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SOLIDARITY AS *PAGDADAMAYAN* IN THE FILIPINO VERSION OF *LAUDATO SI'*

An Experiment in Inculturated Translation

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One of the challenges encountered in the process of coming up with a Filipino translation of the encyclical *Laudato Si'* was the absence of already circulated translations of many key theological concepts. Yet instead of opting for mere transliteration, the principle of dynamic equivalence was adopted at least for the principal terms—all in the search for inculturated translations that can hopefully contribute to the development of our local theological vocabulary. This article as such aims at an exposition of the translation of "solidarity" as *pagdadamayan*.[1] It will look first at the development of the concept of solidarity in the context of Catholic Social Teaching, followed by an exploration of the meaning of *pagdadamayan* in Filipino culture. It will then highlight key intersections and points of convergence between the two concepts in order to demonstrate their dynamic equivalence.

[1]The use of the word *pagdadamayan* to express the term "solidarity" is one of the translations that were briefly explained in the introduction to the Filipino version of *Laudato Si'*. See Francisco, *Laudato Si' [Liham Ensiklikal ukol sa Pangangalaga sa Tahanan Nating Lahat]*, trans. L. R. Ocampo (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 2015), xvi–xvii.

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The Christian Understanding of Solidarity

The New Oxford American Dictionary dates the word "solidarity" to the middle of the 19th century and defines it as the "unity or agreement of feeling or action, especially among individuals with a common interest; mutual support within a group."[2] Two important aspects of the word are highlighted in this definition: solidarity as having the same sentiment or commitment as others do, and solidarity as a shared sense of interconnectedness and interdependence. We may say, therefore, that people are solidary with each other whenever they partake of the same passion or advocacy such as a lively interest in golf or keen involvement in promoting the welfare of the urban poor. They are, at the same time, also solidary whenever they recognize, cherish, and live out bonds of mutual relationship and fellowship amongst themselves.

Fausto Gomez, on the other hand, traces the etymology of solidarity to the Latin word *solidare*, which means "*to unite and reunite solidly*,"[3] and proceeds to define it as "the *unity of all human beings and their obligation to cooperate with one another in the building of a human world*."[4] According to him, solidarity highlights the social and relational aspect of being human and has its roots in our common human "origin, nature and destiny"[5] as persons created in the image of the Trinitarian communion.

Understood thus in a philosophical and theological sense, solidarity is at the same time both the natural *and* supernatural bond that links all human beings to one another. It makes all of us not only equals in

[2]*New Oxford American Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2005).

[3]F. Gomez, *Solidarity: The Heart of Christian Praxis* (Manila: UST Social Research Center, 1984), 9 (emphasis in the original). See also F. Gomez, *The Praxis of Justice and Solidarity* (Manila: UST Social Research Center, 1988), 176.

[4]Gomez, *Solidarity: The Heart of Christian Praxis*, 9 (emphasis in the original).

[5]Gomez, *Solidarity: The Heart of Christian Praxis*, 10.

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dignity but brothers and sisters in one family of God. Going beyond the secular definition, the theological sense of solidarity points not merely to a superficial union but to an ontological one as well; not only to a shared sentiment or commitment but to a shared humanity; not just to mutual support but to a true participation in the divine communion.

According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC), solidarity is at once a *law* (CCC 361) that guarantees fraternal human interaction, a *principle* (CCC 1939) that comes as "a direct demand of human and Christian brotherhood," a *duty* (CCC 2439) of the rich to share with the poor, and a *virtue* (CCC 1942, 1948, 2407) that is expressed in the sharing not only of material goods but of spiritual ones as well.[6]

Understood according to the classic Thomistic definition of virtue, solidarity is a *habitus* or stable disposition of the soul which then shapes not only the actions of a person but also the person herself. This notion of solidarity as virtue is the most important according to Bilgrien since virtues by nature lead to genuine transformation—on both the personal and societal levels—more than laws, duties, or principles do. In her own words, "solidarity [as a virtue] can guide us from 'structures of sin' to 'structures of virtue.'"[7] The one who cultivates solidarity becomes a person who is solidary with others and who transforms society with solidarity.

