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16. Prophetic Voice, Eucharistic Vision, and Martyrdom in Transforming Globalization: An IFI Experience and Perspective

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The two documents on catholicity and globalization, the St. Martin's Statement and the Good Shepherd Report, are fruits of our labor as Concordat churches and of our sincere contribution in the realization of a just, humane, and lasting peace in the world. In the course of our discussion as "catholic churches in a context of a globalized world," we accept our limitations. We affirm that

> as we talk about globalization our common words do not have common meanings. For some the word *globalization* includes both the benefits of worldwide communication and the advantages of the breaking down of borders, while for others the word echoes with the violation of national identity and cultural integrity and as a tool of imperialism. (The Good Shepherd Report)

We also conform to the general belief that catholicity is our presence over all the world, our unity in doctrine, a healing power over sin, virtue that extends over all time, and our common understanding and strong eucharistic focus. We are pained by and deeply concerned at the widespread poverty, exploitation of people, widening gap between the rich and the poor, human rights violations, and degradation of environment, especially in the so-called developing countries, like the Philippines. The St. Martin's Statement posed a question: "How do *catholicity* and *Eucharistic community* express these concerns and contribute to the ability of churches in the catholic tradition to make a difference for those in suffering and need?"

The Good Shepherd Report responds to the above question by affirming that our churches understand their catholicity as an ecclesiological reality inseparable from the Eucharist:

> This ecclesiological understanding is grounded in the generosity and abundance of the Eucharist, for that is the focal point of our catholicity. As we all eat from the one loaf that is our Lord's body and drink from the one cup that holds his blood, we become one with one another and with him. As we share his life, his suffering, and his death, we also share the life, suffering, and death of our catholic brothers and sisters – wherever they live, whoever they are, whatever their sin and virtue. . . . This eucharistic vision is an ethical one; through it our churches may seek to

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> transform the dehumanizing effects of economic, social, and cultural globalization. . . . We seek through the power of the Eucharist to offer an alternative global understanding, confronting global economic, social, and cultural power and tyranny with the all-encompassing spiritual power of God's church.

The IFI presentation today returns to the basic question raised in the two previous documents of the consultation: "How does the IFI as a eucharistic community express these concerns and contribute to the ability of churches in the catholic tradition to make a difference for those in suffering and need?" This paper attempts to answer that question from the experience and perspective of the IFI.

A Firm Grasp of Reality and an Uncompromising Prophetic Voice

Nineteen ninety-four, during the incumbency of Obispo Maximo Alberto B. Ramento and the year he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from the General Theological Seminary in New York, was also the eve of the creation of the World Trade Organization to support the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in launching a massive program for developing countries to follow a trade liberalization scheme. In that same year the Supreme Council of Bishops (SCB) of the IFI released a statement questioning the Fidel Ramos government's vision for the Philippines to become a member of the organization of newly industrialized countries at the turn of the century – NICHOOD 2000 or Philippines 2000. In their statement the bishops spoke out on behalf of the people:

> We, the Bishops of the IFI, pastors and guardians of the faith and morals and responsible citizens of this country, are called upon to scrutinize the overall objectives of this vision. As a people educated in the teachings of Christ, let us not allow ourselves to be passive objects of development plans that compromise our dignity and the future of our children.
>
> While the vision promises the alleviation of poverty, we are seeing massive conversion of prime agricultural lands into industrial estates that creates a pool of cheap labor. Instead of promoting people's empowerment, for enabling politically and economically marginalized sectors of society to have equal opportunities for integral development and to have effective participation in governance, we observe the continuing concentration of political and economic power in the hands of the few.

