

The Role of the Catholic University in the Philippines Today

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It is a pleasure for me to address you today on the invitation of Br. Jun Erguiza, FSC, President of the CEAP, and of Br. Ricky Laguda, FSC, Chair of the CEAP's National Tertiary Education Commission. The topic you have given me is no small topic, "The Role of the Catholic University in the Philippines Today." It has not yet been treated formally by the CBCP, even though the need to reflect on this appears to be truly urgent. What belong to the mission, required spirituality and desired impacts of Catholic higher education in the Philippines today?

The call of Pope Francis for Christians to return to the Joy of the Gospelⁱ and to "go forth" into our complex world to share with it this joy belongs to the context in which this reflection on our Philippine Catholic universitiesⁱⁱ is necessary. As we recognize in our own consumption-driven world the dangers that Pope Francis described for the whole world, "the desolation and anguish born of a feverish but complacent heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures, and a blunted conscience," we look on the Catholic higher education institutions - 46 universities, 241 colleges, 17 graduate faculties of theology and 60 seminaries in the Philippines - as among God's precious gifts both to the Church and society in the Philippines. The Pope calls our largely Catholic society to joy it has largely lost. Sharing the profound respect that John Paul II had for the Catholic university in our world,ⁱⁱⁱ I express my own respect for its daunting work. I thank the Lord for the men and women, religious and priests, missionaries and lay leaders, experts and professionals, who in our country dedicate themselves to the esteemed vocation that belongs to the Catholic university in the Philippines today.

That specific vocation calls them as universities to be centers for the authentic search for the truth of God, of nature, and of the human being-in-human-society and the communication of this truth to students and the world; as Catholic they are called to "the privileged task" to "unite existentially by intellectual effort two orders of reality that too frequently tend to be placed in opposition as though they were antithetical: the search for truth, and the certainty of already knowing the fount of truth," Jesus Christ, the way, the life and the truth.^{iv}

I appreciate that these are no mean tasks. *The search for the truth of God* involves the search for him in our ever more secular world that increasingly ignores God and his Church, or for him in our Catholic culture that, despite its intense piety, is neither scandalized by the painful poverty in our midst nor willing to change the structures that support its yet pervasive corruption. *The search for the truth of nature* involves understanding the awesome power of typhoons and earthquakes, and, due to what human beings do in their industrial centers, factories, power plants and cars, the

changes in natural climate cycles as we are experiencing these today; it involves understanding the intimate truths of how human life is transmitted, nurtured and sustained. *The search for the truth of humanity* involves understanding the human individual in his or her complex relationships in society, and how human life-in-society is sustained, threatened, harmed, or destroyed.

I appreciate especially that this search in our increasingly secular society pursues truth in arenas of diverse disciplines, assertive experts, and clashing ideas, even as it is convinced that Jesus Christ is the truth that manifests itself in the Church and world through the Magisterium of the Church. I appreciate that, even as truth is rigorously and critically sought in academic freedom^v, it must be faithfully taught as Jesus, the Teacher, himself would have taught in our complex world. Jesus himself, the Truth, must be the guide of our Catholic Universities in participating in the urgent task today of New Evangelization.^{vi}

This awesome vocation for the Catholic university as it must now impact on New Evangelization cannot be taken lightly. It must precisely wrestle with diversity in a marketplace of ideas, yet find consolation and integration in Jesus, the Truth; it must mediate understanding for the faith in Philippine settings where faith is increasingly ignored or now even unwelcome; in faith it must now find itself open to startling manifestations of truth not immediately disclosed in faith.

Return to the Heart of the Church: Jesus Christ

The Catholic university, however, is not just an inert institution. It is a group of human beings, teachers, scholars, administrators and staff, in pursuit of truth; it is by God's grace a community – *universitas* - of believers and non-believers engaged together in a shared university mission. These persons, buffeted by the pressures of teaching today, the deadlines of research, or over-exposure to the world of consumerism and injustice, may themselves be in need of New Evangelization. Among their numbers may be believers whose faith has grown tepid, or baptized Filipinos who fail in the way they live their lives to show evidence of their baptism, or people who have never met Jesus or have always rejected him.^{vii}

For this reason, first and foremost, we invite our Catholic faithful engaged in the Catholic university in the Philippines to a renewed encounter with Jesus Christ, the heart of the Church from which the Catholic University emerges. I gladly echo the personal invitation of Pope Francis: "I invite all Christians, everywhere," – including in higher academe – "at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since 'no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord'" (EG, 3). For it is from the joy of this encounter with Jesus, both personal and communal, that the exigency to share it with others is

captured^{viii}. This full encounter that redeems not only ourselves individually, but ourselves in human community, discloses the social content of the Gospel: “at the very heart of the Gospel is life in community and engagement with others. The content of the first proclamation has an immediate moral implication centered on charity”^{ix}.

