laity to understand better their role and to facilitate the work of inculturation.

One of the present concerns of the CBCP is the implementation of PCP II. There still remains much to be done. The implementation on the national level has already been initiated in the formulation of the NPP in accordance with decree 131:

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines will draw up a National Pastoral Plan in accordance with Article 1, #1 and #5. A temporary committee, consisting of members drawn from various sectors of the Church and chosen for their exemplary Christian life and their expertise, will be set up to assist the Bishops in a consultative capacity in drawing up the National Pastoral Plan.²

In line with the National Pastoral Plan, the implementation is further focussed in the diocese and/or parish:

In every diocese and/or parish an implementing committee must be created and tasked to oversee, under the authority of the local Ordinary, the implementation of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines.³

² PCP II D, no. 131, p. 271; see Appendix H.

³ PCP II D, no. 132, pp. 271-272.

"The Council is over. The Council has just begun." These are the words originally meant for Vatican II, but which are just as appropriate for PCP II. Active lay participation consists in more than reading the teachings and decrees of PCP II. In fact, it has just begun and it is now taking new shape in the life and mission of the Church.

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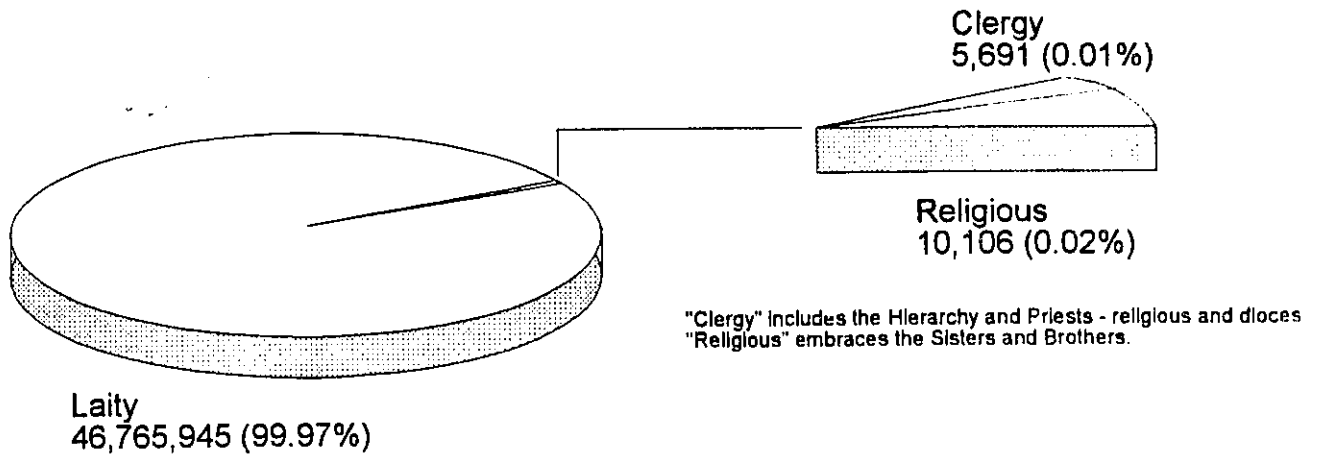
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Laity-Clergy-Religious: Percentages (%) 1989



Total Catholic Population 46,781,742

Source: 1989 Catholic Directory of the Philippines (as also published in P.S. DE ATCHUTEGUI, "Pre-Plenary Council Statistical Profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," in *Landas*, 4 (1990), p. 229)

