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The Indonesian Catholic Church 50 years after Vatican II: seven models of church life

Emanuel Pranawa Dhatu Martasudjita

The significance and influence of the Second Vatican Council in respect of the reform of the Catholic Church are no longer in dispute. The issue now at stake is how the Vatican II documents are understood and implemented in each church community. This article is the result of research on the significance and implementation of the Council's thinking in the Indonesian Catholic Church (ICC) in the past 50 years. It begins with observations on ICC's history and social context, then highlights the main use of conciliar documents in the reforms it has undertaken. Seven models of church life, illustrative of the implementation of Vatican II, are described. Although these models cannot comprehensively reveal all the realities of the ICC, they are seen as portraying it as it is today, at the point from which its future course may be worked out.

Keywords: Indonesia; Indonesian Catholic Church; models of the Catholic Church; Vatican II; implementation of Vatican II; history of salvation; sacrament of salvation; triple dialogue

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council (1962–65), the Faculty of Theology of Sanata Dharma University published a book in Indonesian, entitled *Mozaik Gereja Katolik Indonesia – 50 Tahun Pasca Konsili Vatikan II* [The mosaic of the Indonesian Catholic Church – 50 years after Vatican II].¹ This book contains articles written by almost all the Indonesian Catholic Church (ICC) bishops or their representatives and helps the reader to get a more thorough view of the implementation of Vatican II in the ICC in the past 50 years. To complement the bishops' articles, the roles of Indonesian bishops in the Council are also discussed. The book ends with the present author's epilogue, containing the models of church to be found in Indonesia.² In order to reach a wider range of readers, especially those who speak English, as well as to introduce the ICC to a wider audience, I have rewritten the epilogue for publication here, with some adjustment to the organisation and material it contains.

In the first part of *The Mosaic of the ICC*, there is a discussion on the role of Indonesian bishops in the Council. Several of them were involved in the preparatory commission; for example, Mgr A. Soegijapranata SJ, Archbishop of Semarang, was a member of the *Commissio Centralis*, which was a *Commissio Praeparatoria*,³ and Mgr Van Bekkum, Bishop of Ruteng, was a member of the *Commissio de Sacra Liturgia*.⁴ They were also

¹Edited by Indra Sanjaya and Purwanto. Hereafter referred to as *The Mosaic of the ICC*.

²Martasudjita, 'Model-Model Gereja di Indonesia Pasca Konsili Vatikan II: Sebuah Epilog'.

³See Rosariyanto, 'Keterlibatan Para Uskup Indonesia dalam Konsili Vatikan II', 20.

⁴Ibid., 20–1.

involved in the *Commissio de Ecclesia*, where, *inter alia*, they presented interventions, on the concept of clerical celibacy and on marriage as a contract, and on the need for inculturation in the formation of local native priests.⁵ Several Indonesian bishops questioned the celibacy requirement in certain cultural contexts and conditions.⁶ Members of the Indonesian delegation were also active in contributing their views on the importance of religious freedom as a human right, as reflected in the document *Dignitatis Humanae*.⁷

The main content of *The Mosaic of the ICC* deals with the ICC's implementation of the Council's thinking during the last 50 years from the perspectives of the Indonesian bishops. In general, they note very positive results arising from the renewal stimulated by Vatican II and significant development in the field of ecclesiology, in the description of the Church as the people of God and particularly in the active participation of the laity in all aspects of church life. In addition, the spirit of dialogue and openness launched by the Council has been adopted by ICC, placed as it is in the midst of social, religious and cultural plurality. Indonesian bishops have also paid substantial attention to the issue of liturgical inculturation, which has been implemented in spirit but is unfortunately still spontaneous in nature rather than cultivated in an integrated and interdisciplinary manner.

The use of the words 'models of church life' in the title of this article of course reminds us of Avery Dulles's *Models of the Church*. Dulles believed that the method of using models 'can have great value in helping people to get beyond the limitations of their own particular outlook, and to enter into fruitful conversation with others having a fundamentally different mentality'.⁸ Borrowing the term *models of the Church*, I aim to set out a more complete picture of the ICC. The article will by no means cover its entire experience: ICC's dynamics within the last 50 years have been very complex and varied. However, I hope that the information below may be useful to those who are interested in the Church in Indonesia.

Before discussing church models, I present the picture of a church located in the country with the biggest Muslim population in the world. I then explain the main significance of Vatican II for the ICC and give a contemporary overview of how it is today, using the seven models already mentioned, from which I then reflect on future possibilities for the ICC.

An overview of the ICC

The ICC is present in a nation that lives in the largest archipelagic country in the world. Indonesia geographically consists of 17,504 islands, spreading as far as 5000 kilometres from Sabang in Northern Sumatra down to Merauke in Southeastern Papua, with a total area of 1,910,931.32 (sq. km).⁹ The official data issued by *Statistics Indonesia* in 2012 state that, according to the census conducted in 2010, the population in Indonesia had reached 237,641,326.¹⁰ It has exceeded 250 million since then. The Indonesian people are a large community comprising no less than 1128 ethnic groups. There are 500 local languages

⁵Ibid., 21.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., 22.