Solidarity in Catholic Social Teaching

While the term "solidarity" first appeared in Pope Pius XII's 1939 encyclical *Summi Pontificatus*, the word made its debut in Catholic Social Teaching (CST) documents in 1961 with St. John XXIII's encyclical *Mater et Magistra*. There it is used in four parallel senses, namely:

[6]See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Makati City: Word & Life Publications/ CBCP/ECCCE, 1994), nos. 361, 1939, 1942, 1948, 2407, and 2439.

[7]M. V. Bilgrien, *Solidarity: A Principle, An Attitude, A Duty? Or the Virtue for an Interdependent World?* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1999), 227.

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solidarity between workers and their employers, [8] solidarity among workers,[9] solidarity among people of the same nation,[10] and solidarity of the human race as a whole.[11] This first appearance in the body of CST thus presented solidarity as a sense of unity and connectedness found at various levels of society and as a commitment among people to work for the common good. It is a unity that transcends all personal differences and cuts across artificial societal boundaries. More than just commitment to a common objective or collaboration towards a shared goal, it entails the recognition of a common human origin, nature, and destiny in God.

The word solidarity will gradually gain prominence in the body of CST and become one of the important themes to be highlighted in Vatican II, especially in the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, where it appears eight times.[12] Worthy of note is the Council's exposition of solidarity as part of the divine economy, as rooted in the person and teaching of Christ himself, and as eagerly anticipating its eschatological fulfillment when humankind truly becomes one beloved family of God.[13]

Solidarity, according to the Council, is part of the divine economy in that the Creator willed for us to live not in isolation but in community. The election of God and our vocation to covenant with Him as His people always possess both personal and communitarian dimensions.

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[8]See John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra* (May 15, 1961), 23. Available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_15051961_mater.html (accessed May 2, 2017).

[9]John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*, 136.

[10]John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*, 190.

[11]John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*, 155 and 157.

[12]Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes* (December 7, 1965), 3, 4, 32, 38, 48, 57, 75, 85. Available at http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_ council/documents/vat-ii_const_196512 07_gaudium-et-spes_en.html (accessed May 2, 2017).

[13]Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, 32.

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Vatican II likewise traced solidarity to the person and teaching of Jesus Christ who, by his Incarnation, has willed to enter into human fellowship and make himself solidary with the human race in order to draw it into his fellowship with the Father and the Holy Spirit. In this way, he founded the Church that shines forth as the Family of God and His Body, with its members rendering mutual service to one another according to their distinct charisms.

Lastly, the Council laid down the eschatological horizon of solidarity as a seminal anticipation of the celestial fellowship, an anticipation which we must continue to increase in the here and now until it is perfected in our communion with the Trinity and all the elect in Paradise. As Gomez beautifully puts it, "from the *already* of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ to the *not yet* of the perfect Kingdom of justice and solidarity, the individual Christian and the Christian community journey *now* through steps of love and solidarity."[14]

Thus, while solidarity itself is a relatively new word coined only in the mid-19th century, it is an essential dimension and not just a peripheral aspect of Christian doctrine, praxis, and spirituality. Solidarity has always been there from eternity in the *koinonia* of the Trinity into which we are invited to enter; indeed, Gomez goes as far as to call it "the heart of Christian praxis."[15]

Jesus himself by his Incarnation is our exemplar of solidarity with all of humanity, yet this solidarity is oriented in a very special way toward the praxis of charity and identification with the poor who are rejected and marginalized. It was with them that Christ identified himself in a particular way, not contenting himself in taking the form merely of a human person but that of a slave (Phil. 2:7). It is a specific orientation of solidarity toward the poor that has important implications for our own praxis of solidarity. As Reiser expressed it:

[14]Gomez, *The Praxis of Justice and Solidarity*, 195.

[15]Gomez, *The Praxis of Justice and Solidarity*, 174. See also Gomez, *Solidarity: The Heart of Christian Praxis*, 6.