In the same year, while celebrating the ninety-second anniversary of the proclamation of the church, the IFI bishops categorically rejected the GTT and the birth of the WTO:

> Our opposition to the GATT/WTO lies mainly in the fact that the treaty perpetuates and strengthens a colonial and lopsided trade set-up where we exchanged cheap agricultural and semi-processed goods with high value added [for] manufactured and high-tech products from industrial and imperialist countries. This set-up, established since the colonial era, effectively hinders industrialization and brings us to further indebtedness and ballooning trade deficits. Worse, accession to the treaty means giving away domestic economy left in the hands of Filipino producers, mainly agriculture, to export crops, plantations, and agricultural importers dominated by foreign trans-nationals and their few Filipino business partners. . . . (IFI, Our Heritage 17–18)

Three years later, in November 1997, another IFI Statement was signed, entitled "Opposing Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC] and Imperialist Globalization." In this statement the IFI declared its opposition to the newly developing economic strategies of WTO supporters because of the suffering they imposed on the poor:

> The present world order is the opposite of our vision (justice for the poor). Instead of giving signs to the realization of the reign of God, the new world order is ruled by world superpowers whose economic policy is to conquer the world through the doctrine of free market enterprise. . . . While maintaining a hegemonic control through the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United States with Australia and Japan were able to control the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Armed with oppressive and exploitative economic policies such as liberalization (opening the country to foreign investment), deregulation (free trade) and privatization (the transfer of assets and social services to private sectors), powerful APEC members plundered the wealth and natural resources of the Philippines. . . . The peasants, the workers, the fisherfolks, the national minority, the urban poor, and other marginalized Filipinos are suffering in the name of Philippines 2000. Land use conversion, cash crop promotion, cheap labor, contractualization, and increase of prices of all commodities make the life of the Filipinos more miserable. Filipino-owned firms become the distributors and retailers of the foreign products. The Philippine government serves not the poor but its economic masters by selling the dignity and integrity of the Filipino people who Jesus Christ had promised abundant life. (IFI, Our Heritage 47–48)

This statement was the first of the official IFI statements to use the term *imperialist globalization*. The succeeding events in the eco-political landscape of the Philippines were dominated by the trumpeters of globalization and succeeded in abolishing the remaining hindrances to a full-scale operation of the liberalization, deregulation, and privatization sought by the allied International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and WTO. These changes were concretized in the approval and so-called constitutionality of the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, which granted one hundred percent

control of large-scale mining operations to foreign investors, along with the legislation of the debt appropriation act, which bleeds the annual Philippine budget of thirty-five percent for debt services, a large sum of money that could alleviate hunger among the poverty-stricken populace.

It has been said that prophets predict the future because they have a firm grasp of the present reality. Was the principled rejection heard in the prophetic voice of the bishops against globalization thirteen years ago grounded in reality and their fear supported by solid proof? The damning truth about the vision of Philippines 2000 speaks loudly today. On June 29, 2008, the day after the incumbent president, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, delivered her state of the nation address, the Social Weather Station (SWS) and Pulse Asia shared their findings regarding the real economic and social situation of the nation in the opinion section of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer:*

> *Poverty* – After eight years of Ms. Arroyo, the Philippines remains a poor nation, with 50 percent of the population of 88.6 million rating themselves poor in March 2008, a 4 percent increase from the 46 percent of December of 2007. There is, however, according to Mahar Mangahas of SWS, a downtrend in poverty from its most recent peak of 59 percent in June 2006.
>
> *Hunger* – About 2.9 million families or 14.5 million people experienced involuntary hunger between April and June, the June 2008 SWS survey said. The figure is 4 percentage points higher than the 10-year average hunger rate of 12.1 percent. Severe hunger went up from 3.2 percent (about 570,000 families or 2.85 million people) to 4.2 percent (760,000 families or 3.8 million people).

These facts reveal a failed vision vehemently promoted by the bad Samaritans of economic globalization. It will continue to fail, because it is based on profit, not people – on competition, not justice. Like the prophets of old, the voices of our bishops and of all those who condemned the ill effects of global capitalism were ignored, and poverty, oppression, and violence prevail in the land.

