Your Excellencies, Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings and peace in these very challenging times. We remain in solidarity with Nepal and parts of India and Bangladesh as they recover and rebuild after the devastating Earthquake and aftershocks. We are also very much in union with the suffering people, forced to migrate due to extreme conditions, poverty and human trafficking. We pray very much for all of our countries that we may not forget the saying of St Paul who exhorts us together with Pope Francis to ‘make hospitality our special care’ (Romans 12:13).

In many of our modern, urban societies we have lost the knack of hospitality and we worry about people coming to take our homes, jobs and comforts. We have lost sight of our humanity.

In this issue of ‘Laity we have a statement from the Business Leaders’ Conference called the “Vocation of the Business Leader”. Cardinal Turkson delivered the keynote address and provided the Catholic Social Teaching basis for ethical businesses and being a disciple of Christ. He based his talk on the document of the same name as the conference, produced by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, in 2012. Many shared their efforts to benefit the poor through business and create jobs as well as make profit.

We also share some other events and reflections and hope and pray that you keep well and safe as you labour in the Lord’s vineyard.

Laity

CURE our WORLD

Declaration

We, business leaders and Conference participants together with His Eminence Peter Cardinal K.A. Turkson, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, His Eminence Francis Xavier Cardinal Kriengsak Kovithavanit of Bangkok Archdiocese, Archbishop Louis Chammorns Santisukniran, Chairman of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Thailand and bishops of Thailand totalling 228 persons from 15 countries in Asia, Europe, and North America, participating in the first Asian Conference on the “Vocation of the Business Leader on New Evangelization”, having met in Bangkok, Thailand between 9 - 11 April 2015 and eager to inspire our business activity with the Christian faith and under the guidance

1. “In virtue of our baptism, we are Missionary Disciples and as agents of evangelization, are called to proclaim the faith by words and deeds in witness to Jesus Christ. We hereby accept our specific responsibility to demonstrate how faith in Christ gives meaning and hope to our lives and our communities, and we want to share our blessing with others. We are convinced that the person of Jesus Christ reveals who all people are and what their destiny is. Our work in business is the normal context in which we make this discernment.

2. Evangelization means rekindling within ourselves a burning enthusiasm and allowing ourselves to be filled with the ardour of the apostolic preaching that followed Pentecost. We must revive in ourselves the faith and determination of St. Paul who cried out “Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel” (1Cor 9:16).

3. Business leaders are supported and guided
by our Churches to live out the Gospel in the world. When Christian business leaders fail to live the Gospel in their organizations, their lives “conceal” rather than reveal the authentic face of God.

4. We believe that Christian Social Thought principles are a guide and inspiration for entrepreneurs, researchers and other economic agents to find a concrete way of putting the economy at the service of the common good and the construction of a better world focused on the centrality of the human person.

5. During these meetings we have seen, with satisfaction, many cases demonstrating that entrepreneurs can conduct business streamlining operations and achieving financial results that secure their sustainability, without limiting the persons making up the company or losing profit for all the stakeholders associated with them.

6. Therefore, we value the example of those who, under adverse global conditions, carry on their business with unyielding efficiency, effort, entrepreneurial spirit and quality risk management in order to overcome difficult situations and adapt their organizations to new demands and reality.

7. In this context, we believe that authentic Corporate Social Responsibility should focus on the human person, taking into account not only their material and human needs, but also the most transcendent and spiritual ideals. This should not only be the “Golden Rule” of the committed Christian businessperson, but the road that should be taken with conviction throughout the business community.

8. In our respective vocations as business leaders we adhere to the fundamental value of the dignity of every human person, without regard to age, gender, origin or other extraneous factors. Two principles by which we are empowered to express this profound respect for the human person are:

**Solidarity:**
Whereby we recognize in each other person ourselves, forming the bond of the common good guiding all our business decisions.

**Subsidiarity:**
Whereby we are left free from the unnecessary intervention of higher levels of social organization, to act upon the personal relations and knowledge we have to ensure the success, sustainability and profitability of the property and resources entrusted by the Lord to our stewardship.