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> Divine solidarity *with human nature* may be both consoling and uplifting, and it may indeed lead us to seek moral and spiritual perfection: God becomes human so that human beings might become God, that is, sharers in the divine nature. But when divine solidarity is specified in terms of solidarity *with the poor, the excluded, the crucified ones of this world*, then the mystery before us is truly wondrous and intensely challenging. Wondrous because God has joined the history of suffering so intimately; challenging because we now have to make some important choices and engage in careful, maybe even painful discernment.[16]

For Reiser, Jesus Christ is not just the quintessential human person but the "quintessential throwaway."[17] To be solidary with Christ, then, is to be solidary with those whom the world considers to be throwaways, those "rejected by the builders" who then become in Christ the cornerstone of God's new people. Hence, while it is not unnatural to want to identify ourselves with desirable people, those whom the world seeks, praises, and extols, it is with the people whom the world casts out to the peripheries that we as Christians should expressly endeavor to be solidary with after the manner of Christ himself.

Solidarity will also be highlighted in the teaching of St. John Paul II, the Pope from Poland where a popular movement called Solidarity (*Solidarność*) became instrumental in overthrowing the Communist regime in Eastern Europe. In *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, for instance, he identified solidarity as one of the essential components of the path to conversion.[18] According to him, solidarity helps us to see the "other" as "neighbor" in a world marked by selfishness and individualism that hinder peace and integral development.[19] This nexus between solidarity and integral development that John Paul II underlines brings to the fore once again the notion of society as an interconnected reality

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[16]W. Reiser, *Jesus in Solidarity with His People: A Theologian Looks at Mark* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 7.

[17]Reiser, *Jesus in Solidarity with His People*, 118.

[18]John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (December 30, 1987), 38. Available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html (accessed May 2, 2014).

[19]John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 39.

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where authentic development means developing every aspect without neglecting any other. The pope also emphasized how solidarity is truly rooted in the vision of human beings that reflect the Trinitarian communion of love, an idea affirmed earlier on by the Second Vatican Council.[20] Lastly, he stressed the dynamic character of solidarity which is not just a *feeling* of compassion for or distress at the misery of others but also a "firm and persevering *determination* to commit oneself to the common good."[21]

In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis described solidarity as a word that is "a little worn and at times poorly understood,"[22] often reduced as it were to a few random and scattered acts of kindness. He proposed three ways of understanding solidarity, or what he called "convictions and habits of solidarity,"[23] in the same exhortation. First, he referred to solidarity as "a new *mindset* which thinks in terms of community and the priority of the life of all over the appropriation of goods by a few."[24] It is seen here as a kind of disposition or orientation that seeks and prioritizes the common good instead of giving in to the prevailing culture of individualism, materialism, and consumerism.

Second, he described solidarity as "a spontaneous *reaction* by those who recognize that the social function of property and the universal destination of goods are realities which come before private property."[25] In this way, solidarity is understood as the response of sharing the goods that we have with those whose needs are greater than our own (social function of private property). This response is evoked in us by

[20]John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 40.

[21]John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 38 (emphasis added).

[22]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (November 24, 2013), 188. Available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html (accessed May 2, 2017).

[23]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 189.

[24]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 188 (emphasis added).

[25]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 189 (emphasis added).

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our recognition of the fact that whatever we possess belongs, first and foremost, to all people and not just to ourselves (universal destination of earthly goods).

Third, he referred to solidarity as "the *decision* to restore to the poor what belongs to them."[26] This is in line with the previous point which comes from the profound realization that all that I have belongs not only to "me" but also to "us." Even my life does not belong to me alone, for, as St. Paul said, "none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself" (Rom. 14:7).

Likewise significant is Francis's identification of solidarity together with faith as the defining characteristics of an evangelized culture.[27] This sense of an "us" emerges again later in the document when the pope defines solidarity "in its deepest and most challenging sense" as a "way of making history in a life setting where conflicts, tensions and oppositions can achieve a diversified and life-giving unity."[28] What ultimately prevails despite, beyond, and in the midst of all differences, distinctions, and divisions is a deeper and stronger sense of being one with one another.

