

The Role of Indonesian Catholic Church in Achieving the Millennium Development Goals

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The Catholic Church (Vatican) which has diplomatic relations with the United Nations and with other nations sees that the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is a sign of collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level. The Indonesian Catholic Church as one part of the Catholic Church participates by supporting and actively engaging in delivering the millennium development goals (MDGs). In its efforts the Indonesian Catholic Church uses these four principles — human dignity, the common good, subsidiarity and solidarity. The Indonesian Catholic Church uses all of its resources (foundations, religious congregations and Catholic faith based NGOs) to reach the MDGs through various activities including spiritual and practical activities. It also encourages its people to build local communities so that not only the MGDs are reached but also the local communities become sustainable.

Keywords: Indonesian Catholic Church, MDGs, spiritual and practical activities.

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Gereja Katolik (Vatican), yang memiliki hubungan diplomatic dengan Persatuan Bangsa Bangsa dan dengan berbagai negara, melihat bahwa penetapan Pencapaian Pembangunan Milenium (MDGs) sebagai suatu tanda tanggung jawab bersama untuk mencapai harkat dan martabat manusia, persamaan derajat dan persamaan hak di tingkat global. Gereja Katolik Indonesia sebagai bagian dari Gereja Katolik universal terlibat untuk mendukung dan secara aktif berpartisipasi untuk meraih pencapaian tersebut. Dalam usahanya, Gereja Katolik Indonesia menggunakan empat buah prinsip: harkat martabat manusia, kebaikan bersama, subsidiaritas dan solidaritas. Gereja Katolik Indonesia menggerakkan semua sumber dayanya (yaysan, kongregasi religious dan LSM berbasis iman katolik) untuk mencapai MDGs melalui berbagai aktifitas termasuk aktifitas spiritual dan praktikal. Selain itu Gereja Katolik Indonesia juga mendorong umatnya untuk membangun komunitas-komunitas local sehingga bukan hanya MDGs yang dapat tercapai tetapi komunitas-komunitas local menjadi bestari.

Kata kunci: Gereja Katolik Indonesia, Pencapaian Pembangunan Milenium (MDGs), aktifitas spiritual dan praktikal.

The MDGs which were released in September 2000 were drawn from the Millennium Declaration by a working committee including members from the World Bank, IMF, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), World Health Organization (WHO) and OECD. Soon after the release in September 2001 the Secretary General released the document *Road Map Towards the Implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration* that contained the eight MDGs.¹The MDGs are: to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, to achieve universal primary education, to promote gender equality and empower women, to reduce child mortality, to improve maternal health, to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, to ensure environmental sustainability, and to develop a global partnership for development.

These goals which are making the right to development a reality for everyone are expected to be completed by the year 2015. The objective of this declaration is to promote a comprehensive approach and a coordinated strategy, tackling many problems simultaneously across a broad front. All member states of the United Nations, including Vatican, affirmed that they would "... spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected."² Since then, these MDGS become both political and social agenda not only of all member states but also world institutions.

Vatican, as the center of Catholicism, cannot be separated from the Catholic Church.³With the unique position of the pope as the leader of Vatican and the head of the Catholic Church, what is decided by the Vatican surely affects the Catholic Church. As Vatican, politically and socially, agreed to participate in achieving MDGs, the Catholic Church decides to actively get involved in the MDGs program, though not politically.⁴

¹Please see: United Nations General Assembly Resolution, A/RES/56/95, Dec. 14, 2001<http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/r56.htm>. Retrieved 2 August 2013.

²United Nations, 2000. See www.un.org/millenniumgoals

³The Catholic Church is not a state although Vatican is regarded as a nation state.

⁴The Catholic Church has sought to discern the moral as well as the religious implications of its faith. It is facing the reality that though the faith focuses attention on promises of eternal life, it has to live its existence in this world. Through ages the Catholic Church has committed itself to limit its participation in socio-political activity. The contemporary theological discussions on the social world have forced the Catholic Church to re-examine their understandings of worldly activity in general and of political activity in particular.