I invite the leaders of our Catholic universities to intervene generously in the schedules of their personnel to set appropriate conditions for this renewed encounter with Jesus. This may be in shared silence and prayer, in a quiet recollection, or in a spiritual retreat. It may require trained guides or facilitators. It is only here that the Catholic university might find the inspiration in love and moral exigency to engage in the crucial activities to which God calls Catholic university in the Philippines today.

Urgent Need for Communal Discernment

What this concretely consists in can come to light only through the communal discernment of each Catholic university or college, or of recognized groups of Catholic educational institutions like the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) or the Association of Catholic Universities of the Philippines (ACUP). The university community must discern in discussion, reflection and prayer what God’s will for it is at this time, weighing its mission and vision, strengths and weaknesses, resources and needs, and the pressing concerns of Church and society to which it needs to respond today. It must do this specifically in pursuit of its mission in faith, as its responsible use of academic freedom requires, beyond the minimum requirements of government and the stewardship of resources entrusted to it for mission. Outside of ongoing religious, professional and liberal education in our schools, considering the signs of the times, I propose that Catholic universities and colleges in the Philippines engage themselves in the following. This is not a listing of all the tasks I consider the Catholic university in the Philippines can excel in. It is a listing however of tasks which I consider most urgent for today.

The Search for Meaning and Hope

Catholic universities and colleges have an undeniable duty to proclaim and elucidate the Gospel of Jesus Christ “in season and out of season” to Philippine society as its ultimate source of meaning and hope. It brings this message into the diverse world of contemporary human and natural sciences and evolving forms of liberal education. Scientific and technological discoveries and their use in the global market bring both blessings and curses to Philippine society. They bring it many new conveniences, yet tend to deny it its cultural moorings in what

has long been accepted as meaningful, including an authentic living inculturated faith in Jesus and his Church. Such as the internet, new means of social communication, rapid transportation, and global technical work requirements which condition the demand abroad for our Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW), “inescapably require the correspondingly necessary *search for meaning* in order to guarantee that the new discoveries be used for the authentic good of individuals and of human society as a whole” (ECE, 7). The contradictions Pope Francis perceives in contemporary society which allow it to combine “complacency” with a “covetous heart,” “feverish pursuit” with “frivolous pleasure” and “conscience” with a “blunted conscience” endanger society to the core; they describe people frantic for something of value who but busy themselves with palpable nothings as the humanity of their society erodes. It is a malaise characterized on the one hand by uncritical driven consumption, and on the other hand by a numbness to pervasive poverty in our midst. In the Philippines, close to two thirds of our people live below the poverty line, millions are victims of exclusion and injustice, yet students in our top Catholic universities are simply “bored.” Catholic universities must reflect critically and lucidly on what a meaningful life in Philippine or global society is today and what the sources of hope are. They must consider not only the ideal concepts of our faith, but the actualities of materialism, hedonism, and consumerism in the Philippines and in the global world. They must ask seriously whether in the way they teach, form and motivate students to a job, a profession or to “the good life” they contribute to their students’ yawning superficiality, or challenge them to lives of genuine meaning in faith-driven service of the common good. Is the hope they instill in their students based on an ever-expanding consumption economy, or in the unfailing love of a provident Father of all, the ultimate need of the human heart?

The Search for the Common Good

In pursuit of “the authentic good of individuals and of human society as a whole,” the Catholic university in the Philippines must more vigorously engage itself in issues pertinent to the common good and its pursuit in solidarity. This is a service that both the Church and Philippine society urgently need. Because the requirements of the common good can never be stated with validity for all times, but change through the creative genius of individuals and peoples in changing human societies interacting among themselves, finding the truth of the common good needs ongoing multi-disciplinary critical discussion of contentious issues, depth research, shared publications and true discernment. These lead to a probing articulation of what the common good entails, considering the unending generation and contest both of goods and needs in society and the limitations of natural and human resources. Through careful research, discussion and critical debate, statements concerning the common good can lead to improved statements, and with God’s grace, possibly even to consensus. Consensus can

condition shared action. Shared action can lead to structural reform or even cultural transformation. But even in the absence of consensus, the discussion and debate alone can already result in deeper understanding of issues and thereby greater sensitivity to the common good.

