

COMMISSION ON JUSTICE AND PEACE

Underlying Principles

Jesus underlined the social duty of all baptized when He proclaimed His prophetic mission, saying: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind to release the oppressed to proclaim the year of the Lord is favor." (Lk 4:18-19, see also Isa. 61: 1-2). This gospel mandate is reflected in St. Augustine when he distinguishes three kinds of life: contemplative, active and that which has some mixture of the two. He refers this latter, the mixed form (The City of God 9, 1-2, 19). From the foregoing text, it follows that every member of our Augustinian community has an apostolic task, for the group as a whole has to be apostolic (Plan of Augustinian Formation, 57), however, the basis of Augustinian involvement is Christian charity. This involvement is engaged within and in cooperation with the local Church (Const. 147). It should be an outflow from the spirituality of the individual proceeding from the individual's union with Christ, and always be directed toward Him (Const. 145).

As Augustinians, our special apostolate ought to permeate all apostolic activity, for it flows from the love of God and neighbor, seeks justice, and desires the advancement of all, the whole person, and society (Const. 182). Proceeding from this principle, our apostolic activities should be assiduously carried out with apostolic zeal in the churches and shrines, in the houses of spirituality, in the parishes, in the schools, and in all services requested of us by the Church (Const. 151). In all these, the restlessness from our social involvement must lead us to listen carefully to the concerns of the church and society by resolving the social questions such as: justice and peace, the rights of persons, the dignity of women, the defense of human life, the care of creation, and a more just economic order (Const. 185).

Situational Analysis

The "signs of the times", mentioned by the 2007 Ordinary General Chapter namely: globalization, social injustice, ecology, new technologies and immigration, are also present in the Philippine social setting. Globalization of the market economy has brought about deep social inequalities and leaving a great number of the Filipinos in extreme poverty. There are violations on the rights of human persons such as politically motivated violence, human trafficking, and increasing problems touching children and women, massive conversion of land that resulted in the shortage of food supply, among others. Unabated human activities and abuse of our marine and natural resources has led to widespread destruction of the environment. Furthermore, while thousands of skilled Filipino workers prefer to leave the country, there is also an increasing number of unemployed and underemployed citizens in the country. These are some of the challenges that confront the country and the Province today.

Action Plans

1. To establish a comprehensive program that would serve as the umbrella of all activities of the

Commission

2. To initiate awareness drive such as fora, symposia and conferences on issues on Justice and Peace within the Province
3. To strengthen the networking and linkages with Church-based and civil society groups
4. To collaborate closely with Province's NGO, SNAF, in the implementation of programs