While Vatican governance is limited in the area of the state and in the political aspect of the nation state, the activities of the Catholic Church touch almost every country and nearly every aspect of human life. The Catholic Church is not only the focal point of a vast spiritual and cultural community, and the visible symbol of a living system of ideas and values; it is a coordinating secretariat for a far-flung multinational bureaucracy.⁵ Keeping the traditional prohibitions of clerical and religious participation in politics while involving in the world, the Catholic Church founds Catholic institutions and NGOs as its agents to participate actively in the socio-political life. Its participation is unique since its unique position and existence.⁶ This paper presents an exploration of the unique roles of the Catholic Church, specifically the Indonesian Catholic Church, in achieving the MDGs.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Indonesian Catholic Church and the Universal Catholic Church

Indonesian Catholic Church is a part of and united to the universal Catholic Church. It means that Indonesian Catholic Church follows the governance of Roman Catholic Church which is led by the Pope in Rome.⁷ Then, as part of the universal institution, Indonesian Catholic Church applies the canon and regulations which are promulgated by the leader of the institution. Moreover, as part of its unity Indonesian Catholic Church has to follow and participate in the movements and actions taken by the universal Church. This is the reason why the Indonesian Catholic Church, in some cases, is very similar to the Catholic Church in Rome; the difference is mostly on its locality.

The Catholic Church, also known as the Roman Catholic Church, is the world's largest Christian church, with 1.2 billion members.⁸ The Catholic Church⁹

⁵ Eugene V. Rostow. *The Role of the Vatican in The Modern World*. L'Osservatore Romano. <http://www.ewtn.com/library/HUMANITY/VATMOD.HTM>. Retrieved 20 August 2013. See also : Francis W. Sweeney, 1970, *The Vatican and World Peace*. California: Smythe.

⁶ Its uniqueness is that the headquarter of the Catholic Church is considered as an independent nation state while the members are across nation states.

⁷ See http://www.catholicity.com/catechism/the_church_is_catholic.html. Retrieved 16 August 2013.

⁸ "World's Catholic Population Steady". <http://www.Catholic Culture.org>. 13 May 2013. Retrieved 10 August 2013. See also: Catholic Church. 1995. *Catechism of the Catholic Church: Catholic Education Resources – Secondary Series*. California: University of California.

⁹ "*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*". Vatican Council II. <http://www.Catholic Culture.org>. Retrieved 10 August 2013. See also: Austin Flannery, 2009, *Vatican Council II: The Basic Sixteen Documents*, Michigan: Costello.

does not only consist of the Latin Church¹⁰ but also other 22 autonomous particular churches.¹¹ The Catholic Church exists in many different countries. Total the Catholic Church membership in 2013 remains steady at 17.5% of the world population (about 1,3 billion people). The number can be broken down as 48.8% from the Americas, 23.5% from Europe, 16.0% from Africa, 10.9% from Asia, and 0.8% from Oceania.¹²

The Catholic Church is a hierarchical institution. It keeps its hierarchy to maintain the unity of authority and teachings. The hierarchy comprises the bishops, priests and deacons. In the Catholic Church, authority rests mainly with the bishops, while priests and deacons function as their assistants, co-workers or helpers. The college of bishops is the pastors in the Church, to be the teachers of doctrine, the priests of sacred worship and the ministers of governance. The Pope, who himself is a bishop of Rome, is considered as the head of the universal Catholic Church, including the Catholic Church in Indonesia.

According to Catholic teaching, the Pope is the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity both of the bishops and of the whole company of the faithful.¹³ He has direct authority over the whole Church. In governing the Church, the Pope is assisted by the Roman Curia. This body of officials has the authority over the bishops and over all the faithful. A bishop is the head of local (diocesan) Church. The task of the bishop is to oversee the particular Churches in his area. He functions as the pastor of the people in their locality. The bishops in a particular country or region are often organized into an episcopal conference.¹⁴ The aim of this conference is to maintain a uniform style of worship and co-ordination of social justice programs within the area. The diocesan bishops are assisted by priests who become the head

¹⁰The Latin Church is the largest of the particular churches with over one billion members. See "General Essay on Western Christianity", Overview of World Religions. Division of Religion and Philosophy, University of Cumbria.1998/9 ELMAR Project.<http://www.Catholic Culture.org>. Retrieved 10 August 2013.

¹¹The other 22 autonomous Churches are Eastern Catholic Churches with a membership of 17.3 million. See Ronald G. Roberson. "Eastern Catholic Churches Statistics 2010".*CNEWA*.Retrieved 10 August 2013.

¹²"World's Catholic population steady".<http://www.Catholic Culture.org>. 13 May 2013. Retrieved 10 August 2013.

¹³Catechism of the Catholic Church, article no. 882.Catholic Church, 1995, Catechism of the Catholic Church: Catholic Education Resources – Secondary Series, California: University of California. See also *Lumen Gentium*. <http://www.Catholic Culture.org>.Retrieved 10 August 2013.