Unfortunately, while Catholic Social Doctrine has long pointed to the common good as the imperative of social justice, our culture in the Philippines seems to accord neither appropriate respect nor obedience to the common good. When individuals do not sink to sin, crime and corruption, their thoughts and dreams focus immediately on success in the accumulation of private wealth, property, comforts, and pleasures. When they are not incapacitated by a crippling selfishness, they show dedication to the companies that employ them and often startling heroism for the families that gave them birth and nurturance, or for the new families that are now their own. We have many heroes of the private good, many of them educated in our Catholic universities. For this private good, thought naturally focuses on the size of one's salary, the magnitude of one's profits, the "real returns" on one's political career, the concentration of power and prestige in an individual or group to boost private advantage, all as indicators of a successful student or a successful graduate.

We also have victims of the pursuit of private good, not people who are criminals or thieves, but people for whom life has surreptitiously lost meaning. In the driven acquisition of possessions, they have lost their self-possession; possessed by the daemons of consumerism, they are consumed in what neither satisfies nor makes sense. They are caught in rut routines of whirling wheels that go nowhere but mire more deeply in the mud. Is this not the "desolation and anguish" that Pope Francis calls the greatest danger to society? It saddens because they are unable to escape it, unable to transcend the private for the genuinely social, and so engage in escapades of escape from responsibility that confuse self interest for self, pleasure for happiness, narcissism for achievement, cosmetics for beauty, emoticons for emotions, and mouse clicking for acts of human love.

The need for this engagement cannot be overstated, especially as we address the scandal of poverty in our society and the need to protect our environment. The Church has always affirmed the right to private property to secure the needs of individual and families, but it also affirms a social dimension to private property, rooted in a prior "universal destination of all goods."^x Unbridled production of goods and accumulation of wealth and power that violates human rights and exhausts the environment for the benefit of a privileged few, harms the common good and violates social justice. Power concentrated in the hands of a few that seeks its self-preservation and expansion rather than the good of all, harms the common good. On the other hand, such as the cooperation between the public and private sectors to improve the delivery of basic education in society,

or the cooperation between nongovernment organizations (NGOs), media, business and government to breathe new life into a dead river, advance the common good. What the common good commands or forbids, what the relative weights of long-term vs. short-term benefits are, of private family income vs. family disruption, of extractive mining vs. food security, of large-scale monocrop farming vs. the livelihood of indigenous peoples, of Muslim autonomy vs. a non-Muslim majority, of a strong state vs. a strong citizenry, of high taxes vs. low taxes, of free enterprise vs. guided production, of a strong Manila vs. stronger local regions, of responsible faith in God vs. faith in fate are issues that need enlightened reflection and discussion.

The Catholic university must struggle to find the light of the common good with more conscious determination and system. This is the common good that is not merely an option in arbitrariness but a compelling imperative in social justice. It is the warrant behind Pope Francis' prophetic "No to an economy of exclusion," "No to the new idolatry of money," "No to a financial system which rules rather than serves," "No to an inequality which spawns violence."^{xi} It is an imperative that will not be taught without challenge, nor explained without opposition. But it is an imperative that needs to be asserted prophetically even in contention.^{xii} It is a theme therefore that needs to be more explicitly present in the manner in which the Catholic university teaches its various disciplines, in its research agenda, in its multidisciplinary dialogues and discussions, and in how it serves its communities. This is the stuff of the Catholic university, not just jobs.

The Search in Dialogue for a More Human Culture

The Catholic university must be an exponent of the Church's dialogue with diverse cultures. There is a global culture whose effects on human society are not uniformly salutary; just as there are local cultures each with their genial meaning-bearing manifestations and with their flaws; global culture interacts haphazardly with local cultures. Both impact on human society and on the human individual in the Philippines. John Paul II in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* states, "the dialogue of the Church with the cultures of our times is that vital area where 'the future of the Church and of the world is being played out as we conclude the twentieth century.'"^{xiii} It is in this multiplicity of cultures that John Paul II saw a special role for the Catholic university. "There is only one culture: that of man, by man and for man. And thanks to the Catholic universities and their humanistic and scientific inheritance, the Church, expert in humanity, as my predecessor, Paul VI, expressed it at the United Nations, explores the mysteries of humanity and of the world, clarifying them in the light of Revelation."^{xiv} As multiple forces compete to shape contemporary society in the Philippines, this is a role the Catholic university takes well into the twenty-first century, especially as Pope Francis calls attention to the "desolation and anguish" in world society.

