

FROM THE SERVANT GENERAL

THE WAY FORWARD IN CHRIST

(Part 4)

RECONCILIATION AND REUNIFICATION? LOOKING AT *CARITAS IN VERITATE*

November 24, 2009

Now that CFC-IC has let go of GK, people ask: can the two CFCs now get back together?

First, it has to be clarified if indeed CFC-IC and GK have split. Both sides claim that they have not and in fact that they will intensify collaboration.

Second, the crisis and split were not all about the veering away of GK. Perhaps the even greater factor that caused the split was the unchristian actions of the IC.

Thirdly, I have always maintained that we are open to reconciliation and even reunification, if that is what the Lord wills. But if it is to be of the Lord, then it has to be based on truth and justice.

In this regard, let us look to Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*, to give us proper wisdom and guidance.

This encyclical, issued in June 2009, is on integral human development in charity and truth. The introduction gives general principles, and these can help us in seeing the whole question of reconciliation or reunification more clearly.

It would be a triumph of Christian love if the two CFCs reunited. However, as Pope Benedict XVI says, such love must be based on, and is inseparable from, truth and justice.

Love and Truth

The pope clearly links charity to truth.

- “Hence the need to link charity with truth not only in the sequence, pointed out by Saint Paul, of *veritas in caritate* (Eph 4:15), but also in the inverse and complementary sequence of *caritas in veritate*. Truth needs to be sought, found and expressed within the “economy” of charity, but charity in its turn needs to be understood, confirmed and practised in the light of truth.” (#2)
- “*Only in truth does charity shine forth*, only in truth can charity be authentically lived. Truth is the light that gives meaning and value to charity. Without truth, charity degenerates into sentimentality.” (#3)
- “*Truth*, in fact, is *logos* which creates *dia-logos*, and hence communication and communion.” (#4)

But the CFC-IC has often not told the truth.

- The IC claimed it had 7 pillars after the split. But it knew nothing about the 7th pillar, the Special Ministries, and even today has nothing on this so-called pillar.
- The IC claimed it was in 160 countries after the split, and even now claims it is in 161 countries after adding a new country. But in truth it is probably in only 60-70 countries. There are many claimed countries where CFC-IC is not present, such as, to name just a few: Cameroon, Namibia, the 20 countries of Latin America except for one, Slovenia, Russia, etc.
- The IC misrepresented the statements of the CFC Spiritual Director, Bp Gabriel Reyes, more than once.

- The IC claims CFC-FFL is recognized only by the bishop of Antipolo, even when it was already present in over 30 dioceses in the Philippines. The official recognition of CFC-FFL by the CBCP finally puts an end to this lie.
- The IC claims their CFC is the legal CFC, even suing CFC-FFL in court over the name. They ignore the reality that CFC-FFL's corporation, CFCFI, was established in 1984, while their corporation, CFCGMFI, was established only 9 years later, in 1993. If anyone is to sue anyone over the name, it should be we who should sue them.
- The IC claims we left CFC. The truth is we left the corporation of CFC (actually, because we were being kicked out), but we never left CFC, and in fact, we have restored the authentic CFC, true to its charism and led by its founder.
- The IC made many false accusations against us, especially against me, not the least of which is that I stole millions from CFC.

If there is to be reconciliation or reunification, there should be first of all a recognition of what is true. The pope stresses: "To defend the truth, to articulate it with humility and conviction, and to bear witness to it in life are therefore exacting and indispensable forms of charity. Charity, in fact, 'rejoices in the truth' (1 Cor 13:6)." (#1)

Love and Justice

The pope further links charity to justice.

- "Charity never lacks justice, which prompts us to give the other what is 'his', what is due to him by reason of his being or his acting." (#6)
- "If we love others with charity, then first of all we are just towards them. Not only is justice not extraneous to charity, not only is it not an alternative or parallel path to charity: justice is inseparable from charity, and intrinsic to it. Justice is the primary way of charity or, in Paul VI's words, 'the minimum measure' of it" (#6)
- "charity demands justice: recognition and respect for the legitimate rights of individuals and peoples." (#6)

But the IC has been guilty of injustices.

- The IC has sued CFC-FFL in the Philippines, the USA and Canada over the name "CFC." This is despite the CBCP and many bishops in other countries officially recognizing us. Aside from being unjust, this is scandalous, this is unbiblical, and this is a waste of God's money (and their members' tithes).
- The IC has not paid the retirement benefits of over 20 full-time pastoral workers who resigned or retired due to principle from CFC after the split.
- The IC has not returned the bridge funds that it borrowed from CFC members, simply because these brethren are with CFC-FFL.
- The IC and GK have not completed many villages that have been fully funded. One prime example is the Int'l GK Village. This is despite the appeal of the beneficiaries themselves. Is it because they aligned with CFC-FFL? This is great injustice to the poor.

If there is to be reconciliation or reunification, there must first of all be justice.

Our posture

Again, I am open to reconciliation and reunification. But it has to be based on truth and justice. This is true charity.

On the other hand, there is nothing that hinders us from loving our brethren in CFC-IC-GK. In fact, this has been our posture from the time of the split.

- Even though they veered away while we restored the authentic charism and call of CFC, we still look on them as CFC.
- Even though legally we have prior right to the name CFC, we do not try to deprive them of the use of the name.
- Even though they have maligned us and considered us as enemies, we have not retaliated in kind and have offered our hands in friendship and brotherhood.

As the pope says, "On the one hand, charity demands justice On the other hand, charity transcends justice and completes it in the logic of giving and forgiving." (#6)

I have forgiven my brethren in the IC, even though there has been no repentance or asking for forgiveness. I hold no rancor in my heart.

But if we are to be truly reconciled, this should be based on truth and justice.

Further, insistence on truth and justice is for the good of our brethren in CFC-IC-GK. We should desire that they not remain in untruth and injustice. As the pope says, "To love someone is to desire that person's good and to take effective steps to secure it." (#7).

I pray for the Lord's blessings upon both CFCs.

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