¹⁴*AnnuarioPontificio per l'anno 2010 (Città di Vaticano: LibreriaEditriceVaticana, 2010)*

and pastor of parishes entrusted to him. They are usually called as parish priests. The parish priests manage the parish and provide the pastoral care for the community entrusted to him under the authority of the Diocesan Bishop. He carries out the offices of teaching, sanctifying and ruling in cooperation with other priests or deacons and lay members of the Christian faithful.¹⁵

The Catholic Church and the United Nations

The main reason why the Catholic Church decided to join the United Nations is its characters.¹⁶ The Catholic Church is catholic as well as apostolic. The Catholic Church is catholic since it is universal. Since its very first existence, the Catholic Church is for everybody and anybody regardless the race, nation, gender and other divisive categories. It is apostolic since it is going out of itself and missionary. These two reasons make the Catholic Church always try to get involve in world affairs and participate in the history of international affairs. Since its very beginning the Catholic Church has become a universal, transnational and international institution.¹⁷

Vatican is one nation among 193 nations who are member states of the UN. Though Vatican is an independent nation in the United Nations it functions more as a religious institution.¹⁸ In shorts, Vatican plays a role as the Catholic Church institution in the United Nations. It refuses to be a voting nation, meaning that it has no active vote in the process of the making of decisions and resolutions made by the United Nations. Its official mission functions more as observer and inspirer at the United Nations. Unlike the 192 permanent member states, the position of Vatican (Catholic Church) at the United Nations is not based upon national interests or even a group of believers, but it represents the whole humanity. Its belief on the four

¹⁵Code of Canon Law, canon no. 519. See James A. Corriden, Thomas Joseph Green & Donald E. Heintschel, 1985, *The Code of Canon Law: Text and Commentaries*, New York: Paulist Press.

¹⁶ Bernard V. Bardy, 2008, *Essential Catholic Social Thoughts*, New York: Orbis Books, p. 82.

¹⁷At present the Catholic Church has built diplomatic relations with 174 of the 192 members of the United Nations.

¹⁸ At present time many government representatives at the United Nations raise questions about the status of Vatican (the Catholic Church) at the United Nations. It happens especially when Vatican (the Catholic Church) steps up its opposition to certain process of international policymaking which is considered immoral by the religious institution. Many representatives argue should not continue in its exalted place at the United Nations's table.

principles: human dignity, the common good, subsidiarity and solidarity call the Catholic Church to work not only to achieve its own goals but for the goodness of the whole humanity.¹⁹

The main mission of the participation of the Catholic Church in the United Nations is to promote what Pope John Paul II referred to as a “culture of peace,” to build a world without war or want, with tolerance for authentic freedom and respect for human rights.²⁰ In promoting the culture of peace Pope John Paul II stated that the diplomatic process was inherently capable of reinforcing the deepest aspirations of mankind, among them: a hope for life without violence; a desire for fairness in the distribution of the world’s resources; the freedom to exercise conscience, including the legitimacy of religious practice; and progress in the expansion of human rights awareness.²¹

Since becoming one of the members of the United Nations in 1964, the Catholic Church has become an influential institution in the process of policymaking of the United Nations. The Catholic Church uses its credibility, influence and standing to influence the people and challenge the Government to take a more proactive approach. It becomes the guard of humanity and morality. As an observer and inspirer it actively involves in a lot of discussion both to support the making of good and fair policies or to fight the construction of international policies which against the values of humanity.

DISCUSSION

The Catholic Church and the MDGs

The Catholic Church (Vatican) which has diplomatic relations with the United Nations and with other nations sees that the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is a sign of collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level. The Catholic Church believes that striving for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is an

¹⁹ Jerry WindleyDaoust, 2008, *Living Justice and Peace: Catholic Social Teaching in Practice*, Winona MN: Saint Mary’s Press, p. 97.

²⁰D. Brian Scarnecchia and Terrence McKeegan, Scarnecchia, 2009, *The Millennium Development Goals In Light of Catholic Social Teaching*, New York: International Organizations Research Group, p. 9.

²¹Bernard J. O’Connor, 2005, *Papal Diplomacy: John Paul II and the Culture of Peace*, South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, p. 1.

important step in fighting poverty. It sees in MDGs a political commitment of the nation members of the United Nation towards social justice and the eradication of poverty. Moreover it hopes that by reaching the MDG targets national and international peace and stability can be achieved.

The Catholic Church sees that the MDGs are closely related to the Catholic Social Teaching, which stresses that solidarity and reciprocity are fundamental principles in an interconnected world. According to the Catholic Social teaching poverty, in all its forms, is a scandal; it is the denial of the most basic human dignity. Fighting poverty is not only an act of charity; it is a fight for basic rights. It is the expression of solidarity between people, across continents, across generations, across cultures.