Affirming the Eucharistic Vision in Transforming Globalization

The IFI subscribes, as it states in its 1977 Constitution and Canons, that her people is "a congregation of new men, educated in and liberated by the teachings of Christ, dedicated to the worship of God in Spirit and in truth, nourished and sustained in the Eucharist and commissioned to preach God's love to the world." In 1998 the SCB expounded this commitment:

> The Holy Eucharist as a Sacrament is one venue of God's new people to do what is just, to show constant love, and to live in humble fellowship with our God and humankind (Mic 6:8). This is our communion. The Eucharist is a venue to remember not only the saving acts of God through his passion, death and resurrection but to remember oneself in the Body of Christ which is the Church. After the Mass, we are asked to be "broken pieces of bread to be given to all men, women and children". . . . This has to be sustained by the new congregation as a new community. Life finds its fullness upon collective building of the Kingdom of God where abundance, joy, love, peace and justice reign. That is the Kingdom of God which the IFI congregation of new men, women and children understands. Then that is the vision to be struggled for and pursued as pilgrims of Yahweh.

The Eucharist depicts different but reciprocal symbols. The Eucharist also mediates and constructs a eucharistic vision of a Christian world. It is an experience of meal, sharing, service, and sacrifice that mediates the vision of the Kingdom, where "abundance, joy, love, peace and justice reign." It is "the vision to be struggled for and pursued" by all of us, a vision as an alternative to the present oppressive globalization scheme.

Let us now drink from our own well by reflecting on the vision, ministry, and theology of IFI leaders, especially of Bishop Alberto Ramento and the other three martyrs of this church, Fathers Jeremias Aquino, Narciso Pico, and William Tadena.

Eucharist Is Food

Father William Tadena (1968–2005), an IFI priest and an active member of the Promotion of Church People's Response (PCPR-Tarlac) was ambushed and brutally killed on March 13, 2005, after celebrating a morning Eucharist in his mission station at Guevarra, La Paz, Tarlac. A few months earlier, in December 2004, he had asked his people to share the joy of Christmas with the exploited and hungry workers of Hacienda Luisita by giving food. It was a tense situation: only a month before the military had opened fire on more than a thousand striking workers, killing seven and wounding many. But this massacre did not dampen the courage of those in the picket line amidst unabated harassment from government soldiers and paramilitary groups.

This violent situation neither intimidated Father Tadena nor dissuaded his conviction that food must be shared. He collected more than ten sacks of rice from his parishioners, the majority of whom were peasants, and offered it for the tables of the oppressed people, who were struggling for land, labor, food, and freedom. This act of love and compassion cost him

his life, joining him to the hundreds of activists who have been victims of extrajudicial killings under the Arroyo regime.

What can we learn from Fr. Tadena? It is clear that those who struggle and are "dedicated to the worship of God in spirit and in truth" while living lives of hope and meaning often see the connections among worship, food, and God's concern for those who hunger, whether for bread or justice. It is obvious that hunger brings into focus our human dependence on other human beings. We do not live by bread alone, but we must begin with bread – or rice. The very gesture of sharing bread does more than alleviate starvation: it gives company, dialogue, companionship, solidarity, hope. It gives communion.

Eucharist is about food, for the first eucharistic celebration derived from a meal. We can see here Jesus' intention to remain present with his community in the form of bread and wine, representing his body and blood. Jesus' concern for the poor is always connected to the question of bread for the hungry. It is unfortunate that many Christians cannot see the connection between daily bread and God's salvation. Economy and Eucharist are linked and bound together in the believing community, as Franz Segbers explains:

> The Eucharist allows us to see the relationship between the challenge of hunger and scarcity in the world of the Eucharist. . . . The sharing of bread and the struggle for justice are not merely moral and ethical obligations of the church but rather its constitutive elements. That means not only that churches have an ethic but also that ethical engagement is intrinsic to the very being of church. . . . The eucharistic vision explains the relationship between the Eucharist and ethical behavior. . . . The eucharistic vision holds together worship and action as a bridge between the liturgy of worship and the liturgy of daily life.[1]

Father Tadena was buried on March 29, 2005. At his funeral, Bishop Alberto Ramento, his beloved bishop, shared in his homily the vision of his martyred priest:

> A gunshot was made hitting his neck, piercing his brain, to vanish his understanding and sense of being. A bullet penetrated his heart to eradicate, to kill his innermost desire hidden inside it. Another bullet shattered his neck aimed at destroying his voice, denying his capacity to preach the vision and the belief of a priest whose only sin was to proclaim what he felt. What was the vision that our brother, our

[1] Segbers, "A Eucharistic Vision for a World of Hunger," chap. 18 below.