9. And that this conviction be manifested through the formation of a Catholic Business Professional Group in every country.

10. And these groups be coached by common Asian Catholic Business Group, with representatives from every Asian country.

May the Virgin Mary proclaimed Mater Ecclesiae, Star of Evangelization, obtain for us, business leaders, through her heavenly intercession, the strength to be witness to Jesus Christ through our business activities in serving mankind and the world.

Agreed at Bangkok, Thailand, on the 11th of April, in the year of Our Lord 2015.

His Eminence Peter Cardinal K.A. Turkson, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace

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- You can refer to: [http://www.pcgp.it/dati/2012-05/04-999999/Vocation%20ENG2.pdf](http://www.pcgp.it/dati/2012-05/04-999999/Vocation%20ENG2.pdf) for the pcgp document.
- For presentations from the conference refer to weblink: [http://cureourworld.com/presentations.php](http://cureourworld.com/presentations.php)
Laity

Lay Leadership Training Programme:

North East India Regional Laity Council Training Programme was Conducted by: Wendy Louis, Executive Secretary, FABC Office of Laity and Family from 13-16 April, 2015. Organised by NE Regional Council Social Forum it was held in Guwahati.

The programme had three phases. The person of the leader and her/his relationship with Christ; The vision of the leader – pastoral focus; the platform for participation and growth of the laity in SCCs and other structures of the church with special focus on the particular role of the laity in the church and in the world.

Pictures of NE regional training

AsIPA Desk

AsIPA 7th General Assembly

Theme: “SCCs Living with People of different faiths and beliefs”
Dates: October 22nd (Wed) - 28th (Wed), 2015
Venue: Baan Phu Waan Pastoral Center, Samphran, Bangkok, Thailand

BECs (Basic Ecclesial Communities) in the Archdiocese of Thare-Nongseng, Thailand

Bibiana Joohyun Ro, Executive Secretary of AsIPA desk visited BECs in 5 parishes of the Archdiocese of Thare-Nongseng from 28 February to 2 March 2015 as a sort of follow-up of AsIPA Research Project with EAPI (East Asian Pastoral Institute) and preparation of VII AsIPA General Assembly in October, 2015.

BEC members of St. Joseph Parish with the Archdiocesan Team for BECs

Thailand. The Archdiocese of Thare-Nongseng under the dynamic leadership of Archbishop Louis Chamniem Santisukniran has formed and vitalized BECs in consistent continuation as the top pastoral priority since 2006. As of 2014, in the Archdiocese about 420 BECs in 77 parishes have grown up with the active participation of the laity. They meet once a month, do gospel sharing and engage in actions in the BECs and their neighborhood such as ‘Rice Field Project,’ ‘Organic Gardening,’ ‘Running Turkey Farm and Restaurant,’ ‘Common Ownership for Grocery Shop,’ and ‘Credit Union’ as well as visiting the sick, helping one another, preparing the Sunday mass and cleaning the parish and neighborhood. Many BECs surrounded by Buddhists have been involved in interfaith dialogue in various ways in their daily life like manifestation of love to neighbors.

The guidance and commitment of the archdiocesan and regional teams for BECs have had an important role to implement a vision of the ‘new way of being Church’ and empower the laity to take part in the mission of the Church through BECs in the Archdiocese. The BECs have expanded to prisoners, students and employees in the school, minor seminary and the convent of religious sisters. Fr. Thany Srion, Director of the Archdiocesan team for SCCs said that the Archdiocesan/Parish Pastoral Councils are based on BECs, many parishes have BEC core teams and most of archdiocesan priests are convinced of a vision of BECs through the 9 years of efforts to nourish BECs. The BECs in the Archdiocese show a hope for the Church that the ‘communion of communities’ and a participatory