The Catholic university in the Philippines is called to “become an ever more effective instrument of cultural progress for individuals as well as for society. Included among its research activities, therefore, will be a study of *serious contemporary problems* in areas such as the dignity of human life, the promotion of justice for all, the quality of personal and family life, the protection of nature, the search for peace and political stability, a more just sharing in the world's resources, and a new economic and political order that will better serve the human community at a national and international level.”^{xv} It is called to give “specific priority” to “the need to examine and evaluate the predominant values and norms of modern society and culture in a Christian perspective, and the responsibility to try to communicate to society those *ethical and religious principles which give full meaning to human life.*” It is called in this way to “contribute further to the development of a true Christian anthropology, founded on the person of Christ, which will bring the dynamism of the creation and redemption to bear on reality and on the correct solution to the problems of life.”^{xvi}

This calls the Catholic university in Philippines to accord special attention to the actual relation between the Gospel and Philippine cultures as their experiences of “full human meaning” and “the dignity of human life” is truncated by a pervasive lack of appreciation for the common good, a superficial but driving consumerism, a weakening of individual character, an erosion of the cohesion of the Filipino family, the ongoing sinful destruction of the environment, the sad disrespect for local cultures and the scandalous disregard for the social and political rights of our indigenous peoples, and the elusive search for peace. The Catholic university must address the impacts on Philippine cultures of what appear to be an uncritical rationalism, an insidious amorality, a moral cynicism, secularization and globalization. It must understand and militate against corruption that has practically become endemic to Philippine culture. It must shed light on the effects of an increasingly migrant population on personal ambitions, families, the Church and society in the Philippines. In this context, it must contribute more actively to the creation of “a new economic and political order.” Against “an economy that excludes” and an economy premised on “the idolatry of money,” Catholic universities must help elucidate what this new economic and political order for the Philippines entails. It must educate, form and support the experts and politicians who shall work towards its realization.

The Search in Dialogue for Peace

In this context, among the most urgent activities today needed of the Catholic university in the Philippines is its engagement in instruction, research, outreach and dialogue for peace, especially as historic efforts are being made today

towards forging peace in Mindanao. Peace is not just a local aspiration; it is a national imperative. The mandate for peace is not coming from an upstart minority making irksome demands on the edge of Philippine society; it comes from the soul of our society in the Philippines today, capitalists, socialists, communists, Christians, Muslims, and indigenous peoples alike, trying together to overcome deep wounds in our shared history of colonialism, nationalism, exploitation, conflict and violence, for which we all share blame; it is our People struggling together to transition into a more socially just tomorrow. Here the Catholic university in the Philippines may play a special role as privileged convenor of diverse peoples with competing and often conflicting interests in face-to-face dialogue for peace. It must use its institutional prestige to gather government, NGOs, the private sector and religious leaders to work with groups caught in conflict and violence for peace. Here, a key function of the Catholic university would be to help explain and evaluate the peace processes, including the various documents that these processes have produced, knowing that the documents alone will not bring about peace. High-level peace agreements will remain paper-thin unless on the levels of our barangays, our parishes and our basic ecclesial communities the deep-seated prejudice and the hatred stop and the reconciliation begins.

In the service of peace, interfaith dialogue may involve a dialogue of diverse doctrines. Where Catholic faculties of theology are prepared to do this, trusting in the Holy Spirit and guided by the Church, they ought to^{xvii}. For most Catholic universities in the Philippines, however, the task in dialogue is to help individual Catholics understand their faith better, and in the love that faith impels, to open themselves to peoples of other faiths through a dialogue of life. This includes mutual respect and shared friendship, the privilege to celebrate a gift of union in otherness. Here, our Catholics' faith may be enriched by their understanding and appreciation of the manner others are led to prostrate themselves humbly in worship before an all-powerful yet compassionate God. The task for the Catholic university in dialogue would be to support such openness. But it may even be to help a believer of another faith more deeply appreciate and live that faith. Beyond the dialogue of life may be the dialogue of shared commitment to specific causes^{xviii}. Peoples of different faiths pursuing the same common good may work together in advocating exigencies today of the common good. In the Philippines, such causes may lead the Filipino Christian and the Filipino Muslim to shared advocacy against scandalous poverty, for political reform, for quality education, for productive sources of livelihood, for a healthy environment, for a Bangsamoro homeland, and most of all for peace.