⁸See the Introduction to Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 12.

⁹Based on the information of *Statistical Yearbook of Indonesia 2012* compiled by the Central Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Indonesia (BPS – [Statistics Indonesia](#)), 9.

¹⁰Ibid., 78.

spoken by different groups of people.¹¹ Fortunately, as early as the declaration of independence on 17 August 1945, the founding fathers of Indonesia declared Indonesia a united republic, with five basic state principles (belief in the one and only God; just and civilised humanity; the unity of Indonesia; democracy guided by inner wisdom in the unanimity arising from deliberations amongst representatives; and social justice for the whole people of Indonesia), known as *Pancasila*, and with Indonesian as the national language and the means of unifying this pluralist and diverse nation.

Compared with the Muslim majority of 87.18%,¹² Catholics make up only 2.91% of the population, or 6,907,873 people. Protestants make up 6.96%, while Buddhists, Hindus, followers of Confucianism, and other minor belief systems form even smaller percentages. The Catholic Church in Indonesia is truly a small group within the plurality of Indonesian society with its religious, cultural, and social diversity. Evangelisation in Indonesia has had a long history. According to historical records, based on the testimony of the historian *Haykh Abu Salih al-Armini*, Christianity entered Indonesian territory in the seventh century. In an area called Fansur or Pancur near Barus, Tapanuli Sumatra, there were many Christian churches, probably Nestorian.¹³ However, there is no further record of the development of Catholic Church history until the re-emergence of its missions at the end of the fifteenth or the beginning of the sixteenth century.

In a similar way to that of other major religions, Catholicism entered Indonesia by means of trade. In the sixteenth century, missionaries, led by St Francis Xavier from Portugal-Spain,¹⁴ came to the Moluccas islands, Eastern Indonesia, to carry out the mission of spreading the gospel. However, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Protestant Dutch took over Spain and Portugal's control of this territory, through their trading company, the *Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC). This region later developed into the Dutch East Indies, now known as Indonesia. The development of Catholicism was prevented, even prohibited, during this period, whilst the VOC supported the development of Protestantism. After the French Revolution in 1789, the political situation in the Netherlands changed, and, in 1799, the VOC was dissolved. From the beginning of the nineteenth century, Catholics gained the freedom to practise their religion in the Netherlands and all its colonies, including Indonesia. Catholic missions were thereafter conducted by missionaries who came mainly from the Netherlands. After a long and difficult struggle, the growth of the ICC was marked by the baptism of local people and the ordination of Indonesian native priests. In 1940 Mgr Albertus Soegijapranata, SJ, was ordained as the first Indonesian native bishop, indicating the success of Catholic evangelisation in Indonesia. Although ICC continues to develop, it remains a small and not well-known group, probably because the Christian faith was introduced by Dutch missionaries who were more often seen as colonisers.

¹¹There is a problem in calculating the number of local languages in Indonesia. According to the Head of Language Development, Ministry of Education and Culture (*Kemendikbud*), Mahsun, based on research conducted in 2012, there are 546 languages and sublanguages in Indonesia. See *Kompas*, September 1, 2012. <http://www.kompas.com/read/2012/09/01/12030360/Mau.Tahu.Jumlah.Ragam.Bahasa.di.Indonesia>

¹²Figures based on the 2010 census conducted by BPS – Statistics Indonesia, see *Penduduk Menurut Wilayah dan Agama yang Dianut, Sensus Penduduk 2010* [Population by region and religion, population census 2010]. <http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321>.

¹³According to Bakker, 'Umat Katolik Perintis di Indonesia', 27–9.

¹⁴Boelaars, *Indonesianisasi – Dari Gereja Katolik di Indonesia Menjadi Gereja Katolik Indonesia*, 61–7.

Compared with other Catholic Churches in Asia where Catholics are generally in the minority, the minority status of ICC is not exceptional. It may be said that Catholicism is still considered a foreign religion. According to Felix Wilfred, this view has arisen not only because of the way the religion was brought into the continent but because the churches in Asia generally keep themselves apart from the mainstream of the life of the people, their history, struggles and dreams.¹⁵ Given this context, the Catholic Churches in Asia now realise that they must be involved and integrated into Asian cultures.

The main significance of Vatican II for the ICC

We are grateful that the hierarchy of the ICC was established (in 1961) before Vatican II.¹⁶ At that time, there were 25 dioceses in all. Now, 50 years after the Council, there are 37 dioceses spread across the whole archipelagic nation of Indonesia.¹⁷ The ICC was recognised as a self-reliant Church, hence its bishops were allowed to participate fully in the Council, and it has enthusiastically implemented Vatican II resolutions, meeting very few obstacles, probably because the Catholic Church in Indonesia is still considered young and ‘there are almost no Catholics who can still refer to the pre-Vatican II traditions’.¹⁸ In this respect, the reception of Vatican II has been very good and smooth.