THE CHURCH IN ASIA

Country	Pop. (x1000)	Catholic (x1000)	Bishop	Diocesan Priest	Rel. Priest	Rel. Brother	Rel. Sister	Catech ist	Major Semin arian
Afghanistan	16,120	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bangladesh	115,590	203	7	86	125	56	1021	1148	124
Bhutan	1,520	0.5	1	2	-	-	-	-	-
Brunei	270	6	3	4	-	-	-	-	-
Cambodia	8,250	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
China	1,118,135	6,000	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hongkong	5,785	263	2	78	278	69	670	775	33
India	827,060	14,198	149	8702	6160	2773	31,659	31,659	7863
Indonesia	179,300	4,721	42	534	1604	968	5497	22962	2345
Japan	123,540	433	25	569	1353	312	6830	2885	222
Korea-North	21,770	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Korea-South	2,790	2,923	21	1275	331	345	5336	7817	1694
Laos	4,140	36	3	-	-	-	-	-	2
Macau	500	25	1	49	35	12	155	-	-
Malaysia	17,860	542	8	160	64	76	512	1866	68
Mongolia	2,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Myanmar	41,670	484	16	27	23	51	868	2406	197
Nepal	18,820	2	-	1	28	21	64	9	10
Pakistan	112,050	847	11	121	138	45	733	436	174
Philippines	66,100	51,087	119	3493	2086	519	8549	951	6428
Singapore	3,000	175.5	1	73	47	58	237	873	24
Sri Lanka	17,200	1,411	13	491	284	212	2360	6508	308
Taiwan	20,965	295.7	11	238	499	91	1083	462	111
Thailand	57,200	235.8	17	340	235	138	1312	1406	253
Vietnam	66,200	4,461	31	1273	300	541	6226	-	816

Source: World Mission 5 (December 1993), p. 25

Catholic and Non-Catholic Populations of the Philippines

1953 Total 27,000,000



1983 Total 51,479,812



1989 Total 56,965,102



Source: The 1983 and 1989 Catholic Directories of the Philippines (as also published in P.S. DE ATCHUTEGUI, "Pre-Plenary Council Statistical Profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines," in *Landas*, 4 (1990), p. 224.

SURVEY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LAITY IN THE PHILIPPINES

Question: How do I manifest my being a Catholic or my being a Christian?

Respondents:	= 606	
a. through baptism	= 531	(87.6%)
b. by going to Church	= 431	(71.1%)
1. everyday	= 70	(11.66%)
2. Sundays/Holydays	= 376	(62.40%)
3. occasionally	= 110	(18.20%)
c. by serving the Church through:		
1. attending Mass	= 99	(16.30%)
2. Church Organization and activities	= 212	(35.00%)
3. service of others	= 89	(14.70%)
4. donation	= 51	(8.40%)
5. prayers	= 66	(10.90%)
6. following Commandments	= 13	(2.10%)
7. evangelization	= 12	(1.90%)

Source: CBCP, Final Draft on the Laity, Manila, CBCP National Coordinating Office, 1991, p. 9.

VISION-MISSION STATEMENT OF THE CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES

Immersed in a society
fragmented by divisive conflicts
and afflicted by widespread poverty
yet deeply aspiring for fullness of life in God:

We, as Church in the Philippines,
with total trust in God's love,
envision ourselves
as the community of disciples,
who firmly believe in the Lord Jesus
and joyfully live in harmony and solidarity
with one another, with creation, and with God.

Following the way of our Lord,
we opt to be a Church of the poor,
which demands evangelical poverty of us all
and harnesses the transformative power
of the poor among us
toward the justice and love of God
in this world.

To achieve this VISION,
under the leading of the spirit of God
and with Mary as our guide,
we shall embark on a renewed integral evangelization
and witness to Jesus Christ's
Gospel of Salvation and Liberation
through our words, deeds and lives.

As bishops, priests, religious and laity,
we together commit ourselves
to implement the spirit and decrees
of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines
in order to inculturate gospel values in our milieu.
By this shall kaayusan (order in harmony) be achieved
through persons who are maka-diyos, maka-tao, maka-bayan
and maka-buhay.

Ours will then be a civilization of life and love,
a sign of the in-breaking of the Father's kingdom.

64th Philippines Bishops Assembly
Tagaytay City
July 23, 1992

THE VISION-MISSION STATEMENT OF NASSA NETWORK

In the light of our social realities
and with the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines
we envision the Church in the Philippines
as a Community of Disciples
and as a Church of the poor.
We envision a society enlivened by love
and based on justice, truth,
freedom, sovereignty and solidarity.

We believe that to be credible
evangelization must be integral,
having as a constitutive dimension
action for justice and participation
in social transformation.