The movement of the Catholic Church to fight against poverty, of course, cannot be separated from its concept of poverty.²² The understanding of human poverty of the Catholic Church comes from its bible. Both the Old and New Testament of Christian bible talk much about poverty. For Christians, poverty may mean good and bad. It really depends on what is meant by poverty and what aspect of poverty it refers to. Catholic Church, on one side, is against poverty and tries hard to overcome it, but on the other side, it sees the goodness of poverty.

In the Old Testament, poverty is an evil against which one must struggle and ask God to be set free.²³ The consequences of poverty are humiliation, oppression, and dependence.²⁴ Christianity believes that God, who made a covenant with the Chosen People, has a particular care for the disinherited, widows, slaves and orphans.²⁵ They believe that God hears the cry of the poor, those who suffer and the humiliated²⁶ and protects the poor.²⁷ In short, Christianity believes God takes the side of the poor, of the victims of injustice, the persecuted, and the weak.²⁸ Slowly, over the centuries, the term “poor” is understood also to be an interior attitude of faithfulness that often brings with it isolation and persecution by the powerful.

²²For how the Catholic Church sees poverty and methods to solve it, please see Jerry WindleyDaoust, pp. 196-197 and 220.

²³Deuteronomy 15, 7-11

²⁴Book of Sirach 13, 3-7. 21-23.

²⁵Exodus 22, 25-26; Leviticus.25, 35-38; Deuteronomy. 24, 10-15.

²⁶Exodus 2, 24; 3,7; Book of Sirakh 4,1-6; 21,5.

²⁷Isaiah 11, 4; Psalm 34,7

²⁸Jerry WindleyDoust, p. 198.

The New Testament completes the Old Testament with the spirituality of renunciation. Jesus taught that material poverty is a sorrowful experience, but many poor people have accepted their condition with a complete trust in God. Although Jesus, in one side, saw the goodness of poverty, when he outlined his mission to the people, he quoted the Songs of the Servant of Yahweh by Isaiah: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me and has anointed me to announce the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, to restore sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the Lord’s year of favour”.²⁹ This verse becomes the fundamental verse for Christian vocation. All Christians believe that they are called to be like Jesus to announce the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, to restore sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the Lord’s year of favour.

Imitating Jesus, the Catholic Church gives away everything, sharing his poverty and experiencing his generosity.³⁰ Wealth is not condemned but its value is relativised and human beings are warned to use it wisely and moderately. It warns its people not to allow themselves to be seduced by material things or multiply their possessions and their riches, desiring and exercising dominion over other people. On the other hand, it teaches its people that giving away money and sharing it with the poor, they become friends and clients before God. In fighting poverty which degrades millions of people throughout the world the Catholic Church urges its people to never cease to struggle so that every human being might be able to live a decent life.

The emeritus pope, Benedict XVI, in his encyclical letter, *Caritas in Veritate*³¹, describes a comprehensive view of the Catholic Church’s teaching on proper development. He emphasizes the requirement to achieve the proper development, that is recognizing the truth of love and charity. He states:

This dynamic of charity received and given is what gives rise to the Church’s social teaching, which is *caritas in veritate in re sociali*: the proclamation of the truth of Christ’s love in society. This doctrine is a service to charity, but its locus is truth. Truth preserves and expresses

²⁹Luke 4, 18-19

³⁰ Mark 10:28.

³¹ The English translation of the title is ‘Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth’

charity's power to liberate in the ever-changing events of history. It is at the same time the truth of faith and of reason, both in the distinction and also in the convergence of those two cognitive fields. Development, social well-being, the search for a satisfactory solution to the grave socio-economic problems besetting humanity, all need this truth. What they need even more is that this truth should be loved and demonstrated. Without truth, without trust and love for what is true, there is no social conscience and responsibility, and social action ends up serving private interests and the logic of power, resulting in social fragmentation, especially in a globalized society at difficult times like the present.³²

Prior to *Caritas in Veritate*, the Catholic Church has also produced other documents which contain Catholic social teaching. Some of them are encyclical letters, such as *Quadragesimo Anno* (On Reconstruction of the Social Order);³³ *Mater et Magistra* (Christianity and Social Progress) and *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth);³⁴ *Populorum Progressio* (The Development of Peoples) and *Octogesima Adveniens* (A Call to Action);³⁵ *Redemptor Hominis* (The Redeemer of Man), *Misericordia* (On the Mercy of God), *Familiaris Consortio* (On the Family), *Laborem Exercens* (On Human Work), *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (On Social Concerns), *Christifideles Laici* (On the Vocation and Mission of the Lay Faithful), *Mulieris Dignitatem* (On the Dignity and Vocation of Women), *Centesimus Annus* (On the Hundredth Anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*), Letter to Families, *Evangelium Vitae* (The Gospel of Life), Letter to Women, Women: Teachers of Peace, and *Ecclesia in America* (The Church in America).³⁶ Moreover, there are other Catholic social teaching documents which are produced by the Second Vatican Ecumenical. They include: *Dignitatis Humanae* (Declaration on Religious Liberty),

³² Pope Benedict, XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, #5.