The impact of the Council on the ICC may be seen in three significant ways. First, the Christology of Vatican II is able to provide norms and basic guidelines for the life and development of ICC. This Christology is clearly evident in various Vatican II documents, for example in the first words of the dogmatic constitution *Lumen Gentium* (LG 1): ‘*Lumen Gentium Christus est*’. Christ is the light for every nation while the Church is only the sacrament, that is, the symbol and means of God’s salvation, which is manifested in Christ (LG 1, 9, 48). Christ as the centre of faith has a very important role in the ICC, which has to deal with other religions in Indonesia. This fundamental relation to Jesus Christ has guaranteed the course of the ICC to live up to the faith of the apostles and the tradition of the universal Church.

Secondly, the communion structure of Vatican II has served as the foundation for ICC’s life as a local church, which presents the universal Church.¹⁹ Communion, which is the main theme of Vatican II ecclesiology, points specifically to the Trinity. This means that the Church is ‘a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit’ (LG 4). The understanding of the Church as a community built on the Trinity shows that the nature of the Church is grounded in its relation with the Trinity, as a people which participates in God the Father’s salvation through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.

¹⁵Wilfred, ‘The Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences (FABC) – Orientation, Challenges and Impact’, xxiv. In one sense, Wilfred’s view is strengthened by the reality of Christian symbols, some of which are influenced by Western symbols. Hence, for some Indonesians or Asian cultures, the symbols seem strange.

¹⁶According to Pope John XXIII’s decree *Quod Christus Adorandus*, January 3, 1961, the episcopal hierarchy of Indonesia consists of six archdioceses and 19 dioceses. See Widiastono and Mardiatmadja, *Gereja Katolik Indonesia Mengarungi Zaman – Refleksi Keuskupan Agung Jakarta*, 64. In 2013 the episcopal hierarchy of Indonesia had developed into 10 archdioceses and 27 dioceses.

¹⁷The 37 dioceses consist of two archdioceses with four dioceses in Sumatra Island; two archdioceses with five dioceses in Java Island; two archdioceses with six dioceses in Borneo Island; one archdiocese with two dioceses in Sulawesi Island and the Ambon Archipelago; two archdioceses with six dioceses in the East Nusa Tenggara Archipelago; and one archdiocese with four dioceses in West Papua.

¹⁸Boelaars, *Indonesianisasi – Dari Gereja Katolik di Indonesia Menjadi Gereja Katolik Indonesia*, 153.

¹⁹Cf. Neuner: ‘Die Communio-Struktur der Kirche wird in der Theologie der Ortskirche ausdrücklich hervorgehoben’, in ‘Ekklesiologie – Die Lehre von der Kirche’, 522.

Therefore, wherever believers under a bishop's oversight congregate to hold the Eucharist as the celebration of God's salvation, the whole Church emerges.²⁰ The implication is that a local congregation led by a bishop, as is the case of the Catholic Church in Indonesia, is a true Church and it has made the Church of Christ come into being. As Vatican II teaches:

The individual bishop, however, is the visible principle and foundation of unity in his particular church, fashioned after the model of the universal Church. In and from such individual churches there comes into being the one and only Catholic Church. (LG 23)

This self-awareness as Christ's Church motivates the ICC to be responsible for its own faith and actively to spread it among the Indonesian people.

Thirdly, the spirit and soul of Vatican II, pastoral in nature,²¹ have inspired and reinforced the ICC to be active in carrying out all aspects of dialogue with the Indonesian nation and culture. The Council agreed that 'the Church stands forth as a sign of that brotherliness which allows honest dialogue and invigorates it'.²² ICC has focused on active participation in dialogues, as has the Catholic Church throughout Asia, making dialogue an important keyword throughout the region.²³ The 1990 Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) proposed the term *triple dialogue* to summarise the potential aspects which should serve as the focus of church dialogues with various religions, various cultures, and the large number of poor people.²⁴ Given the degree of religious and cultural plurality, as well as the substantial number of the poor, dialogues are essential in all three areas and have been characteristic of ICC practice up to the present time.

Seven models of the ICC

The seven models by which I categorise the ICC cannot be separated from one another and are not mutually exclusive. They can be found simultaneously in a single diocese. It may also happen that each diocese emphasises and prioritises some models without putting aside the others. These seven models may be further categorised into two groups: *ad intra* Church (the first to the third models) and *ad extra* Church (the fourth to the seventh models). The order of presentation does not imply prioritisation in the discussion, but is intended merely to facilitate the categorisation of these two groups.

Model 1: The Church that builds mystical communion

One of the basic themes, possibly even the main theme of Vatican II ecclesiology, is indicated by the term '*communio*'.²⁵ Though this term is not frequently used in the Council

²⁰See *Lumen Gentium*, 26: 'In any community existing around an altar, under the sacred ministry of the bishop, there is manifested a symbol of that charity and unity of the Mystical Body, without which there can be no salvation. In these communities, though frequently small and poor, or living far from any other, Christ is present. By virtue of Him the one, holy catholic, and apostolic Church gathers together. For the partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ does nothing other than transform us into that we consume.'