The word solidarity also appears fourteen times in *Laudato Si'*, the most recent document on CST. While its other uses in the encyclical are rather consistent with earlier precedents in the CST corpus, solidarity is also described as a "spirituality of *global* solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity."[29] This particular understanding, which speaks not only of *human* but also of *global* solidarity in par. 240, is the broadest definition of solidarity by far in that it encompasses not just all of humanity but all of creation as well. This of course is explicitly

[26]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 189 (emphasis added).

[27]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 68.

[28]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 228.

[29]Francis, *Laudato Si'*, (May 24, 2015), 240 (emphasis added). Available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html (accessed May 2, 2017). See especially paragraphs 16, 70, 91, 92, 117, 120, 142, and 240.

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linked to and grounded in one of the most important points repeatedly emphasized by Francis in this document—the fact that "everything in the world is connected."[30]

Solidarity is always identified as well in different lists as one of the central principles or pillars of Catholic Social Teaching.[31] In the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, "solidarity" occurs 157 times and is regarded as one of the four key principles of CST.[32] Such is the importance attached to solidarity that it is considered to be one of the three dimensions of our response to the Kingdom of God in the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics*[33] as well as one of the building blocks of a truly Christian community.[34]

Pagdadamayan in Filipino Culture and Practice

The earliest historical accounts are quite ambivalent about the charitable practices of the early Filipinos. Reporting about the latter

[30]See Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 16, 42, 70, 91, 111, 117, 138, 220, and 240.

[31]See, for example, the list of CST principles drawn by the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines where solidarity appears first, along with human dignity, as the basis of integral development (Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines: 20 Jan–17 Feb 1991* [Manila: Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, 1992], 291; see also numbers 293–296). See also the list of W. Byron in "Ten Building Blocks of Catholic Social Teaching," in P. T. Giordano, ed., *Readings for Theology 141: A Theology of the Catholic Social Vision* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Office of Research and Publication, 2007).

[32]See Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (April 2, 2004), 160. Available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical _councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html (accessed May 2, 2017).

[33]Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (Manila: ECCCE/Word & Life Publications, 1997), no. 746.

[34]Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, *Catechism for Filipino Catholics*, no. 792.

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in 1667, for instance, a Jesuit missionary named Francisco Combés wrote that they "do not know what charity is. Consequently, whatever benefits they confer are all placed on account as debts, which their tyranny estimates wholly to their own satisfaction."[35] He narrates, for example, that help is not given gratuitously when an orphan is adopted, for the orphan then becomes a slave of the one who gave help. What is rendered is not really an act of kindness but a loan, an *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude) that needs to be repaid, and at times not only with service but with a life of servitude. As Combés said, "kindness is shown at the cost of liberty."[36]

This negative impression is shared by the Augustinian friar Gaspar de San Agustin who observed in 1720 that Filipinos "act tyranically one toward another … that, if the Spaniards had not come to these islands, the Indians [Spanish *indios* in reference to the indigenous population] would have been destroyed; for, like fish, the greater would have swallowed the lesser, in accordance with the tyranny which they exercised in their paganism."[37] We witness this kind of tyranny even today in the "padrino" system that is rampant in Philippine politics, where political favors and various forms of material assistance are dispensed in exchange for blind loyalty and allegiance.

Conversely, a fellow Jesuit and contemporary of Combés named Francisco Colin saw symbiosis instead of usury in the *utang na loob* practice of Filipinos:

> There was another kind of service which was not of a truth servitude, although it appeared to be such. It was generally seen among certain persons called *cabalangay*. Whenever such persons wanted any small trifle, they begged the head chief of their barangay for it, and he gave

[35]F. Combés, "The Natives of the Southern Islands" (Madrid, 1667), in E. Blair & J. A. Robertson, eds., *The Philippine Islands: 1493–1803* Vol. 40 (Cleveland, OH: The A. H. Clark Company, 1906), 147.

[36]Combés, "The Natives of the Southern Islands," 147.

[37]G. de San Agustin, "Letter on the Filipinos" (Manila, 8 June 1720), in E. Blair & J. A. Robertson, eds., *The Philippine Islands: 1493–1803* Vol. 40 (Cleveland, OH: The A. H. Clark Company, 1906), 225.

