



Seeking the Truth, Restoring Integrity

(A CBCP Pastoral Statement)

Beloved People of God:

Greetings in the peace of the Lord!

Today in the midst of restlessness and confusion, we come to you as pastors, for that is our precise role. We do not come as politicians whose vocation it is to order society towards the common good. Our message contributes to the flourishing of a democracy which must not be built only on political formulae.

We face today a crisis of truth and the pervading cancer of corruption. We must seek the truth and we must restore integrity. These are moral values needing spiritual and moral insights.

Therefore, we address this pastoral statement to everyone particularly you our beloved people and in a special way to our political rulers and officials.

We are convinced that the search for truth in the midst of charges and allegations must be determined and relentless, and that the way to truth and integrity must be untrammelled, especially at the present time when questions about the moral ascendancy of the present government are being raised.

For this reason, we strongly:

1. Condemn the continuing culture of corruption from the top to the bottom of our social and political ladder;
2. Urge the President and all the branches of government to take the lead in combating corruption wherever it is found;
3. Recommend the abolition of EO 464 so that those who might have knowledge of any corruption in branches of government, may be free to testify before the appropriate investigating bodies;
4. Ask the President to allow her subordinates to reveal any corrupt acts, particularly about the ZTE-NBN deal, without being obstructed in their testimony no matter who is involved;
5. Appeal to our senators and the ombudsman to use their distinct and different powers of inquiry into alleged corruption cases not for their own interests but for the common good;
6. Call on media to be a positive resource of seeking the truth and combating corruption by objective reporting without bias and partiality, selective and tendentious reporting of facts;

For the long term we reiterate our call for “circles of discernment” at the grassroots level, in our parishes, Basic Ecclesial Communities, recognized lay organizations and movements, religious institutions, schools, seminaries and universities. It is through internal conversion into the maturity of Christ through communal and prayerful discernment and action that the roots of corruption are discovered and destroyed. We believe that such communal action will perpetuate at the grassroots level the spirit of People Power so brilliantly demonstrated to the world at EDSA I. It is People Power with a difference. From the grassroots will come out a culture of truth and integrity we so deeply seek and build. We instruct our CBCP Commissions to take active role including networking for this purpose.

May the Lord bless us in this sacred undertaking to build a new kind of Philippines and may our Blessed Mother be our companion and guide in this journey to truth and integrity.

For and on behalf of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines:

+Angel Lagdameo, D.D.
Archbishop of Jaro
President, CBCP
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