²¹The pastoral principle of Vatican II emerged from Pope John XXIII himself. See Alberigo, 'Transition to a New Age', 588–9.

²²*Gaudium et Spes* (GS), 92.

²³FABC, Fourth Plenary Assembly, 'The Vocation and Mission of the Laity in the Church and in the World of Asia, Statement of the Assembly', 181.

²⁴FABC, Sixth Plenary Assembly, 'Christian Discipleship in Asia Today: Service to Life, Statement of the Assembly', 144.

²⁵See Kasper, *Theologie und Kirche*, 273.

documents, it nevertheless expresses a central idea.²⁶ What is interesting is that, at the beginning, the discussion on *communio* was not meant to relate to the organisation of the Church, but to the nature of the Church which this Council calls the Mystery of the Church.²⁷ This is shown in the title of the first chapter of *Lumen Gentium*, which is 'The Mystery of the Church'. It was necessary to put forward this understanding, in order to balance the concept of the Church which, in the previous three centuries, had emphasised its physical aspect and its structural hierarchy only. By using this title, the Council Fathers intended to emphasise that all discussions on every aspect of the Church – the people, the hierarchy, the laity and the religious, the call of the whole Church to holiness and so on – should start with the nature of the Church as a mystery, that is, its participation in the communion of the Trinity. This means that every movement in the *ad intra* as well as the *ad extra* Church must start from the Church communion, based on the communion with the Trinity. In this sense, Church communion is a mystical communion, the communion with God.

The understanding and implementation of this model of the Church as a mystical communion has been developed in many dioceses in Indonesia. *Communio* has become the vision of some dioceses. The ICC is the communion of the disciples of Jesus Christ who appreciate brotherhood bound in love. In particular, the establishment of base communities has received considerable attention from many dioceses in Indonesia, particularly from the concept of base community, introduced as the theme of the General Session of the ICC in 2000.²⁸

One of the primary ways to build this mystical communion is the Indonesian dioceses' serious concern with the liturgy. The implementation of Vatican II in the liturgy of the Catholic Church has gone well and has received a warm welcome from all Indonesian Catholics. Many Catholics, though not all, attend the celebration of the Eucharist on Sundays. The efforts made by the dioceses in the past decade in devotions such as Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration and the Eucharistic Congress of the Dioceses have helped Catholics to live up to their faith. Meanwhile, the devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary has become a prominent popular devotion in all Indonesian dioceses.

A prominent and urgent issue is of course concern for inculturation in the liturgy. In considering the norms for liturgical inculturation, many Indonesian dioceses have tried to celebrate the liturgy in a way which is relevant and provides answers to the actual problems faced by the people. The cultural richness and religious experiences of various ethnic groups in Indonesia need to be accommodated and integrated into the development of good and healthy inculturation in liturgy. For example, the liturgical inculturation of marriage in the ICC is to be seen in the ritual of *sungkeman*,²⁹ included in the matrimonial liturgy and performed before the bride's and the groom's parents as a request for their blessings. In addition, the rite of Christian marriage during the Mass can be celebrated in the atmosphere of the local culture, such as in Java: the use of the *gamelan* music and Javanese liturgical songs, Javanese traditional dresses worn by the spouses and their families as well as the Javanese-style altar decoration. More effort is certainly needed on inculturation that involves all parties and experts within the co-ordination of the church

²⁶Ibid., 275.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸See overall theme of the General Session of the ICC in 2000: 'Memberdayakan Komunitas Basis Menuju Indonesia Baru' [Empowering base community in new Indonesia].

²⁹*Sungkeman* is a way to respect an elder by kneeling and bowing in front of them.

hierarchy. Present inculturation developments often seem to arise spontaneously and to belong to certain priests or certain Catholic communities only.

Model 2: The Church as the People of God manifested in the Body of Christ

Lumen Gentium understands the existence of the Church within the concept of the history of God's salvation. In this sense, Jesus Christ carries out God's salvation in the Holy Spirit. Then, the Church is called 'a kind of sacrament of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind' (LG 1). The Church is only the sacrament of God's salvation that is accomplished in Christ for the world.

The Church as sacrament is also the Body of Christ (LG 7). The ICC is the People of God becoming the Body of Christ. This picture is clearly biblical as stated in St Paul's letters. From the point of view of the Church as the Body of Christ, various service functions and various charismata or gifts are meant 'for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ' (Eph. 4.12). In this sense, all Church movements are determined and directed by Jesus Christ, who is the Head (Eph. 4.15–16).