In the quest for peace in Mindanao, interfaith dialogue must be complemented by intrafaith dialogue. As the peace processes may have lead us to wish that Muslim communities in the Philippines were more united, our Catholic communities may themselves need to find deeper union in the Spirit unto the

attainment of peace. Unto this end, our Catholics need to engage in intrafaith dialogue. Here again, our Catholic universities, wherever they are in our country, are invited to help facilitate this dialogue not only within their academic halls, but in parishes, civic gatherings, and in the media. Towards the attainment of genuine peace, conservatives within our community must dialogue with openness, charity and humility with progressives, the wealthy with the poor, the bishops with the faithful, the religious with the businessmen, the environmentalists with the industrialists. Affirming differences, Catholics must allow the Spirit through dialogue to lead them to greater love, genuine repentance, or generous forgiveness. Towards peace, Catholics who staunchly support these peace processes must dialogue with Catholics who bitterly resent it; Catholics who have been enriched in Muslim friendships must dialogue with Catholics who are deeply wounded in their history with Muslims; Catholics who have sinned in their relationship with Muslims must dialogue with Catholics who have been harmed and victimized by them. In all these dialogues, all must become more sensitive to the way God himself continues to dialogue with us in our troubled times, listening to us, understanding us, healing us, speaking his word of compassion to us, urging us without ceasing to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us" (Mt. 6:12).

The Struggle to Defend the Environment

I am pleased today to acknowledge a growing concern for the environment that has been created by God for all and entrusted to us for the good of all. It is a concern driven by consciousness in history of the irreplaceable depletion of our natural resources in powerful private interest, even as that depletion continues today through the ongoing or imminent activities of large local and foreign firms^{xix}. I deplore the fact that our laws have failed miserably to preserve our national patrimony for the common good, and that our leaders in the executive continue to give more attention to the growth of an economy that excludes rather than the preservation of an environment as an imperative of the common good. I deplore how corruption and a misuse of security forces have exacerbated this lack of concern, and continue to cause the loss of the cultural cohesiveness, patrimony and lands of our indigenous peoples, and even their loss of lives^{xx}. In this concern, the Catholic university has a grave mission. It must educate and form leaders with an abiding specific concern for the environment, where it has sadly failed in the past. Care for the environment is not an option. It is an imperative. The national patrimony in forests, minerals, water and air belong to all. It belongs to goods created with a "universal destination" for all on whose exploitation there is a strict social mortgage.

With these solid principles of the Social Teaching of the Church, the Catholic

university in the Philippines today must, through its research and outreach functions, get more actively involved in the local deliberations pertinent to the exploitation of the environment for human use. For clearly, if the human community is to eat, to clothe itself, to shelter itself, to engage in the production of goods that respond to human needs, and to progress in an ever-more-human human community, it will do so within and thanks to the environment created by God for all. The Catholic university must help create the wealth that is necessary to eliminate poverty in our society, but it must also disabuse decision-makers of the notion that growing a consumption society boundlessly is the call of the common good; similarly, that large foreign investments that bring short-term rewards for some with long-term destruction of the environment is the call of the common good. It must help find ways of improving productive efficiency without irreversibly alienating the soil from the small farmer. The Catholic university must use its auspices to shape the knowledge and conscientious decision-making of our lawmakers, national government officials, and our people today. The defense of the environment for the common good is a key mission today for the Catholic university in the Philippines. It is a mission it must fulfill, even at the cost of great sacrifice.

In the Joy of the Gospel, Go Forth

As I said at the outset of this letter, this has been a daunting topic, and I thank you for your patience. The call of Pope Francis is to return to the Joy of the Gospel and to “go forth” into our complex world to share with it the joy of the Good News. In the light of this call, I have attempted to express the special call of the Catholic university in the Philippines today. As the Catholic university truly proceeds from the heart of the Church, the members of the university community must first return to the heart of the Church. They must return to the encounter with Jesus, and to the joy of this abiding encounter, which, in the light of the Paschal mystery, is always deeper than its tribulations. No salary can replace this joy; no personal preference can replace its imperative; no rankings can replace its immeasurable importance, no discovery of truth can outshine its compelling Truth. From the joy of this encounter, the Catholic university in the Philippines today must engage itself specifically for Philippine society in the search for meaning and hope, the search for the common good, the search in dialogue for a more human culture, the search in dialogue for peace, and the struggle to defend the environment for the common good. It must do so with humility, but without fear, with wisdom but without arrogance. It must go forth beyond the peaceful halls of academe into the insecure world of Philippine poverty and violence. Beyond words and concepts, it must find truth, insist on truth, obey truth, and live truth. It must make a difference in the transformation of our society. It must do so calling on Mary, Star of the New Evangelization, for her guidance and help.