> priest, and our pastor William proclaimed? It was the vision of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente. It is the vision of the Aglipayanos that was given to us by our forebears who offered their lives and shed their blood so that we can freely preach the vision, that vision on how to become a true Christian.
>
> Anyone who does not serve his or her neighbor, especially the poor, anyone who denies support to the deprived, the needy, the oppressed, those who are thirsty, the political prisoners, is not a true Christian. A Church that worships God but fails to serve her country and people performs false worship, because a life of a person, his or her words and deeds in every minute of his or her life, is his or her true worship.

Bishop Alberto Ramento carried out what he preached, a life of true worship in words and deeds, by following the sacrifice of his priest, the multitudes of martyrs before them, and Jesus himself, who exemplified it to everyone.

Eucharist is Sharing

Supreme Bishop Alberto B. Ramento, D.D. (1936–2006), was known to us as the ninth Obispo Maximo of the IFI, a peace advocate, human-rights defender, and bishop of the poor peasants and workers. He was the chairperson of the Supreme Council of Bishops and the bishop of Tarlac when he was brutally murdered in his humble convent in Tarlac City on October 3, 2006. But very few have known of his feeding program for street children, called "Lingap-Batang Lansangan" ('Care for Street Children'), which he started in 2000. It was a feeding program, originally supposed to take place only on Thursdays and Saturdays, but it became an everyday occurrence when the children began to occupy one corner of the church as a sleeping quarter. Though the program operated intermittently, depending on the support he received from his friends in Japan, his gesture of sharing gave him the great respect of the little children, whom Jesus loves most; they treated him as a member of their family, calling him *lolo* ('grandfather').

When the bodies of the slain farm workers in the infamous Hacienda Luisita massacre on November 16, 2004, had nowhere to be laid because of the fear that engulfed the community, Bishop Ramento courageously shared his church and convent for the bodies of these abused people. When the union leaders of Tarlac had no place to plan to strengthen their ranks, Bishop Ramento shared his humble home. His principles and militant actions enraged those who profited from the sweat and blood of the toiling masses.

What was Bishop Ramento's motivation in doing all this? His eucharistic vision explains his reasons. In his July 1998 address at the Lambeth Conference, on the theme Partnership and Mission between the Anglican Communion and the IFI, he said:

> The Liturgy of the Holy Eucharist explicitly demonstrates the Christian view of cooperation and solidarity. First, in the Offertory, as St. Paul stated in his letter to the Romans, "we offer ourselves as a perfect and living sacrifice." This is giving self to another self, the love that God requires us to practice, the love that has no price tag and does not count the cost. Secondly, in the Breaking of the Bread, Christ said, "This is my body broken for you," so we must be broken too. This means that we break our desires and greed for power, our appetite for wealth that leads to over-accumulation of wealth. And finally, the Communion. In the Offertory, everyone gives according to ability. In the Holy Communion, everyone receives according to his or her need. The feeding of the five thousand illustrates that without greed, everybody can have a just share of the blessing of prosperity.[2]

Eucharist is sharing. The simple, central action of Eucharist is sharing of food – not only eating, but sharing. The sharing and communing that take place around the table of the Lord when we celebrate the Eucharist symbolizes the sharing and communing that should take place in the world around us. To share and commune with Christ in the Eucharist but not to share and commune with our brothers and sisters in the world would be a contradiction.

In the Solomon Islands, where I ministered for five years as a lecturer in an Anglican theological college, I experienced how the people love feasting, with food in abundance. I do not remember having seen a beggar in the streets of Honiara or a person starving to death in the village. The people there are rich, not because they save their riches for themselves, as we do by putting our money in a bank, but because they always share. For in wider sharing and communing, the creation of a new world or a better-structured society becomes possible.