In accordance with the picture of the people of God in the Body of Christ, the ICC has made various efforts to improve the governance of the church leadership, which, on the one hand, places the church hierarchy as the official church leadership, but, on the other hand, requires this hierarchy to co-operate with the religious and laity for the service of all church members. Many dioceses set up a Diocesan Pastoral Council and in each parish a Parish Pastoral Council as a community of service and pastoral communication for all aspects of church life. The spirit of Vatican II was one of church reform and openness, and the Indonesian dioceses also open their minds to the study of various disciplines, including management, to ensure that the management of pastoral work also maintains the principles of accountability, credibility, and transparency.

Fifty years after Vatican II almost all the dioceses in Indonesia are led by native bishops,³⁰ whose leadership has brought significant consequences, for example in the large number of dioceses which now have the vision of a self-reliant Church. Self-reliance concerns not only finance but also personnel, such as priests and religious, as well as the involvement of the laity. The formation of priests and schools of philosophy and theology have received a lot of attention from the Indonesian bishops. Various catechetical centres and centres for lay empowerment, whatever forms and names they have, have been established in many dioceses. In the model of the Church as the People of God manifesting itself in the Body of Christ, there is a specific charisma, seen in the growing number of religious, both monks and nuns. The flourishing religious congregations and vocations to the religious life in Indonesia have produced native Indonesian missionaries to work overseas.

Model 3: The Church which involves the laity

As urged by Vatican II, the ICC has given serious attention to the laity. Several Indonesian bishops see that the involvement of the laity in the Indonesian Church's activities was already practised long before the Second Vatican Council.³¹ In the mission history of

³⁰Cf. Boelaars, *Indonesianisasi. Dari Gereja Katolik di Indonesia Menjadi Gereja Katolik Indonesia*, 303–10.

³¹For example, the bishops of Sibolga, Weetabula, and Atambua mentioned this. See Indra Sanjaya and Purwanto, *Mozaik Gereja Katolik Indonesia – 50 Tahun Pasca Konsili Vatikan II*, 217, 458, 484.

Indonesia, European missionaries' evangelisation was successful thanks to the help and involvement of the laity.³² However, in the pre-Vatican II atmosphere in the Catholic Church, which tended to be clericalist, the laity failed to be the 'subjects' of evangelisation and became only its 'objects'.³³

Nonetheless, Vatican II, in *Lumen Gentium*, presented a very positive view on the role of the laity, in which the apostolate of the laity directly participates in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ (LG 31). All the faithful, of whatever rank or status, including the laity, are called to holiness (LG 40). The Vatican II decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, on the Apostolate of the Laity, teaches the nature and diversity of that apostolate. The dignity of the laity and their important role in the Church were rediscovered by Vatican II.³⁴

The role of the laity in the Church has gained the attention of Indonesian bishops. The extent of lay involvement in the various aspects of the life of the local church varies from one place to another. In some places, Borneo and Papua, for example, worship is even conducted by the laity due to the shortage of priests. The laity are also involved in evangelisation and pastoral ministries in general, and another clearly visible and positive feature in many Indonesian dioceses is the involvement of the laity in the Parish Pastoral Council.

Many dioceses have given special attention to the younger generation who will become the future of the Church. Some dioceses have even introduced an event such as the Year of Youth. The Youth Commission has been established at both national and diocesan levels. Meanwhile, assistance for young people on campuses is offered through campus ministry. Nevertheless, in various pastoral forums for youth, there are some concerns about the difficulty of gathering and assisting young Catholics in parishes or dioceses. In pastoral ministry today, there is real concern about the shallowness of young people's faith. Sometimes, we can find them leaving Catholicism because they probably cannot find the right habits, or because they have marital problems. Pastoral ministries for the support of young people do indeed need special attention from church leaders today and in the future.

The involvement of the laity in the service of the Church is promising, for example in social economic improvement for the community, regardless of ethnicity and religion. In many dioceses, the ICC is involved with the laity in establishing Credit Unions, for example. The laity are also active in various other types of work, such as education, health, and social and economic life. What still needs to be improved is the presence of the Church through the involvement of the laity in the political domain. There is a relatively small number of Catholics involved in political activities due to the lack of hierarchical support for lay people involved in politics.

Model 4: The Church for the poor and for social justice

Vatican II's spirit of openness towards the world and its challenges and problems is clearly stated in the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (GS). This document declares the unity

³²Cf., for example, *ibid.*, 484.

³³That was why the Bishop of Ruteng, Flores, Indonesia, is extremely thankful that the Second Vatican Council which 'abandoned the clericalist principle which identifies the Church with the clergy and positions the laity as evangelisation "objects". The Council emphasises the dignity of the laity as the inalienable part of the Church, and even as the subjects who actively make up the congregation of God's people', in Indra Sanjaya and Purwanto, *Mozaik Gereja Katolik Indonesia – 50 Tahun Pasca Konsili Vatikan II*, 446.

³⁴Thus is the title of Sauer's article when explaining the history of the discussion of the document on the laity in the Vatican II Council: 'The Council Discovers the Laity', 233.

and solidarity of the Church with the joys and sorrows of life of the people of the world, especially with those who are poor and suffering:

The joys and the hopes, the griefs and anxieties of men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. (GS 1)

Seeing the reality of human life with its poverty and suffering is an inseparable part of evangelisation and internalisation of the gospel. Vatican II was concerned with the social economic gap that occurs in many parts of the world. The fathers of the Council stated that economic growth and development without human and rational co-ordination will only lead to social injustice (GS 63).