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> it to them. In return, whenever he summoned them, they were obliged to go to him to work in his fields or to row in his boats. Whenever a feast or banquet was given, they all came together and helped furnish the tuba, wine, or quilan, such being their method of service.[38]

For Colin, the system of *utang na loob* consisted of a network of gratitude rather than of control. There was a mutualistic relationship within the barangay between the chief (*pinuno*) and his subjects (*nasasakupan*) who were not considered aliens but as part of his extended family inasmuch as they constituted his in-group (*sakop*). The word *pinuno*, in fact, likewise carries a related socio-linguistic nuance with its image of a tree that shelters and nourishes those that come under it. This kind of *sakop* relationship, therefore, was not a form of usury forcibly exacted by the benefactor on the basis of benefits bestowed but a free act of gratitude elicited from benefactees for favors received. As Andres and Ilada-Andres explain:

> The sakop prevails over the individual. It demands from the individual a continuing act of reciprocal action with the fellow members. The Filipino as an individual finds fulfillment in sakop-fulfillment.[39]

This positive evaluation of the Filipino practice of mutual assistance espoused by Colin is shared by the Franciscan Juan Francisco de San Antonio, who noted that there "they lived governed by their own chiefs; not with a hard and fast rule, but *all in friendly relations*. By virtue of this friendship they were obliged to aid their chief, both in his wars and in the cultivation of his fields; and *all to aid one another mutually*."[40] Here we see that this interdependence was not limited to the relationship between superiors and subordinates or between those

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[38]F. Colin, "Native Races and Their Customs" (Madrid, 1663), in E. Blair & J. A. Robertson, eds., *The Philippine Islands: 1493–1803* Vol. 40 (Cleveland, OH: The A. H. Clark Company, 1906), 96.

[39]T. D. Andres & P. C. B. Ilada-Andres, *Understanding the Filipino* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 2008), 59.

[40]J. F. de San Antonio, "The Native Peoples and Their Customs" (Manila, 1738–44), in E. Blair & J. A. Robertson, eds., *The Philippine Islands: 1493–1803* Vol. 40 (Cleveland, OH: The A. H. Clark Company, 1906), 348 (emphasis added).

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who were materially secure and materially impoverished; it extended to all in the community who had a sense of responsibility for one another and thus provided reciprocal assistance in times of need.

This mutual assistance is called "damay" in Tagalog, defined as "1: tulong, saklolo o pakikiisa sa hirap, dalamhati, o anumang hindi mabuting kalagayan; 2: pagsangkot or pagkakasangkot sa isang pangyayari; 3: pakikibahagi sa gawain."[41] Such a threefold definition brings three important nuances to the surface: *damay* as the concrete assistance that is given, *damay* as a sense of personal involvement in an event, and *damay* as active participation.

Jose Abueva identifies *pagdadamayan* as a distinctive Filipino trait seen especially in the practice of giving *abuloy* or alms in times of bereavement.[42] Many Filipino neighborhoods especially in the rural areas continue this tradition of contributing materially for a person's wake and burial even up to now. Such concrete material assistance becomes the embodiment of the inner sentiment that is usually called *pakikiramay*, a word that is also derived from *pagdamay*. As people go to the wake or burial of the deceased, they say "Nakikiramay po kami" to the bereaved and show this *pakikiramay* by offering alms.

Patricia Licuanan connects this *pakikiramay* with *pakikipagkapwa-tao* and identifies it with the characteristically Filipino traits of availability, magnanimity, and neighborliness:

> *Pakikipagkapwa-tao* is manifested in a basic sense of justice and fairness, and in concern for others. It is demonstrated in the Filipino's ability to empathize with others, in helpfulness and generosity in times of need (*pakikiramay*), in the practice of bayanihan or mutual assistance, and in the famous Filipino hospitality.[43]

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[41]See V. S. Almario, ed., *UP Diksiyonaryong Filipino*, *binagong edisyon* (Quezon City: UP Sentro ng Wikang Filipino, 2009).