BEC leaders of St. John Bosco Parish with the Archdiocesan Team for BECs

Continued on page 4
AsIPA Workshops in Myanmar

The Laity Commission (LC) of CBCM under the guidance of Bishop Lucius Hre Kung, Chairman of LC and the diocese of Hakha, with the cooperation of the AsIPA Resource Team (Ms. Cora Mateo, Taiwan, Fr. Albert Rosario Rabe, Philippines and Bibiana Joohyun Ro, Korea) completed the AsIPA workshops successfully in Myanmar at national and regional levels. The AsIPA team has been conducting workshops in Myanmar since 1995. The main topics of this workshop were: a vision of the Church in Asia as a participatory Church, Pastoral Focus, 7 Steps Gospel Sharing, BECs/SCCs (Basic Ecclesial Community/Small Christian Communities), Leadership using AsIPA Texts and Pastoral Sharing. Participants were convinced that the Catholic Church of Myanmar needs today to be a participatory Church. They could be more aware of the important role of BECs/SCCs (centred on the word of God) in the mission of the Church.

- The National AsIPA Workshop (April 7-11; the Center of CBCM in Yangon): 37 participants from 12 Arch/dioceeses (4 bishops from Myitkyina, Banmaw, Kalay and Hakha, 33 diocesan representatives);

The participants enthusiastically expressed their commitment to conduct the AsIPA workshop in their respective dioceses soon. The bishops present were also committed to implement a vision of BECs through AsIPA as a whole. Cardinal Charles Bo presided the Closing Mass and listened to the participants’ testimony on the workshop and encouraged them to move forward. As a follow-up of the workshop, the diocesan representatives and 4 bishops had a meeting on 10 April. As a result of the meeting, the National Team of AsIPA was formed composing of 5 members from 5 Arch/dioceeses. It was also decided to translate the remaining AsIPA Texts from English into Burmese within 2015. The first meeting of the National Team of AsIPA hopefully with all diocesan representatives for BECs will gather together in order to discuss and plan AsIPA activities in Myanmar for the next three years (2016-2018).

- The AsIPA Workshop for Kalay and Hakha dioceses (April 13-17, Bishop’s Compound in Kalay): 70 participants (2 bishops, 68 representatives);

- The BECs/AsIPA Workshop for Myitkyina and Banmaw dioceses (April 19-24, Pastoral Center of Myitkyina): 50 participants (36 from Myitkyina and 14 from Banmaw);

- As a result of the Regional AsIPA Workshops, a diocesan team for BECs in Kalay, Hakha and Myitkyina dioceses were formed with the approval of bishops.

Fr. Lucas Tha Ling Sum, Executive Secretary of the National Team of AsIPA, remarked through BECs in Integral Pastoral Approach “I hope that the Church in Myanmar becomes a Church that is centered on Jesus, builds a participatory community and carries on the mission of Jesus in the world.”

- Reported by Fr. Lucas Tha Ling Sum (Executive Secretary of the National Team of AsIPA, Hakha Diocese) and Fr. Peter Hka Aung Tu (Parish Priest and BEC team member of Myitkyina)

- Edited by Bibiana Joo- Hyun Ro, Executive Secretary of AsIPA Desk
We are very often confronted by the negative aspects of Women’s Issues - most often violence and inequality which continue unabated. In this issue of “Lathy” I am highlighting an article which emphasises the role of women in the building of peace. In a survey conducted and published in India in 2010, called “Women For Peace” a large majority of the respondents expressed their belief that women have a unique role to play in the building of peace. Opportunities are less often provided as also seen. In this book of 115 pages you will find the detailed results of the survey and a list called “Learning the Ways for Peace” by Archbishop Thomas Menamparambil. For more details on this study: the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India, CBCI Commission for Women. This survey was conducted and written by Sr Lilly Francis SMMI and published in 2010.