The acts and eucharistic vision of Bishop Ramento project a Christian world in which an element of sharing within unity is performed. We can be guided by the vivid description in Acts 2:42–47 of this kind of world, where the faithful listened to the word, broke bread, and shared

[2] Homily delivered by the Supreme Bishop Alberto B. Ramento in a service of Holy Eucharist during the Lambeth Conference, England (July 1998) 2; Special Collections, IFI Archives, ACTS, Urdaneta City, Philippines.

their goods. Eucharist is one symbol consistent with other symbols, that is, to share the word – the word broken to be shared with others – to break the bread so that it may be shared with others. The breaking of bread leads to the breaking of one's possessions, the sharing of goods. This is the world mediated by the Eucharist, and if that is the world that the Eucharist mediates, then every person who enters that world through the Eucharist should also be understood as a person who shares. This is the power of the Eucharist.

Following the thoughts of Bishop Ramento, we can see that the Eucharist is subversive, mediating a new world that challenges the existing social order. This understanding is actually not new to this church, as appears in the IFI's first official liturgy, from 1906. The Oficio Divino, written by Bishop Isabelo de los Reyes, Sr., emphasized the elements of assembly, joy, and culture in the liturgy, years before the liturgical reform introduced by the Second Vatican Council. Indeed the Eucharist challenges the whole world to view reality from the perspective of the poor and heavy laden, a new social consciousness, a new view of reality, not one of entitlement, not one of wealth and power, not one of possession and greed, but one of a sense of gift. If it is a gift, it should be respected, it should be shared.

In Bishop Ramento's burial service on October 13, 2006, his former General Secretary, Bishop Tomas Millamena, who had become the tenth Obispo Maximo, bade farewell to his bishop and his friend in his homily:

> The powers that be did not like Bishop Ramento's immersion with the poor to build the Kingdom of God where charity, peace and justice reign. Hence, they killed him. They brutally murdered him. . . . What befell Bishop Ramento and the rest of the victims of the extrajudicial killings are the manifest signs of the times. We are appalled at the way we are being persecuted when all that we do is to share our table to the hungry, offer a glass of water to the thirsty, and share a caring hand to the poor.

Eucharist is Service and Presence

Father Jeremias Aquino (1949–1981) was a political prisoner during the Marcos dictatorial regime. He was a graduate of St. Andrew's Theological Seminary, which had a strong social commitment to Christian activism even during the pre-Martial Law period. St. Andrew's was known as "the Greening of Cathedral Heights." Fr. Aquino was chosen as a delegate to a conference at Taizé, in France, where his commitment to the

poor and oppressed was further deepened by the conference theme: "I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled" (Lk 12:49). He was assigned to the Parish of the Holy Cross, Loyola Heights, in Quezon City, where he and the students and social workers of the University of the Philippines devoted a special ministry to squatters, poor laborers, displaced persons, and discharged strikers. He died a mysterious death in a car accident that many believed to be a planned execution. During his incarceration in 1979, his thoughts and prayers flowed:

> Where is the altar of sacrifice today, O Lord? Is it on the ornate and expensive marble where Sunday alms are poured or on the low tables of workers and peasants, who only eat once or twice a day? Where do you want me to celebrate? Since you sent me out into the world, where else could I celebrate? Since you sent me out to peasants' huts, where else could I celebrate? Since you sent me out to join bands of prophets, where else could I celebrate? Since you sent me out to dare to scale heights of mountains, where else could I celebrate? Since you sent me to prison, where else could I celebrate? . . . Lord, thank you for counting me among your living manifestations at this time when few can read your signs and interpret them in concrete ways. Lord, I now begin to understand why you ordained me a priest forever. Thank you, Lord.[3]

Traditionally, the reception of Eucharist was a private matter between the believer and God. During communion, a piece of bread is held before our eyes, and we hear the words *Body of Christ* proclaimed to us. And we answer, often without thinking, "Amen." But what is the Body of Christ? It is the church, the people of God – all the people of God, but especially the poor, the outcast, the hungry, and those who struggle for freedom and human dignity.