To realize this vision,
our mission in the Social Action Apostolate
is to help:

form mature social consciences,
promote Gospel or Kingdom values in society,
organize genuine faith communities
that are truly evangelizing and transformative,
promote projects of human and sustainable development
and promote the integrity and care of creation--
all in the spirit of people empowerment
and Christian love of preference for the poor,
following the way of the Lord Jesus
in word, deed, and life.

Source: "A National Pastoral Plan and PCP II Decrees on Social Concerns"
(Transcription of a talk by Archbishop Orlando B. Quevedo, Bacolod
City, P.I., October 6, 1992) in *NASSA Archives*, Manila.

Title X. LAITY

Section 1. Pastoral Orientation

Article 41. #1. The proper role of the laity in the Church and the world should be continually promoted on the basis of the Church's teachings, particularly as found in the Second Vatican Council, Canons 224-231 of the code of Canon Law and the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifidelis Laici*.

#2. The CBCP will take steps to foster a more active role of the laity in the Church and to provide, where appropriate, full-time, professionally trained pastoral workers, to foster the growth of the Church.

Article 42. #1. Efforts should be exerted, particularly by the clergy, to help the lay faithful to foster their awareness that the theater of their apostolate is the world in which they properly belong, so that they may actively and responsibly participate precisely as lay faithful in the common concerns and projects of their communities.

#2. The lay faithful should also be encouraged and helped to assume their duty and responsibility to participate in public life and reform it according to Gospel values.¹

#3. To this effect, a special injunction should be issued for them to assume leading roles and responsibilities in temporal works.²

#4. Catholics in non-sectarian organizations like civic groups, NGOs, and POs, should proclaim their faith in Christ, as his witnesses. Such organization are fertile grounds for such a witnessing evangelization.

Article 43. Dialogue - one that is open to the prompting of the Holy Spirit - should be encouraged between clergy and laity.

Article 44. #1 Education for effective lay participation should be ongoing. It should be integrated, related to one's life situation and based on the teachings of the Church.

#2. Special efforts are to be made at sanctifying people in their places of work (offices, schools, factories, etc.). Direct pastoral care of employees in their work places can be made along the lines of BECS.

#3. Lay faithful and particularly lay leaders should acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to defend and explain the faith to others.³

Article 45. There should be a system of registration in every parish for all Church members to increase the involvement of the laity in the community and heighten their sense of belonging.

¹ Cf. Canon 225 #2

² Cf. Canons 227, 228 and 537.

³ Cf. Canons 225, #1, 226 #2, 231 #1.

Article 46. #1 A continuing education for Filipino families in accordance with *Catechesi Tradendae* and *Familiaris Consortio*, should be undertaken and Family Life seminars like Pre-Cana, Pro-Life, Marriage Encounters should be made part of diocesan/parish pastoral programs.⁴

#2. Diocesan family centers must be established; in these Filipino elements of spirituality are to be developed in the context of a general spirituality of Christian marriage.

#3. Under the direction of the local Ordinary, there should be available in diocese and parishes a competent team, including priests and Catholic couples to help promote effective pastoral care of the family and provide family counseling.

#4. Christian families should be a countersign to the manipulative anti-life culture, through a strengthened family spirituality which is pro-life.

Article 47. The Church should formulate pastoral programs for those in broken homes and families, adhering to the norms outlined in *Familiaris Consortio*, 83 and 84.

Article 48. The family is to be regarded as the basic unit of Christian life. Hence it must be viewed as both subject and object of evangelization; for evangelization begins in the family and family catechesis must be part of the fostering of BECs.⁵

Article 49. #1. Greater cooperation for formation in Christian values should be fostered between schools and families.⁶

#2. Programs for the prevention of exploitation of women and children based on a Christian concept of love and family life,⁷ should address primarily the formation of Filipino family in Christian values and the strengthening of those values; it should also include pastoral care after marriage as outlined in *Christifideles Laici*, 69.

#3. Problems affecting homosexual individuals and behaviour should be given due attention in accord with the pastoral norms of *Homosexualitatis Problema* of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued on 1 October 1986.