³³ It was promulgated by Pope Pius XI in 1931.

³⁴ Both of them were promulgated by Pope John XXIII: *Mater et Magistra* (1961) and *Pacem in Terris* (1963). For commentaries, please see: Charles E. Curran, 2002, *Catholic Social Teaching 1891 – Present: A historical, Theological and Ethical Analysis*, Washington DC: Georgetown University Press.

³⁵ Both of them were promulgated by Pope John VI: *Populorum Progressio* (1967) and *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971). For commentaries, please see: Charles E. Curran.

³⁶ All of them were promulgated by Pope John Paul II: *Redemptor Hominis* (1979), *Misericordia* (1980), *Familiaris Consortio* (1981), *Laborem Exercens* (1981), *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987), *Christifideles Laici* (1988), *Mulieris Dignitatem* (1988), *Centesimus Annus* (1991), Letter to Families (1994), *Evangelium Vitae* (1995), Letter to Women (1995), Women: Teachers of Peace (1995), and *Ecclesia in America* (1999). For commentaries, please see: Charles E. Curran.

Apostolicam Actuositatem (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity), and *Gaudium et Spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World).

All of those documents talk about the essential principles of Catholic social teachings: the dignity of human person,³⁷ the common good³⁸; the universal destination of goods and private property;³⁹ the principles of subsidiarity and co-solidarity.⁴⁰ Moreover, all of them talk about the fundamental human values of truth, freedom, justice and love.⁴¹ Those principles are so inter-connected and united that they cannot be read separately. They must be read in the context of their unity and articulation. Furthermore, since the principles are universal, they do not apply for Catholics but for all human beings.

Since the time of the establishment of the MDG framework in 2000, the Catholic Church has made a commitment to help achieve the MDGs by 2015. The Catholic Church's purpose and the ways of achieving the MDGs are related to its understanding of poverty. The Catholic Church fights poverty not only to make all people live in welfare but also to help them to live in a full humanity.⁴² For the Catholic Church the welfare is nothing, even is dangerous, if it brings them to inhumanity. The Catholic Church stresses that the efforts to reach the MDGs needs to employ these four principles — human dignity, the common good, subsidiarity and solidarity.⁴³

The Roles of Indonesian Catholic Church

Indonesian Catholic Church as one part of the Catholic Church plays a role in the MDGs achievement in local scale. The Indonesian Catholic bishops

³⁷This principle is based on the belief that every human being, regardless of their race, nation, sex, origin, culture or class, is created by God in His image and called to eternal union with Him.

³⁸This principle is based on the belief that every human being cannot find fulfillment in herself/himself and that she/he exists with others and for others.

³⁹ This principle is based on the belief that all goods should be used for the everybody regarding a proper understanding of private property

⁴⁰ These two principles cannot be separated. Solidarity overcomes inequalities between human beings while subsidiarity is that action should be taken at the lowest level, the level closest to the people that the action is seeking to help.

⁴¹D. Brian Scarnecchia and Terrence McKeegan, 2009, *The Millennium Development Goals In Light of Catholic Social Teaching*, New York: International Organizations Research Group, p.9.

⁴² Bernard V. Bardy, p. 47.

⁴³ Marvin L. KrierMich, 1998, *Catholic Social Teaching and Movement*, Mystic, CT: Twenty Third Publications, p. 177.

(KWI/Konferensi Waligereja Indonesia)⁴⁴ met to discuss Indonesian Catholic church's support and active engagement in delivering the millennium development goals (MDGs). They believe that government, on itself, is not able to address the challenges only through appropriate interventions detailed in its policies and plans. It needs to be assisted by civil society and other social institutions. Indonesian Catholic Church feels that this is an important call because the church is part of the frontline service deliverers in this country.