It means then, that breaking of bread is a call to action. It is service not just with those who can pour money in the alms basket on Sunday, as Father Aquino complained, but service and presence at the lowly table of peasants, workers, prisoners, and urban poor. In 1 Cor 11:17–22, Paul expressed shock at the lack of solidarity, the scandalous division of the Corinthian people. Some of them ate and drank to their own satisfaction, while others, maybe the poor members of the community, went hungry: "Each one eats his own food" (1 Cor 11:21). No care and concern was shown for other members of the community, the poor ones, the weaker

[3] "Thoughts and Prayers from Prison," *The Filipino Priests* (Jan.–April 1982) 6.

ones. It is like the world that we live in – the world of globalization, where materialism, competition, and individualism thrive rather than respect for people's dignity, cooperation, and community.

This reality of globalization leads to the understanding that the Eucharist has an ethical demand. This ethical demand mirrors the demands of Christian life, of Jesus' values and work in the world. It is action with and for those who suffer, for it is the concrete expression of the compassionate life and final criterion of being a Christian.

Eucharist is presence, and presence is a function of action. It is not just the comfortable real presence of Christ in the Eucharist but also facing and being challenged by the disturbing personal presence of Christ in the poor and the downtrodden. Father Tissa Balasuriya, in his book *The Eucharist and Human Liberation*, pointed out the connection between Eucharist and commitment:

> If . . . the eucharistic celebration does not lead to commitment, to personal and societal liberation in a serious manner, then all these externals are a mere distraction, a dissipation of energy, and a lessening of the real meaning of Eucharist. In fact, it may even be suspected whether these are not an indication of the absence of a seriousness of commitment. (Balasuriya 21)

Following the Way of Martyrdom

Father Narciso Pico (1949–1991), the parish priest of our Lady of Antipolo, Pontevedra, Negros Occidental, was shot dead by two unidentified armed men some ten meters away from his church on January 10, 1991. Eyewitnesses recounted how Fr. Pico was first shot in the back and shoulder moments after he went out of the cafeteria:

> After being hit, Fr. Pico was heard to have shouted, "Ano ini?" ['What is this?'] when he fell to the ground at the side of the cafeteria. He pleaded for his life, saying, "Dios ko! Malooy kamo, husto na ini!" ['My God! Have pity, enough!']. . . . One of the killers told his companion, "Tapusa na lang!" ['Finish him off!']. Immediately the other gunman shot Fr. Pico at close range in the head as he was covering his face with both hands. One of the shots hit his little finger, which was almost severed.

Fr. Pico was a member of the Promotion of Church People's Rights and of the Ecumenical Forum for Church Response and an active supporter of the organized sugar workers in his province. In the year 2000, the Church of Sweden honored him as one of the martyrs of the millennium.

In 2006 Bishop Ramento was mercilessly stabbed to death with the intention to kill and not just to rob, as is seen in his two fatal chest wounds. His lawyer said of his death: "The killer toyed with him like a cat playing with a mouse." The description of this act was chosen by *Sunday Inquirer Magazine* in its special edition on December 31, 2006, entitled "The New Word Order," with the purpose of recalling the words to be remembered for 2006 (p. 6). Father Tadena in 2005 uttered his last words: "My God! Ambush!" Upon seeing his assailants, he faced his death. At Father Aquino's death in 1981, there was only silence. He was found dead in a mysterious car accident.

Going back to the question: How does the IFI as a eucharistic community express its concerns and contribute to the ability of churches in the catholic tradition to make a difference for those in suffering and need? The answer is by offering itself to be sacrificed. The transformation of an unjust and oppressive society will never happen unless there are people who are willing to offer their lives. Bishop Ramento, it seems, knew this well. In his last homily as the incumbent Obispo Maximo, in the eucharistic celebration on May 8, 1999, he reflected on transformation:

> The challenge is to transform the society into a new heaven and new earth. We, Aglipayans, the congregation of new men and women, we in the IFI, the only tangible result of the Revolution of 1896 and 1898, are in a position to lead towards transformation. Are we willing to make steps forward and be counted, remembering that doing so would mean carrying our cross? Jesus said, "Take up your cross and follow me." Take up your cross, not His cross, because what you carry, the service and the weight of the cross, depends on the service you offer. To carry one's cross means denying ourselves to the luxury of life we now enjoy. It means fighting for justice even when we ourselves would be treated unjustly. It means to take the risk of being accused as communists because we sided with the oppressed, because we recognize Jesus in the least of our brethren.[4]