Email: comwomenchci@gmail.com

Extracts from Women, Peace & the Future
Personal Reminiscences
by Elise Boulding

Born in 1920 in Norway. Joined the Quakers at 21 years of age. Died in June 2010. In 1973 she spent a year in retreat in a mountain cabin outside Boulder, CO, where she began writing her seminal work on women, The Underside of History, a View of Women Through Time. Her last book, Cultures of Peace: the Hidden Side of History, is a celebration of the many ways peace is made in everyday places and hidden spaces and its writing was a culmination of her life’s work.

Boulding says, “Now I am seventy-eight, widowed five years, retired from teaching at Dartmouth for fourteen years, delighting in the families of my five children, especially the sixteen grandchildren - and here I am, still making links, networking. I find today that the linking of what goes on among human beings in family and community with what goes on in the larger civil society, in the 185 states that make up the UN, in the UN itself, and in the planetary biosphere of which we are a small part, is more important than ever. We have tried so hard, and achieved so little, Alva Myrdal, in her most difficult days with the Disarmament Committee, would say, “to give up is not worthy of human beings.”

Elise Boulding asked herself this very important question as a mother all those years ago: “How do we raise our kids to be peacemakers?” … We were a group of activist young mothers raising kids between the late 1940s and the mid-1960s. We had gotten through the war years with husbands in jail or in civilian public service camps or otherwise protesting the war. The war was over, but the nuclear threat did not go away. How to prevent a replay of the past, and raise a generation that would do things differently? … We were all full-time homemakers, so the rearing of peacemakers and creating peaceful community environments fell to us. We put as much intensive thought (and prayer) and daily effort into that work over those two decades as ever we later put into getting mid-life advanced degrees and becoming teachers, community developers, and other kinds of professionals…. What energy was unleashed as we began to find out what we could do in the public sphere just by doing it! There were multiple energy streams. One was conventional politics. No one was more surprised than I to find myself running as a peace candidate from our Michigan congressional district in 1966. Another stream led from all-women’s teams circling the globe during the 1965 UN International Cooperation Year, on to the 1975 UN International Women’s Conference in Mexico, and to the subsequent series of UN international women’s conferences and their grassroots counterparts in each country, ever focused on the themes of equality, development, and peace. Women’s NGOs came into their own. The long slow climb of women into political life from city council to state legislature to national parliament to UN ambassadorships had begun.

Still another energy stream led women like myself into the social sciences and communication professions. In 1967 the Bouldings moved from Michigan to Colorado (our youngest then starting seventh grade, our oldest in college) and I became a professor of sociology and peace studies. By the early 1970s every social science association had a committee on the participation of women—.

Peace research and peace studies emerged as a separate discipline in the social sciences and this became a special energy stream for women - one that I was part of from the beginning. … Another stream of women's energy went into the new futures studies movement. … I wanted to get out the message that developing mental images of a peaceful world could help set in motion social processes to realize it. … Women, outside the centers of power, envisioned creative egalitarian futures in which people lived at peace with one another and with nature, in contrast to the high-tech futures more often described by men.

… There are elements of a culture of peaceableness, of creative dealing with difference, at each level of life. Even if that culture is weak and sometimes rendered nearly invisible by the cultures of violence and war, we must still remember, as Kenneth Boulding liked to point, “What exists is possible.” That is why I am writing about that culture of peace and what can help it to grow stronger. I write in the hope that it will encourage the envisioning and empowered action by my younger sisters and brothers that can bring us into a more peaceful twenty-first century.

[This article first appeared in the November-December, 1998 issue of Fellowship, published by the Fellowship of Reconciliation.]
The COYA (Catholic Organizations for Youth in Asia) has been working hand in hand with the FABC-OLF-Youth Desk for quite a long time. In Asian and international events like the Asian Youth Days and Asian Youth Gatherings, the COYA assisted the Youth Desk very actively in the past. The Bishop in Charge of the Youth Desk and its Executive Secretary have been with the COYA members, accompanying them as ‘Spiritual Guide’. We are happy that the COYA has accepted our invitation to share its Mission-Vision-Objectives with the young brothers and sisters of Asia through our newsletter. We thank the COYA members to send us the article and photos.