Indonesian Catholic Church, as one of the social institutions, feels that it may take a lead in adopting the MDGs as a roadmap for lifting the poor out of poverty. It realizes that it can adopt the MDGs as their own Church policies and incorporate them into its plans and programs. It is convinced that they even can do better since it does not only focus on the work to achieve the MDGs but also provides the fundamental layer of the MDGs, the spirituality which becomes the motive of the achievement.

As a religious institution Indonesian Catholic Church believes that tragedy of poverty is not only a social matter but also a spiritual (religious) matter. Facing this tragedy, Indonesian Catholic Church sees the importance to demand its people openness to understand it in depth and to mobilize themselves at the level of the 'heart,' so as to ensure that current economic and social processes evolve towards fully human outcomes.⁴⁵ This is the reason why the Indonesian Catholic Church commits to solve the problem through spiritual development. It believes that by doing this, it may modify people's behavior and decisions regarding this social fact. On the other hand, Indonesian Catholic Church realizes that it is not enough to invite reflection. To solve the problem, it needs to actively intervene in the situation.⁴⁶ Indonesian Catholic Church tries to combine these two (spirituality basis and active involvement) into one movement. It does not want that its participation falls into the sphere of emotions, without being capable of moving the conscience and its search

⁴⁴Indonesian Catholic Church is divided into 37 dioceses. Each diocese is led by a bishop. All of them become the members of a federation of The Catholic Bishops (Bishops) of Indonesia (Konferensi Waligereja Indonesia/KWI) which aims to promote unity and cooperation in their pastoral duties to lead Catholics in Indonesia. KWI is not "above" or supervises bishops, each bishop remains autonomous. Through KWI, the Indonesian bishops work to negotiate and decide something about Catholics across the country.

⁴⁵ See Caritas in Veritate, article no. 20.

⁴⁶ See Thomas Massaro, 2012, Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Actions, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publisher Inc., p. 4.

for truth and goodness. In other words, Indonesian Catholic Church is about assuming an interior attitude of responsibility, capable of inspiring a different style of life,⁴⁷ and inviting the people to take actions in favor of the good of society.

Supporting the activities done to reach the MDGs, just as the universal Catholic Church, Indonesian Catholic Church emphasizes the need of genuine solidarity with the poor. It believes that without this genuine solidarity, there is no social conscience and responsibility, and social action ends up serving private interests and the logic of power, resulting in social fragmentation, especially in a globalized society at difficult times like the present.⁴⁸ As the universal Catholic Church, Indonesian Catholic Church in its efforts to reach the MDGs uses these four principles — human dignity, the common good, subsidiarity and solidarity.⁴⁹ The Indonesian Catholic Church occupies its resources to reach the MDGs through various activities including spiritual and social activities. It also encourages its people, institutions (foundations and Catholic faith based NGOs)⁵⁰ to help build local communities so that not only the MDGs are reached but also the local communities become sustainable. Indonesian Catholic Church develops and provides guidelines for them so that their activities may not fall into political interests.⁵¹ Many things have been done by Catholic local Churches and parishes, Catholic foundations (schools, public health and social services) and Catholic faith based NGOs all over Indonesia. They also work hand in hand with other religious institutions or even with the government. Though they are working behind the screen and are rarely published, they have contributed a lot to the achievement of MDGs in this country.

Indonesian Catholic Church's Religious Role

One of the major influences of the Catholic Church on social practice can be identified under the teaching of Catholic social thought. This teaching becomes the

⁴⁷ See *Caritas in Veritate*, article no. 27.

⁴⁸ D. Brian Scarnecchia and Terrence McKeegan, 2009, *The Millennium Development Goals In Light of Catholic Social Teaching*, New York: International Organizations Research Group.

⁴⁹ Jeffrey A. Mirus, 2008, *Making Sense of Society: Catholic Essays on the Human Persons, the Social Order, Government and Faith*, New Hope: UrbietOrbi Publications, p. 25.

⁵⁰ Some of these NGOs lobby at the national, regional, and international levels and others work on the grassroots level.

⁵¹ For the universal Church, one of them is the encyclical letter of *VeritasCaritate* which was promulgated by Benedict XVI in 2009. For the Indonesian Church one of them is the pastoral note on *Ecopastoral* which was promulgated by the Indonesian Bishop Conference in 2012.

religious (spiritual) motivation for the Catholic institutions and people. Moreover, through the teaching, the Catholic Church plays its role in influencing social policy debate which offers a means by which the Church may play an important part in the development of social policy in the future. These are some ways how the Indonesian Catholic Church serves the religious (spiritual) motivation among its institutions and people:

1. Indonesian Catholic Church's Theme of the Year

Every year Indonesian Catholic Church decides a theme of the year. The theme of the year functions as the guidelines not only for the theme of reflection of the whole Catholic Church in Indonesia but also the theme of movements. During Lent season, the Catholic people usually have a common retreat reflecting the theme of the year. Parish organizer develops reflection book which becomes the guidelines for the people to reflect on the theme. Furthermore, Catholic communities hold programs in which people gather together to talk, discuss and reflect on the theme. This is usually followed up with actions accordance with the theme. The theme for 2008 is education. Through its 2008 letter, the Indonesian Bishop Conference (KWI) invited the Catholics to reflect on the need of good education for all. The letter moved Catholic institutions to provide better education to everybody regardless the backgrounds of the students. It urged the need not only cognitive education but also moral education. The theme for 2009 is food for everybody. Through its letter, KWI invited the Catholic people to reflect the right of food. The letter concerned with the fact that in some places the people were overloaded with food while in other places people were lacked of food. Public health became the theme of 2010 of KWI. In accordance with them, the Indonesian Catholic Church questioned the vocation and the aim of the existence of Catholic public health institutions. It urged the institutions to provide good health services to everybody and to be always on the side of poor people. Then, the theme for 2012 is eco-pastoral. Through its annual letter, the Indonesian Bishop Conference (KWI) invited the people to reflect on the integrity of creation. The letter discussed the vocation of Catholic people to involve in preserving and developing the quality of the environment. Finally, the

theme for 2013 is valuing the work. Through the theme the Indonesian Catholic Church not only invites the people to reflect on the value of working but also promotes fair wage of every workers.⁵²

2. Indonesian Catholic Church's Participation in the World Food Day

Following the universal Church, the Indonesian Catholic Church get involved in the annual celebration of world food day. The commitment of the Catholic Church to participate in the celebration is in favor of agricultural development to combat hunger and malnutrition, is also an occasion to underscore the situation of so many people who lack daily bread. The Church is fully aware that liberation from the yoke of hunger is the first concrete manifestation of the right to life, which -- despite its having been solemnly proclaimed -- is often very far from being fulfilled effectively. The Church invites the people to reflect on the importance of the different factors that can give people and communities essential resources, beginning with agricultural work, which must not be considered as a secondary activity, but as the objective of every strategy of growth and integral development. In doing this action the Indonesian Catholic Church is always inspired by the Christian values: the feeling of compassion and humanity toward others and the duty of solidarity and commitment to justice. The Indonesian Catholic Church believes that besides immediate aid in the face of the death of entire communities caused by famine and the forced abandonment of the native lands, it is also necessary to intervene in the medium- and long-term. The Church invites the people to participate also on the other activities to solve the problem.

3. Indonesian Catholic Church's Support toward the Works of Catholic Institutions

The Indonesian Bishop Conference (KWI) regularly meets and gathers with Catholic institutions and Catholic inspired NGOs (non-governmental organizations) to coordinate their important efforts. In the meetings and gatherings they discuss about the presence, impact, difficulties and challenges which they are facing in the society. They concern with the advancing mutual understanding and collaboration in some areas such as education, human rights, migration, healthcare, environment and development. Through conversations

⁵² For further information on these themes, please see: www.indonesia.ucanews.com and www.mirifica.com

either in panel or in small groups KWI and the representatives of the Catholic institutions and Catholic inspired NGOs not only share their concerns and their current activities in these specific areas, or develop a better way to collaborate and network across the different institutions and NGOs, but also address the concerns and crises of those who they work with. In this kind of meetings and gathering, the Catholic Social Teaching permeates the discussion and color the decision making process.

Indonesian Catholic Church's Practical Role

Indonesian Catholic Church tries to achieve the MDGs by employing its success in developing a powerful, far-reaching role as a social service provider. Catholic schools, hospitals, orphanages and other similar institutions which multiply and flourish all over Indonesia are encouraged to participate with the Catholic Church to achieve the MDGs. Moreover, in reaching the MDGs, the Indonesian Catholic Church urges its religious congregations and Catholic faith based NGOs to take part in the process in each of its own field of work. These two types of faith based institutions become the real drive and energy of various Catholic social works and movements. While the religious congregations focus their work to increase the overall level of provision in education, health and related social services, the Catholic faith based NGOs try to combat social inequality or reform society. Both of them, as the agents of Indonesian Catholic Church, work hand in hand to reach the goals set by its source.

A Case Study

In this paper, the Indonesian Province of Carmelite Order and Perkumpulan Darma Laksana (Indonesian Carmelite NGO) are used as examples of a religious congregation and a Catholic faith based NGO which work to reach MDGs.