[42]J. V. Abueva, *The Making of the Filipino Nation and Republic* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1998), 631.

[43]P. Licuanan, "A Moral Recovery Program: Building a People—Building a Nation," in M. B. Dy, ed., *Values in Philippine Culture and Education* (Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1994), 36.

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Contributions of various kinds, whether in the form of money or service, are also made for occasions that entail huge expenses other than funerals and burials, such as weddings and other milestones. Although not compulsory, this practice is seen not only as a kind of cultural tradition but also as a means of assisting one's neighbors as they are wont to do in turn when the time comes. In this way, the otherwise burdensome expenses and onerous work needed for these big occasions are significantly lightened, and one gains a concrete sense that one is not alone but part of a real and living community. Not only is the sorrow or joy shared but the expenses and work are as well.

Moving on to the second level of the definition, *pagdadamayan* goes beyond providing external assistance and also represents the interior sense of involvement that it wells up from. Visitacion de la Torre, for one, states that *pagdadamayan* goes beyond mere *pakikisama* in that it entails "a certain level of commitment" to commiserate with and be of assistance to the other in times of need, be it emotional or financial.[44] One helps the neighbor not as an outsider but as one who truly commiserates or "suffers with" them. Alejo concurs by saying that *pagdamay* necessitates going out of oneself in order to enter into the experience of others.[45] This demands a sense of empathy and inter-belonging that makes the suffering of the other one's own.

Leoncini, meanwhile, identified *pagdamay* as the "encompassing value" concretized by the practice of *pakikisama* or maintaining smooth interpersonal relations.[46] As an "encompassing value," it is the underlying motive that governs social interactions; otherwise, *pakikisama* would be merely external or superficial conformity bereft of a deeper basis.

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[44]V. de la Torre, *Cultural Icons of the Philippines* (Makati City: Tower Book House, 2002), 120.

[45]A. E. Alejo, *Tao Po! Tuloy!: Isang Landas ng Pag-Unawa sa Loob ng Tao* (Quezon City: Office of Research and Publications, Ateneo de Manila University, 1990), 93.

[46]D. L. P. Leoncini, "A Conceptual Analysis of *Pakikisama*," in R. M. Gripaldo, ed., *Filipino Cultural Traits: Claro R. Ceniza Lectures* (Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2005), 175.

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This sense of involvement and interrelatedness is rooted in the sense of belonging and connection that is very strong in the Filipino. As one of our local proverbs says, "Ang sakit ng kalingkingan, damdam ng buong katawan [The pain of the pinky is felt by the whole body]."[47] With this "corporate" sense of being interconnected and interrelated as members of one and the same body, one cannot turn a blind eye or a deaf ear to the sufferings of others which are always at the same time one's own suffering. This even goes so far as to imply a sense of communal ownership and sharing of private goods.

Andres and Ilada-Andres observe, for instance, that "[in] a community where there are Filipinos and there exists a sakop feeling, private property is the community's property." When some community members refuse to share what they have, this constitutes not only a failure in generosity but also a transgression of the norms of neighborliness. A family that owns the lone television set in the vicinity, for example, is expected to share it with their neighbors, otherwise they would violate "the moral imperative of the sakop."[48]

Pagdadamayan as such is the sharing not only of material goods or mutual service but also of life, with the sharing of material goods being merely the external expression of this inner sharing of life. It is a genuine and felt sense of interconnectedness and not just material interdependence such as in the transactional sense of *quid pro quo*. As Alejo said, "may kapwa sa loob ng tao" (there is a neighbor within every human person)[49] who forms an integral and essential part of one's humanity that can never be extricated. This worldview is likewise reflected in our native socio-linguistics where the other is never really an other, an *iba*, but always a fellow, a *kapwa* or *ka-puwang* with whom I partake of the same space (*puwang*), the same world, and the same existence.

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[47]Alejo, *Tao Po! Tuloy!*, 91.

[48]Andres & Ilada-Andres, *Understanding the Filipino*, 59.

[49]Alejo, *Tao Po! Tuloy!*, 91.