Father Patrick Simon Gomes
Executive Secretary, FABC-OLF-Youth Desk

Catholic Organizations for Youth In Asia (COYA)

The Catholic Organizations for Youth in Asia (COYA) is a network consisting of Catholic lay organizations / eccleral movements working for/with and by the youth in Asia. Each movement has its specific calling and mission to develop Catholic and human values through living, reflecting and acting in the social and spiritual dimension of the Church and the society, especially in the context of Asia. COYA collaborates closely with the Federation of Asian Bishop’s Conferences-Office of the Laity and Family-Youth Desk (FABC OLF-YD), and with the local Church. Catholic Organizations for Youth in Asia living the spirituality of ecclesial communion and becoming effective witnesses of the Word.

What is our Vision?
Catholic Organizations for Youth in Asia living the spirituality of ecclesial communion and becoming effective witnesses of the Word.

What is our Mission?
We, the member organizations of COYA, in prayerful communion with each other commit to:

- Encourage building of relationships and collaboration between member organizations, movements and institutions that work with young people and the local church, youth commissions and offices.
- Raise awareness and promote dialogue on youth evangelization and formation.
- Support efforts to address societal concerns especially issues affecting the youth.
- Support the development of Christ-centred youth ministries.

Spirituality of Communion
As Catholic organizations working with youth in Asia we respond to the call of Jesus “to be one with the Father” through the Word and Eucharist so that we ourselves can be witnesses of this spirituality of communion:
We commune in Faith as children of one heavenly Father.
(John 17:21)

We commune as Disciples with Mary as on the first Pentecost.
(Acts 2)

We commune in Charism as co-workers in the kingdom of God.
(1 Cor 12:8, Galatians 5:22)

We commune in Youth Ministry as co-apostles in witnessing the Gospel to the world.
(Mark 16:15)

We commune in Community as one Apostolic Church, like the early Christians, being one in heart and soul.
(Acts 4:32)

Annual Living the Pentecost
To live out the spirituality of communion, COYA holds its annual assembly of all member organizations around the feast of Pentecost in any Asian country agreed upon.

This year, the Pentecost meeting is at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center in Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam hosted by the Vietnam Young Catholic Students (VYCS).

The objectives are to:
Celebrate the Pentecost as a community of organizations in Asia: look deeper into our mission/call as joyful evangelizers in Asia; discover how different organizations responded to the challenges posed by the Holy Father in the Joy of the Gospel; and plan how we can collaborate together until the 10th year anniversary of COYA.

The host organization shared their preparatory experiences and reflections. It is the first time of VYCS to host an international meeting they wanted to do their best to take this chance to be a small bridge among the young handsome and beautiful sons and daughters of God and do something meaningful.

Besides preparing the “visible tasks” for the COYA meetings, they also noticed the “invisible tasks” which are preparations for God for Him to join us. Everyone believes that with God everything is possible. They identified two (2) steps for them to prepare: The first one is to celebrate the Pentecost Sunday Mass together to ask the strength and light from The Holy Spirit. The second is take time to go to the confession and prepare themselves to welcome the Holy Spirit who is the best “guide” for us.

The main celebrant of the Opening Mass was Fr. Antonio Tanchoco, CICM. Looking at our present situation in Asia and in Vietnam, he shared about how Christianity is at its best when there is persecution. He also shared that we as organizations have many gifts and when we bring them together, we become one church.

The Living the Pentecost 2015 is blessed with the presence of Cardinal John the Baptist of Saigon Diocese who gave the first talk. Cardinal shared about how to live out the Joy of the Gospel followed by a question and answer portion with the different youth organizations.

The Chairman of The Youth Desk, Bishop Bong Baylon, will deliver his talk about missionary discipleship in Asia during the COYA DAY on June 4, 2015. About 200 people from different organizations around Saigon will come and celebrate Pentecost together.

Next year, COYA celebrates its 10th year of communion with one another. Ideas about how to celebrate it are carefully brainstormed by the different organizations present and will be finalized soon with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.