The concern of the Church for the poor has been stressed officially by the Popes in what has been said about the social teaching of the Church, especially since Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891). Vatican II affirmed the Church's concern for the poor and the suffering. However, in the Church in the developing world, as in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the issue of poverty requires immediate attention. This is why the Latin American bishops have emphasised the importance of the Church's role not only in showing solidarity with the poor,³⁵ but also in having a *preferential option for the poor*.³⁶ Since their 1974 assembly, the Asian bishops who are members of the FABC have been stressing the importance of conducting *triple dialogues*, in which one dialogue deals with the escalating poverty in Asia. Meanwhile, at the international level, the 1971 Synod of Bishops taught that action for justice is constitutive of evangelisation. Thus the Church's concern for the poor must also be accompanied by the involvement of the Church in the struggle to uphold justice.

The dioceses in Indonesia have been active in struggling with the poor and the suffering, as well as in fighting for social justice. Many dioceses have referred to this struggle in their vision. It has also to be recognised that the Catholic Church is present in many places dominated by poverty. The Indonesian Bishops' Conference has promoted 'Lenten Fasting for Community Development' throughout the ICC since 1970. In particular, this action is a follow-up of Pope Paul VI's social encyclical *Populorum Progressio*. It is usually carried out during Lent and is also a response to Vatican II's teaching on the practice of penance.³⁷ To monitor the ICC's care for the poor, a Commission for Economic Social Development has been established at national, diocesan and parochial levels.

Church attention to the poor can also be seen in the official name chosen for legal entities in various parishes, which is *Pengurus Gereja Papa Miskin* (Administrators of the Church of the Poor). ICC eagerly promotes activities to improve people's economic condition by forming Credit Unions, holding gatherings for charity, developing small businesses and home industry, rehabilitation, and other empowering actions that touch people at the grass roots level regardless of their religion and affiliation. It is also necessary to note how the funds of Lenten Fasting for Community Development and parish collection money are used. It has been agreed that money or other gifts collected at Mass is designated for 'the poor and for the Church'.³⁸ Some dioceses have practised this by designating between 10% and 25% of donations to the poor. Nevertheless, solidarity between the 'poor' and the 'rich' parishes and dioceses needs to be improved. Since he

³⁵Conference document of Latin American Bishops in Medellin, Columbia, 1968.

³⁶Conference document of Latin American Bishops in Puebla, Mexico, 1979.

³⁷Cf. *Second Vatican Council*, 'Sacrosanctum Concilium', 110.

³⁸*Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 73.

came into office in March 2013, Pope Francis has provided more colour and more specific encouragement for the Church to make the poor its primary concern.

Model 5: The Church of the dialogues

This title applies to relations with other religions, including ecumenism and dialogue with culture. Dialogues are important, and Vatican II requires their development within the Church itself, as in the dialogue between pastors and the general faithful (GS 92). The relationship with brothers and sisters in Christ who belong to different Churches, is discussed in *Unitatis Redintegratio* (UR), which requires that the Church embrace them in a respectful and loving manner (UR 3) and which encourages various ecumenical activities to promote Christian unity (UR 4). In relation to non-Christians, Vatican II affirmed their position in the declaration *Nostra Aetate* (NA). The Catholic Church respects other religions and their followers, including admitting that they reflect a light of the truth which enlightens all people (NA 2).

The ICC promotes inter-religious dialogue formally through the Commission for Religious Relations set up at the Indonesian Bishops' Conference level, as well as in each diocese. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the dialogues with various beliefs, prayers in major events involving different communities and in the inter-religious forums are among the concrete actions which are being taken. At the national level, there has been co-operation between Catholics and Protestants in the translation of the Bible into Indonesian, which has produced a good result, in that all Christians can now read the same translation of the Bible. At the academic level, there is co-operation between schools of theology run by Catholics, Protestants or Muslims. In addition, there is co-operation at grass-roots level, in which people of different religions are working together on various religious activities in their localities.

The dialogue with Muslims needs to be emphasised, as Islam is the majority religion in Indonesia. Nevertheless, Indonesia is not a Muslim country but a country which recognises and permits different religions to co-exist. The Republic of Indonesia's *de iure* recognition of the religious diversity among its citizens is the first principle of the *Pancasila*, the five principles which serve as the foundation of the state. The 'Belief in One God' to which this principle refers does not mention any particular religious faith, but acknowledges the recognition of the Divine in all religions. In addition, the Indonesian Constitution mentions religious freedom as follows: 'The State guarantees the freedom of all citizens to embrace their respective religions and to worship in accordance with their religions and faiths.'³⁹ Unfortunately, in practice, it is not always easy to uphold this religious freedom in Indonesia. There are still conflicts among people of different religions, the roots of which are often not related to religion, but to social, political, and economic problems. It seems that Indonesia is not yet competent enough in managing this nation's diversity in various aspects of life, such as ethnicity, race, and religion. Discrimination against minorities still occurs and the government often seems too paralysed to handle the actions of certain groups whose social, political, or economic position is strong.