ⁱ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* [EG].

ⁱⁱ For this document, unless otherwise stated, “Catholic universities” will refer to all operating Catholic higher education institutions (HEIs) including colleges, professional institutions, graduate schools of theology, major seminaries, and the like.

ⁱⁱⁱ Pope John Paul II, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* [ECE], 2.

^{iv} *Ibid.*, 1.

^v “Every Catholic University, *as a university*, is an academic community which, in a rigorous and critical fashion, assists in the protection and advancement of human dignity and of a cultural heritage through research, teaching and various services offered to the local national and international communities. It possesses the institutional autonomy necessary to perform its functions effectively and guarantees its members academic freedom, so long as the rights of the individual person and of the community are preserved with the confines of the truth and the common good” (ECE, 12).

^{vi} Pope Francis mentions three areas for new evangelization: the area of “ordinary pastoral ministry,” of “the baptized whose lives do not reflect the demands of the Gospel,” and of “those who do not know Jesus Christ or who have always rejected him” (Cf. EG, 15) “Universities are outstanding environments for articulating and developing this evangelizing commitment in an interdisciplinary and integrated way. Catholic schools, which always strive to join their work of education with the explicit proclamation of the Gospel, are a most valuable resource for the evangelization of culture, even in those countries and cities where hostile situations challenge us to greater creativity in our search for suitable methods” (EG, 134).

^{vii} Cf. *Ibid.*

^{viii} “The Gospel joy which enlivens the community of disciples is a missionary joy” (EG, 21).

^{ix} EG, 177. “Our redemption has a social dimension because ‘God, in Christ, redeems not only the individual person, but also the social relations existing between men’” EG, 178.

^x “Solidarity is a spontaneous reaction by those who recognize that the social function of property and the universal destination of goods are realities which come before private property. The private ownership of goods is justified by the need to protect and increase them, so that they can better serve the common good; for this reason, solidarity must be lived as the decision to restore to the poor what belongs to them. These convictions and habits of solidarity, when they are put into practice, open the way to other structural transformations and make them possible. Changing structures without generating new convictions and attitudes will only ensure that those same structures will become, sooner or later, corrupt, oppressive and ineffectual” (EG, 189).

^{xi} EG, 53-60.

^{xii} “If need be, a Catholic University must have the courage to speak uncomfortable truths which do not please public opinion, but which are necessary to safeguard the authentic good of society” (ECE, 32). Cf. also ECE 34: “The Christian spirit of service

to others for the promotion of social justice is of particular importance for each Catholic University, to be shared by its teachers and developed in its students. The Church is firmly committed to the integral growth of all men and women”.

^{xiii} ECE, 3.

^{xiv} “A Catholic University enables the Church to institute an incomparably fertile dialogue with people of every culture....” (ECE, 6).

^{xv} ECE, 32.

^{xvi} *Ibid.*, 32-33.

^{xvii} “In order to sustain dialogue with Islam, suitable training is essential for all involved, not only so that they can be solidly and joyfully grounded in their own identity, but so that they can also acknowledge the values of others, appreciate the concerns underlying their demands and shed light on shared beliefs” (EG, 253). Cf. also: Pope Paul VI, *Nostra Aetate*, 2. “The Church, therefore, exhorts her sons, that through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, carried out with prudence and love and in witness to the Christian faith and life, they recognize, preserve and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values found among these men.”

^{xviii} Cf. Pope Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, 89. “Therefore, to encourage and stimulate cooperation among men, the Church must be clearly present in the midst of the community of nations both through her official channels and through the full and sincere collaboration of all Christians—a collaboration motivated solely by the desire to be of service to all.”

^{xix} “Our land is rich, yet over-exploitation threatens the future of our people. We must therefore guard our non-renewable resources, like minerals, to ensure sustainable development of our land for the sake of future generations.” Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, *A Statement of Concern on the Mining Act of 1995*, February 28, 1998.

^{xx} Cf. Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, *What is happening to our beautiful land?*, January 29, 1988.