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This sense of belonging to a wider community goes beyond the narrow notions of family that sometimes constitute, under the purview of social ethics, a moral liability for the Filipino. In 1999, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines observed that our family ties are very strong to the point that Filipinos are able to do anything for their family regardless of whether it is right or wrong. They also noted that these strong family ties sometimes turn into a sense of blind allegiance that leads to ironies and injustices in the economic, political, and cultural spheres. The *New National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines 2007* observed, in a similar vein, that "Filipinos are indeed social-minded, but their social-mindedness is very often limited to the family or small group. This is one reason why corruption is so rampant, since the public good is equated with the good of one's family."[50] The Filipino attitude of *pagkakanya-kanya* thus becomes a source of social apathy and fragmentation as well as an obstacle to national unity. The Philippine bishops have pointed out that Filipinos need to transcend this narrow sense of family and transform it into a wider sense of belonging to the wider family of God which includes the poor and sinners.[51]

It is in this light that Manuel Dy calls for an ethics of solidarity as imperative for the Philippines today: "For a nation of 7,100 or more islands, divided into so many regions, each at home in its own language, and with factions of different if not conflicting ideologies, the value of solidarity may be our primary road to survival as a nation."[52] Unless we can also shift to an authentically communitarian mindset, there is not much to be hoped for, even with the proposal for us to

[50]Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, *New National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines 2007* (Manila: Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, 2007), no. 70.

[51]Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, *Landas ng Pagpapakabanal* (Manila: Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, 1999), 73–74.

[52]M. B. Dy, "Outline of a Project of Filipino Ethics," in M. B. Dy, ed., *Values in Philippine Culture and Education* (Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1994), 21.

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transition to a federal form of government that is being advanced today. Every Filipino needs to imbibe *pagdadamayan* and express it as active participation in the life and affairs of society instead of remaining comfortable in the narrow confines of one's personal and familial interests.

Solidarity as *Pagdadamayan*

The *New Vicassan's English-Pilipino Dictionary* translates solidarity as "lubós na pagkakaisá; matibay na kaisahán (pagkakaisá)";[53] Leo English translates it in similar fashion as "pagkakaisá, kaisahán."[54] These are valid translations that follow the etymology of solidarity that we have seen in Gomez. As a theologian, however, I would like to propose the word *pagdadamayan* as a dynamic equivalent of the concept of solidarity that is expounded in the context of CST. Let us now highlight some key intersections and points of convergence between *pagdadamayan* and solidarity from our exposition above.

***Pagdadamayan* and solidarity both express a "corporate" vision of human society.** Together they point to an inclusive understanding of society as a unified body, with a particular emphasis on the inclusion of the poor and marginalized. For *pagdadamayan*, this is expressed beautifully in the adage, "Ang sakit ng kalingkingan, damdam ng buong katawan [the pain of the pinky is felt by the whole body]."[55] All the members of society are interconnected and so the pain of one is the pain of all. One also notes, moreover, that the pinky is traditionally regarded as the weakest of the five fingers. Emphasis is placed therefore on the weakest and most vulnerable sectors of society.

[53]See V. C. Santos & L. E. Santos, *New Vicassan's English-Pilipino Dictionary* (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing, 1995).

[54]See L. J. English, *English-Tagalog Dictionary* (Mandaluyong City: Cacho Hermanos, Inc., 1977).

[55]Alejo, *Tao Po! Tuloy!*, 91.

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We encounter the same "corporate image" in the Christian imagination, especially with the Pauline Body of Christ analogy as applied to the Church: "If one member of Christ's body suffers, all suffer. If one member is honored, all rejoice" (cf. 1 Cor. 12: 12–26). This understanding of society has been highlighted in the body of CST from the very beginning with the use of the word solidarity first in *Mater et Magistra* and especially in John Paul II's *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* where it was linked with the concept of integral development. Its scope has most recently been widened even more by Francis in paragraph 240 of *Laudato Si'*, where it is taken to include not only all of humanity but also all of creation in light of the encyclical's emphasis on the interconnectedness of everything.