Meanwhile, the dialogue with local culture is expressed in the process of inculturation.⁴⁰ Pope John Paul II stated that the process of inculturation has marked the history of the

³⁹See 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Chapter XI, Article 29, Clause 2.

⁴⁰Massimo Faggioli mentions Vatican II promoted the importance of the local Church and enculturation. See Faggioli, *Vatican II – The Battle for Meaning*, 59–60.

Church, and has become more significant at the present time.⁴¹ The cultural diversity in Indonesia has become both a resource, as well as a challenge and an opportunity for the Church in the process of inculturation. Effort has been made in many areas, such as in liturgy, theology, formation of candidates for the priesthood, the art of church buildings and other artistic works. The process of inculturation remains a challenge that is not easy to handle. The funeral customs among the Toraja people in Sulawesi may be mentioned as an example. The funeral in Toraja is usually performed merrily, with the slaughter of sacrificial animals, sometimes tens or hundreds of buffaloes and pigs, depending on the financial resources of the family.⁴² Merely because of their obligation to provide a huge number of sacrificial animals, the funeral can be delayed for an undetermined time until the family manages to provide them. Traditionally, it is believed that these sacrificial animals will serve as the victuals for the deceased person's soul in the journey to the world of the dead. For inculturation's sake, the Catholic Church still gives space and opportunities for the traditional funeral ceremony because it is held outside the official church liturgy, but it is difficult to assign Christian meaning to animal sacrifice, because it should always be firmly stated that salvation has taken place and has been achieved in the person of Jesus Christ. Here is the challenge: how can the Church still provide space and opportunities for local culture while it still affirms Christ as the only Saviour and Redeemer?

The essence of inculturation lies, of course, in the encounter of the gospel and the local culture. However, the tension between the universal Church and the local church in various symbols of faith is not easy to overcome. Pope John Paul II's statement that inculturation is a long and complicated process⁴³ is indeed true. The process of inculturation presupposes an interdisciplinary co-operation under the authority of the Church,⁴⁴ and in accordance with the characteristics of the local people. As already indicated above, there is a strong impression that, in some places in Indonesia, the process of inculturation is not yet conducted systematically and comprehensively. Developments are still sporadic and spontaneous, and on a trial-and-error basis. The ICC needs to pay more attention to this, in a more comprehensive manner.

Model 6: A Church that preserves the environment

Vatican II did not specifically issue a document on the Church's duty to preserve the environment. However, this does not mean that it left no message on this issue. The preservation of the environment has become a global issue for all mankind. The Council gave attention to this task in the context of the Church as sacrament of salvation for all mankind. Salvation is understood comprehensively in statements that Jesus Christ is the author of salvation and the source of unity and peace (LG 9). Through its eschatological vision, Vatican II explains that Christ's redemption has been present in the world, especially through the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation,⁴⁵ and that it has to be worked out in the process of human history and the history of the universe until the end of time, that 'God may be all in all' (1 Cor. 15.28).

⁴¹John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 52.

⁴²Among the rich nobility, sacrificial animals, in addition to buffaloes and pigs, include goats, deer, and horses.

⁴³John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 52.

⁴⁴Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, *De Liturgia Romana et Inculturatione*, 37.

⁴⁵Cf. LG 48, 57.

The ICC has responded seriously to the issues of environmental damage in Indonesia. In the Indonesian Bishops' Conference's Assembly in 2012, the eco-pastoral theme was introduced to promote the involvement of the Church in the preservation of the environment. The Indonesian bishops have urged all parties and authorities in this country to engage in actual concrete steps to preserve the environment. Meanwhile, the Church is expected to be in the vanguard of efforts in education, advocacy, and negotiation, as well as in concrete movements for environmental preservation.

These efforts are reflected in the life of the dioceses in Indonesia 50 year after Vatican II. Of course, they still require improvement, considering the very critical condition of the environmental damage that involves all the components of Indonesian society. In 2004 the Indonesian Bishops' Conference issued an interesting pastoral note, entitled *Keadaban Publik: Menuju Habitus Baru Bangsa. Keadilan Sosial bagi Semua: Pendekatan Sosio-Budaya* [Public civilisation: towards new habits and social justice for all: a socio-cultural approach]. There are three axes that serve as the pillars for this nation to live together. These are the political axis including politicians and government agencies, the economic axis including business practitioners, and the social-cultural axis that is society itself. If these three axes can be combined to promote new habits and social justice for this nation, the Indonesian people's dream of environmental friendliness and equal justice for all in Indonesian society can surely become a reality.