Section 3. Youth

Article 50. #1. The strength, vitality and relevance of the Church as sacrament of the Kingdom implies a laity fully come of age, that is, a laity who, imbued with and animated by the gospel of Christ, shall have assumed consciously, actively, and fully their role and responsibility in church and society.

⁴ Cf. Canons 528 #2, 529 #1, 768 #2, 851 no.2, and 1063 nos. 1-4.

⁵ Cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 11.

⁶ Cf. Canon 796 #2.

⁷ Cf. *Charter of the Rights of the Family* of the Holy See.

#2. Since youth constitute a large and dynamic portion of the laity, the youth ministry should be assured of the fullest attention and highest priority in every way by all in the Church.⁸

Article 51. #1. Every diocese should form, organize and mobilize the young in such a way that they get creatively involved in the life of the diocese/parish as evangelizers of their fellow youth. A systematic and comprehensive program must be designed for this purpose.

#2. Every diocese is strongly urged to establish an office for the Episcopal Vicar for Youth, a Youth Center, and a diocesan campus ministry program with competent personnel and sufficient logistical support.⁹

#3. Under the direction of the bishop, the Diocesan Youth Centre will be tasked with:

1. creating and elaborating a diocesan pastoral youth program,
2. ensuring that the young in the parishes grow in authentic Christian spirituality, and
3. helping the young become involved in socio-economic and political action for social transformation in line with the social teaching of the Church.

Article 52. #1. The CBCP resolutions on Youth Ministry must be immediately implemented and mechanisms be set up to evaluate their effectiveness.

#2. A national program of catechesis of out-of-school youth must be given high priority.

#3. Parish youth program must give special attention to those in difficult situations, e.g., street children, migrants, those in crisis.

Section 4. Women

Article 52. #1. Leadership training for women is to be promoted with emphasis on the dignity and role of women in Church, especially as outlined in *Christifideles Laici* and *Mulieris Dignitatem*. Special attention should be given to the domestic helpers.

#2. Family centers should conduct a study, especially in the light of *Mulieris Dignitatem* and *Christifideles Laici*, on the various aspects of women's participation in the mission of the Church.

#3. On all levels of Church life, from parish organizations to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, efforts are to be made to constantly include women in community discernment and the implementation of pastoral responses to local and national concerns, particularly those that closely affect the lives of women.

Article 54. #1. Church's institutions in collaboration with other institutions must oppose, through programs geared to authentic liberation, all forms of discrimination, abuse and exploitation of women.

#2. People in the entertainment world should be among the sectors of society to be addressed by a pastoral program.

⁸ Cf. Canons 528 #1, 776 795, 799 and 1063 no. 1.

⁹ Cf. Canon 813.

#3. Special pastoral concern should be shown women who engage in the flesh trade.

Section 5. Catechists

Article 55. #1. Priority should be given to the calling, training and formation of professional and volunteer catechists for children and youth in public and non-sectarian schools and out-of-school children and youth.

#2. Catechists should be professionally trained and adequately compensated ideally with financial support from parishioners.¹⁰

#3. Catechists should be provided pastoral exposure and in-service training, especially those working with BECs.

Section 6. Migrant Workers

Article 56. #1. Special attention should be given to migrant workers not only to help protect them but also to make them more aware of and prepare them for their missionary role of witnessing to the Gospel in their employment overseas.

#2. The CBCP Episcopal Commission on Migration and Tourism shall promote a special apostolate to assist workers defend and promote their fundamental rights and to help them live up to their Christian vocation.¹¹

#3. Bishops and major religious superiors should provide an adequate number of priests, religious and lay pastoral personnel for the apostolate to overseas Filipino workers their families.¹²

Section 7. Lay Evangelizers

Article 57. As part of their formation married lay evangelizers are to be invited to participate in family life seminars which include a treatment of *Familiaris Consortio*.