Both *pagdadamayan* and solidarity go beyond superficial unity and cooperation and into a deeper sense of connection and relatedness. The concept of solidarity in the Christian notion is rooted in our common human "origin, nature and destiny"[56] in the Trinitarian God. As the Second Vatican Council taught, solidarity is part of the economy of salvation, rooted in Christ, and prefigures in eschatological anticipation the communion of the elect with God. It is more than just "the heart of Christian praxis";[57] rather, it is the living out of our being and essence as human beings created in the image of God who in his deepest essence is communion and solidarity. This leads to the recognition of the "other" as "neighbor" with whom I share a common humanity created in the image of God.

In a similar vein, the Filipino culture of mutual assistance must not be understood as a form of tyranny or slavery as in the case of Combés and de San Agustin and neither as a "debt of gratitude" in the simplistic sense of *quid pro quo*. As Colin and de San Antonio saw it, this reciprocity is rooted in the mutual recognition of each other as friends and members of the same barangay who are called to aid each other with mutual concern. We also take into account the important point of

[56]Gomez, *Solidarity: The Heart of Christian Praxis*, 10.

[57]Gomez, *The Praxis of Justice and Solidarity*, 174. See also Gomez, *Solidarity: The Heart of Christian Praxis*, 6.

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Andres and Ilada-Andres who said that the Filipino finds fulfillment in *sakop*-fulfillment.[58] Instead of being enslaved by networks of social interdependence, the Filipino finds herself fulfilled by finding herself in relation with her fellow Filipinos.

Both *pagdadamayan* and solidarity are multi-dimensional realities entailing a sense of involvement that issues in action and participation. As we have seen, Francis understood solidarity as a mindset, reaction, and decision.[59] The CCC, meanwhile, presents mindset as a law, principle, duty, and virtue.[60] These constitute the different dimensions or ways of understanding solidarity, and always underlined is the practical and decisive aspect of solidarity which flows from a genuine involvement in human affairs, especially the plight of the poor.

In *Misericordia et Misera*, his apostolic letter at the conclusion of the Jubilee of Mercy, Francis lamented how the "culture of extreme individualism" has taken away the sense of solidarity and concern for others.[61] He pointed at the same time to solidarity as "the utmost response of mercy" in the face of ongoing attacks against the dignity of human persons.[62] This needful response, the Pope added, should not only be scattered or sporadic; it must also be stable and purposive in order to transform persons and cultures.

Pagdamay in its Filipino context, meanwhile, is understood primarily to be the concrete assistance that expresses the interior disposition of concern and sympathy. The *nakikiramay* shows her *pagdamay* not only by

[58]Andres & Ilada-Andres, *Understanding the Filipino*, 59.

[59]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 188–189.

[60]*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 361, 1939, 1942, 1948, 2407, and 2439.

[61]Francis, *Misericordia et Misera* (November 20, 2016), 18. Available at https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap_20161120_misericordia-et-misera.html (accessed May 2, 2017).

[62]Francis, *Misericordia et Misera*, 19.

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her presence or words but also by offering material help or service. In this sense, *pagdamay* is a true virtue which makes itself known in deeds.

This concrete assistance imparts to its recipient a lived sense that one does not have to undergo a given experience or bear a burden alone, especially in a moment of trial or difficulty, that the community is always there not only to share the expenses and work but also to partake of one's joy and pain. In the wider social context, *pagdamay* takes the form of a communitarian mindset and of active participation in the life of the community, something sorely needed as an antidote to the Filipino tendency to remain confined to one's familial interests.

Conclusion

Important things are gained in translating solidarity as *pagdadamayan* instead of literally as *pagkakaisa*, namely: 1) the "corporate" vision of human society, 2) an interior sense of connection and interrelatedness that goes beyond its external manifestation in unity and cooperation (*pagkakaisa*), and 3) an understanding of solidarity as a sense of involvement that issues into action and participation.

May this experiment in inculturated translation be a humble contribution to the development of our local theological vocabulary. May it lead to a new appreciation of the concept of solidarity that is very much needed in our society today, a concept which may seem foreign at first but one that is actually very close to the Filipino mind and heart.

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