The Indonesian Province of Carmelite Order

The Indonesian province of Carmelite Order is a province of a world religious congregation which was started in Palestine in 1247. Through its long history it, then, sets up its main office in Rome. The Indonesian province was founded by the Dutch in Malang residence East Java in 1923. The headquarters of

the province is located in Malang. Its members work in Sumatera, Java, Flores, Kalimantan and Papua. They run several schools in East Java and in Flores.

Answering the invitation of the Indonesian Bishop Conference to participate in helping the country to reach MDGs, this congregation asks its schools to have programs related to MDGs. The goals that they are focusing on are goals number 7 and number 8: to ensure environmental sustainability and to develop a global partnership for development. The schools create a common program to promote students' and society's awareness of the environment. They invite other Carmelite schools in the Asia Pacific region to work with them to sustain and to increase the quality of environment. They develop several programs, such as re-foresting areas, holding seminar and workshop on environment (locally, regionally and internationally), increasing students' awareness by having writing competition on the topic of environment and others. Through the schools this congregation helps Indonesia to achieve the MDGs.

Moreover, this congregation also asks its commission of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation to develop a spiritual reflection related to the goals of MDGs and share the result with all members of the province so that they may use the reflection in their work in parishes. The commission focuses itself on goal number 1, number 2, number 7 and number 8. They are: to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, to achieve universal primary education, to ensure environmental sustainability, and to develop a global partnership for development. The commission starts a team of spirituality, develop the reflection and share the result in the form of booklets. The booklets, then, are distributed to the members and to the people to motivate them to work to reach the goals.

PerkumpulanDarmaLaksana

PerkumpulanDarmaLaksana is a non-governmental organization which belongs to the Indonesian Province of Carmelite Order. It functions as the agent of the province to help achieve the MDGS by serving the people on the grass-root level. To achieve the second goal (to achieve universal primary education) PerkumpulanDarmaLaksana opens three study houses which provide free lessons and library to help students from poor families to get into their formal school track. It

also provides scholarships for students from poor families. Moreover, to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger (the second goal), this NGO provides empowerment programs for teenagers who do not continue their study. It provides classes on cooking, sewing and mechanics. It also provides free nutrition and vitamins for babies and children. Furthermore, to promote gender equality and empower women (the third goal), it offers free courses for women. They are taught how to start a home industry and to have and manage their income. To reduce child mortality and to improve maternal health (goals number 4 and 5), it opens a simple clinic where expecting women may come and check their pregnancy. It also offers free consultation about their pregnancy. To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (goal number 6) it has mobile clinic program in which it cooperates with doctors to visit to communities living in very distant areas and provide free medical check, treatment and medication for the poor local people. Then, to endure environmental sustainability, it cooperates with agricultural engineers to educate farmers about how to develop organic farms. It also cooperates with Ministry of Forestry to plant trees in deforested areas. Finally to develop a global partnership for development, it becomes a member of the international Carmelite NGO which has affiliated to United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI) and has got the consultative status from Economic and Social Affairs of United Nations (ECOSOC status). Through this, PerkumpulanDarmaLaksana may play an active role globally in the United Nations.

CONCLUSION

Indonesian Catholic Church as a part of the universal Catholic Church is committed to achieve the MDGs which have been agreed by Vatican which represents the universal Catholic Church in the United Nations. Following the Catholic social teaching, Indonesian Catholic Church finds that reaching MDGs is part of its vocation and mission to evangelize⁵³ the world. This understanding moves it to work hard to reach the MDGs by enforcing its competence, performance and

⁵³ To evangelize means to proclaim good news to the people. It is not the same as to christianize people.

influence toward the society and by involving the institutions and organizations under its sphere.

In reaching the MDGs Indonesian Catholic Church needs to work on both level: the spirit and the practice level. But since its tradition and historical fact, as a religious institution, Indonesian Catholic Church may only focus its role on providing the religious (spiritual) fundament for the movement to achieve the MDGs. The concrete actions on the field are handed to the Catholic foundations, religious congregations and Catholic faith based NGOs. They become the agents of Indonesian Catholic Church in doing the real actions with the people on the grass-root level. By doing this, Indonesian Catholic Church covers both the spirit and the practice level of the effort to reach the MDGs.

Regardless the achievement of Indonesia in reaching MDGs Indonesian Catholic Church has shown that it plays an active role in performing its commitments to participate to reach the MDGs. What has been done by Indonesian Catholic Church is not specifically for this religious institution. Other religious institutions may have similar programs to participate in the process of making the world better place for everybody.

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