

## **THE CORONA IMPEACHMENT TRIAL: A CALL TO THE CHURCH TO LOVINGLY SEEK JUSTICE AND PEACE**

The impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato C. Corona, Supreme Court of the Philippines, [began](#) last Monday, January 16, 2012. This is based on the [Eight Articles of Impeachment](#) filed by the House Prosecution Panel before the Senate who will serve as the Impeachment Trial Court.

We believe that this current dynamics and tension among the three branches of our government—namely the Executive, the Judiciary, and the Legislative—is a positive and healthy development towards a more mature political system in our land. As a people, we need to see the integrity and independence of each of the branches of our government, and the relationship of all these branches as one system.

We look positively at the Corona Impeachment Trial as a necessary test to strengthen, or to regain, the confidence of the Filipino people in our justice system. When a people can genuinely rely on the integrity of its justice system, there is great hope for lasting peace. Justice brings peace.

In the midst of these processes, it is easy to express our passion in an adversarial way. Some have strong anti-Corona opinions. Some have strong anti-P'Noy opinions.

These dynamics were labeled as a “war” between the executive branch and the judiciary branch of our government. Unhealthy accusations—such as “the dictatorship of the President,” or “the Chief Justice is the real dictator”—is growing in the public exchange of words. We are saddened by a few statements made by some Christian opinion leaders against personalities they do not like; we feel such statements border on character assassination. Supporters from both Corona and P'Noy sides have responded through their comments on popular social networking sites, demonizing the supporters of the other side.

The members of the Body of Christ ought to actively participate in these discussions. But we do not have to be “at war” against each other. It is healthy to have differing views and opinions as we seek to discern the truth as a people. This, however, should not divide us as adversarial parties within the Body of Christ. We must set an example to those outside the Church to express our diversified perspectives and yet maintain our mutual respect and our love with one another.

Let us resist the temptation to demonize the political figures or personalities—whether they are from the executive branch, from the judiciary branch, or from the legislative branch—with whom we strongly disagree. Let us resist the temptation to dehumanize our sisters and brothers who support the parties and personalities we strongly dislike.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are instructed “to speak the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15) and to let our conversation be “always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone” (Col. 4:5-7).

We call on the Body of Jesus Christ to pray and fast as we go through these growing pains as a nation! Let us pray that Christian believers, especially those in leadership position,

- would lead and exhort the people in their spheres of influence to express their opinions based on truth while communicating those truths with an attitude of love;
- would express their convictions against the actions of certain persons—like Chief Justice Corona or President Aquino—and yet treating those persons with dignity and respect because they are human beings created in the image of God;
- would express their views against the actions of certain persons without passing judgment against those persons, remembering that one is “presumed innocent unless otherwise proven guilty”; and,
- would express their genuine concern for our country by continually praying for “all those in authority” (1 Tim. 2:1-4) even if we disagree with such persons in authority.

May we serve God together out of love as One Body.

May we take these current events as a *kairos* opportunity to become effective witnesses of our gentle Savior, Jesus Christ.

May we communicate the beauty of the Prince of Peace as we express our differing convictions and opinions—being salt and light—among our beautiful people in this awesome land.

May the creativity of the Creator, the peace of the Christ, and the energy of the Comforter embrace our whole being. Amen.

Board of Directors  
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