Environmental damage has occurred in almost all corners of Indonesian territory. Deforestation, damage to biodiversity in the oceans, contamination from industrial waste in rivers and residential areas, and problems of garbage are only some of the examples of environmental damage. In its pastoral movement, the Archdiocese of Jakarta has launched the interesting theme of *Sampah Menjadi Berkah* [From waste to grace]. The Church should not pretend that the damage is only caused by other parties, but must admit that it too has become part of Indonesian society and also contributes to the environmental damage. For this reason, a concrete church movement for environmental preservation must be viewed as an essential part of evangelisation, especially as the manifestation of Christ's redemption in the society and environment of Indonesia.

Model 7: The evangelisation of the Church in the digital era

The Years of Faith (2012–13) launched by Pope [Benedict XVI](#) and carried on by Pope Francis made Catholics realise that depth of faith and evangelisation must be promoted afresh in this digital era. It is also understandable that the Synod of Bishops in October 2012 in Rome proposed the theme of 'The New Evangelisation for the Transmission of the Christian Faith'. Re-evangelisation is indeed an actual theme that needs to be seriously revitalised. In the Apostolic Letter *Porta Fidei* 7, Pope Benedict wrote that the Church must be active in the re-evangelisation or new evangelisation of the world, particularly in an era that is marked by massive revolution in information technology. How can the gospel be the light for this digital world?

Vatican II realised the importance of evangelisation in an era which is marked by the development of communication media. In the decree on the Church's Missionary Activity – *Ad Gentes* (AG), the Council stated that evangelisation or mission is the very nature of the Church based on the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit in accordance with the decree of God the Father (AG 2). Meanwhile, various possible methods of evangelisation must be carried out so that God's salvation through Christ may be present among humankind and in every corner of the world. The Church is invited to make use of social communication media for this purpose as specifically mentioned by

Vatican II in the decree *Inter Mirifica*. Nowadays, the advancement of information technology is astonishing. The question is whether this advancement has been accompanied by the advancement of evangelisation.

The effort to develop awareness of social communication has been introduced by the universal Church through World Communication Day. The Indonesian Bishops' Conference and dioceses in Indonesia have tried to develop social communication by establishing a Commission of Social Communication. Communication media, including online social networks, the Internet, or mailing lists, have been widely used by the public, including the Church. However, the use of digital communication media for evangelisation requires more serious attention from the dioceses in Indonesia. Websites in Indonesian on Islam and Protestantism can be easily accessed. Why are sites on the Catholic Church in Indonesian so few and less visited? It seems that evangelisation through modern communication media needs to be improved by the dioceses throughout Indonesia. Moreover, today's younger generation is considered *digitally native*, that is a generation born in the era of digital technology and very familiar with the computer, the Internet, various gadgets since their early years. What can the Church do for evangelisation and faith internalisation among our young people and children today and in the future?

The ICC of the future

The Second Vatican Council took place at the end of what has been called the ideological era and the beginning of the postmodern era.⁴⁶ Today, people speak of the information era and are occupied by a massive revolution in information technology. There are still lingering questions and problems in the life of the Church that are not answered by Vatican II documents. On the one hand, this matter makes Catholics, including the ICC, dispirited. On the other hand, if we keep faith in the Mystery of Jesus Christ 'who remains the same yesterday, and today, and for ever' (Heb. 13.8), we will remain calm.

So, what is the future of the ICC? There are at least three issues that deserve proper attention. First, amidst the religious and cultural plurality, as well as the huge number of the poor, the ICC that embodies Christ's Church is sent to spread God's words to the nation. Karl Rahner once predicted that the future Church must have space for mystical experiences.⁴⁷ I would like to add that the ICC will still have a future if we continue to keep our faith in Jesus Christ as it is taught in the Bible and by the Magisterium. In everyday life a Catholic must live in intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.

Second, the ICC must become part of the concrete daily life of the Indonesian people. Here is the importance of the full and active involvement of the Catholic Church in the struggle of Indonesians who still suffer from corruption, poverty and injustice. The ICC must follow what Pope Francis said:

Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the peripheries in need of the light of the gospel.⁴⁸

⁴⁶See Alberigo, 'Transition to a New Age', 628, n. 112, where Alberigo cites the church historian Hubert Jedin's view on Vatican II as a council that marks a new era.

⁴⁷Karl Rahner made his classic remark 'the Christian of the future will be a mystic or he will not exist at all.' See Karl Rahner, *Concern for The Church*, 149.

⁴⁸Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium – Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World*, 20.

It is by bravely entering the peripheries that the gospel can be present in the pain of poor and suffering people.

Third, the ICC must stimulate inculturation drives in various aspects of life in a comprehensive, systematic, and interdisciplinary manner while remaining under the guidance of the Magisterium of the Church. Serious attention to inculturation can serve as the Church's testimony in evangelisation among the Indonesian people that the Christian faith is not 'alien' but indeed accords with and even answers the deepest yearning of the Indonesian people and their culture. It seems that the development of a study centre for this issue and support from the hierarchy are urgently needed.

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