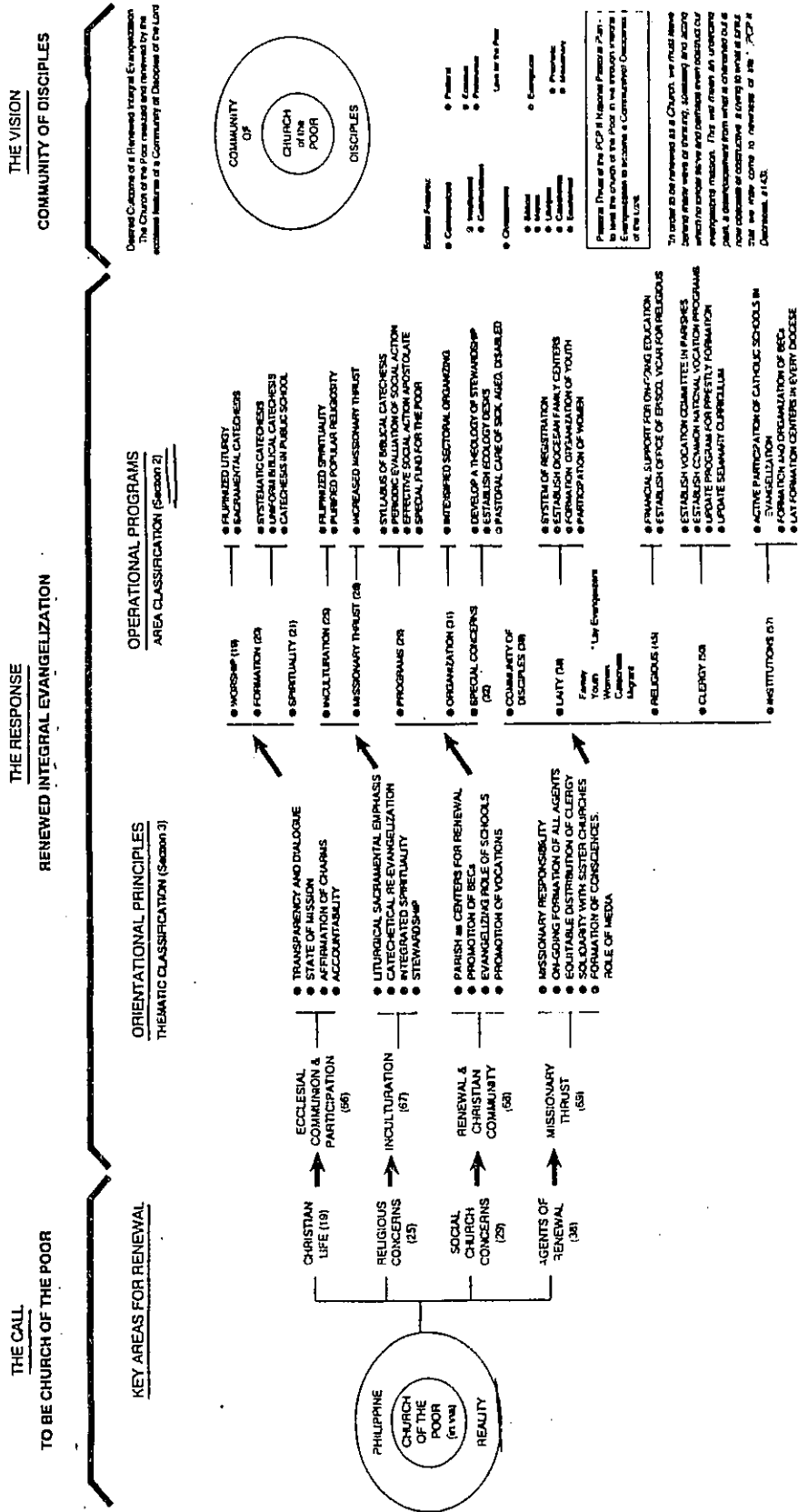
Source: *Acts and Decrees of Second Plenary Council of the Philippines*, nos. 41-47, Manila, CBCP, 1992, pp. 245-251.

¹⁰ Cf. Canons 776, 780, 785, ##1-2.

¹¹ Cf. Canons 529 #1 and 568.

¹² Cf. Canons 508 and 887.

FLOWCHART: NATIONAL PASTORAL PLAN



N.B. Numbers refer to pages in the NPP Draft.

Source: In the State of Mission, Towards a Renewed Integral Evangelization, PCP II, National Pastoral Plan, Manila, CBCP, 1993.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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