Carrying one's cross and sacrificing is truly difficult. But removing the sacrificial part of the life of Christ or omitting it from the Eucharist is no longer Christ and not the Eucharist at all, because the Eucharist is sacrifice. Behind the meal lies the reality of the sacrifice of Christ and the church. In the Eucharist, the church enters into the total self-giving of Christ. But we must be cautious, because merely to go through the mo-

[4] Homily delivered by Supreme Bishop Alberto B. Ramento (8 May 1999) 2; Special Collections, IFI Archives, ACTS, Urdaneta City, Philippines.

tions of the Eucharist without the serious and complete dedication of our lives would be hypocrisy (see 1 Cor 11:27–28). The ritual of Eucharist, of thanksgiving for what God has done for us in the person of Jesus, is not just repeating his words and gestures: it is living his life, sharing his compassion, dying with him, and worshiping his God as he did, in service and humble obedience.

Again, in "Worship in the IFI," an address delivered in one of the sessions at the July 1998 Lambeth Conference, OM Ramento said:

> The post communion prayer . . . says in part, "may we now be pieces of bread, broken, ready to be distributed to all people." Here, the worshippers are commissioned to be the priest and the sacrifice, to be living sacraments of the people. Worshippers are sent out as bread, broken, which means that the struggle with the oppressed and unjustly treated, even to the point of being oppressed and suffering injustice, is laudable worship.

Conclusion

In this last meeting of the Concordat churches on this topic of Catholicity and Globalization, the IFI invites the participants once again to understand our experience and perspective. We invite you to transform globalization by having a firm grasp of the reality and to become uncompromising prophets, to have a eucharistic vision in transforming globalization, and to prepare yourselves for a self-giving sacrifice for justice, peace, and abundant life for all. There is no other way but to do it in dialogue and in communion as catholic churches, journeying together for God's kingdom, "on earth as it is in heaven."

We must also be reminded that it is the conference commitment "to offer specific suggestions of how to counter the dire effects of globalization, to encourage its positive aspects, and to seek transformation through justice and compassion" (The St. Martin's Statement). We are "unanimous in agreeing that one powerful way of living out our *communio* and signifying our catholicity would be to incorporate Bishop Alberto Ramento, the ninth Obispo Maximo of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente . . . , into the calendars of the churches," knowing that "Such a liturgical expression would commemorate his life and witness against oppression and against the physical and social exploitation that results from globalization" (The Good Shepherd Report). We are happy to inform you that our Supreme Council of Bishops has formed a committee to discuss Bishop Ramento's canonization.

We further recommend the following:

1. The publication of the statement of "Catholicity and Globalization" in (1) pamphlet form to update our local churches and to be educated about it for proper action (programmatic expression), (2) a larger version, including all the presentations, for libraries and other academic purposes.
2. For the heads of the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht, the Episcopal Church in the USA, the Church of Sweden, and the Iglesia Filipina Independiente to initiate a round-table discussion regarding the final statement of the conference and to flesh out points of convergence for concrete action and cooperation at the international level, considering "how to counter the dire effects of globalization, to encourage its positive aspects, and to seek transformation through justice and compassion."
3. That our more affluent Concordat partners support the ministry of the IFI toward those who are harshly affected by the ill-effects of economic globalization in the Philippine society, such as the peasants, workers, women, and children.
4. To support a Filipino chaplaincy program for migrant workers, e.g., to open a ministry for migrants like those exemplified by the Anglican province of Hong Kong and the parish of Nottinghill in the diocese of London.

The call for catholic unity is our response to the prayer of Jesus "that all may be one" (Jn 17:20). This unity is imperative in the churches' common journey to face the challenges brought by globalization and an opportunity to work intimately in promoting the values of the kingdom, where love, freedom, justice, and peace reign. The IFI unites herself with the Concordat partners with the goal of transforming globalization into a eucharistic vision by breaking oneself to be shared for others. The IFI invites other churches to raise their prophetic voice and to be emboldened by the courage showed by the martyrs of this church in fighting the onslaught and curse of economic globalization. May our catholicity globalize sharing and our pursuit for justice bring peace to the world.