



Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines

**EPISCOPAL COMMISSION ON
PRISON PASTORAL CARE**

ECPPC Brief History

> March 25, 1975, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines received a letter-petition from the death row inmates of the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa, Metro Manila.

> The CBCP formed that year the *Episcopal Commission on Prisoners Welfare*. It became the agency of the CBCP charged to promote the total development of the members of the prison society. Later it became the *Episcopal Commission on Prison Pastoral Care*.

> The ECPPC pursues this objective through the organization of *Volunteers In Prison Service/ Restorative Justice Advocates* that implements the *Integrated Pastoral Program for the Rehabilitation of the Prison Society*.



MISSION:


Formation of Community of Disciples that will promote and provide programs and opportunities to meet the unique needs of the prisoners and their families, ex-prisoners and their families, victims and their families, the correctional employees and the volunteers in prison service.

VISION:

Towards a Total Human Development of the Members of the Prison Community

CBCP-ECPPC Special Functions

- Shall **conduct the monitoring and analysis on on-going activities** undertaken by the different sectors of society involved in correctional work for the purpose of providing feedback advisories as basis for pursuant recommendations on legislations, Government policies, Government Organizations (GO) and Non-Government Organizations (NGO) plans, programs and projects in the local and international levels.
- Shall **generate public awareness** on the plight of the correctional community, and encourage the active involvement of the Clergy, the Religious and the Laity in the Correctional Ministry through the dissemination of information and the promotion of relevant activities.
- Shall **foster close cooperation and collaboration** among the different sectors, such as other Christian Churches, civic and professional Organizations, media and cultural Associations, inclusive of Business entities and the like, for a more human and/or Christian integrated response to correctional problems and issues.

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- Shall **initiate, implement and support structures and activities** which animate and assist in the holistic development of the correctional community.
 - Shall help in the **organization of the volunteers in Prison Service (VIPs)** in all ecclesial jurisdictions down to the parishes and Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs).
 - Shall **provide training and/or formation** to individuals and/or groups of persons, be this Government in the Correctional Ministry, for their integral Christian orientation.
 - Shall **set up a Library and Research** for service to the correctional community.
 - Shall undertake initiatives and activities for **fund raising** to help finance the plan, programs and projects of the Commission.

SITUATION OF PRISONERS

-Subhuman living conditions- congested and dilapidated
Subhuman living conditions- congested and dilapidated jails and prisons, inadequate daily food allowance, beds, toilets and other sanitary facilities ***inadequate daily food allowance, beds, toilets and other sanitary facilities.***

-Human rights violation .

-Slow judicial process

Lack of rehabilitation and intervention programs in jails and penal institutions.



Failure to attend to prisoners with special needs namely the mentally ill, the handicapped, young, the old and the sick

Graft and Corruption

Lack of rehabilitation and intervention programs in jails and penal institutions



Current Major Trusts

- ***Promotion and Organization of Volunteers in Prison Service & Restorative Justice Advocates*** in various Arch/dioceses to deliver meaningful rehabilitation program for the members of the prison community
- ***Continuing Advocacy of Enlightened Legislations*** that promote and serve the Gospel values and attitudes towards offenders and their VICTIMS.
- ***Establishment of Linkages and Partnerships*** with groups, agencies and organizations involved in prison. (The ECPPC is a founding member of the Philippine Action for Youth Offenders and the Integrated Correctional Association of the Philippines and a member of 2 international organizations: IPCA-International Prison Chaplains Association and ICCPPC-International Commission of Catholic Prison Pastoral Care)

- ***Sustained Program for ECPPC Staff Resource Persons and Volunteers*** towards the deepening of their commitment and understanding of the prison ministry to better deliver services needed to promote the interests of the prison society.
- ***Special Projects*** in relation to the ECPPC regular program like Prison Awareness Week Celebration, Restorative Justice Week, World Day Against Death Penalty and Tending Life and Summit for LIFE.
- ***Direct Services*** like para-legal and educational assistance to children of ex-prisoners and prisoners and livelihood assistance.

1. Promotion and Organization of Volunteers in Prison Service (VIPS) and Restorative Justice

ECPPC has made as its priority the organization of Volunteer in Prison Service (VIPS) units and Restorative Justice Advocates in the different dioceses and archdioceses. The commission does this by conducting *Orientation Seminar* that aims to provide the volunteers an understanding of the ministry.

The commission also:

- Publish **VIPS Update** quarterly to establish communication and provide information among each unit.
- Conducts **General Assembly** of VIPS and Chaplains every three years and **Regional Assembly** before the General Assembly.

2. Advocacy, Networking, Partnership and Linkages for Enlightened Legislation

A. The CBCP-ECPPC is the founding and active member of the following coalitions and organizations;

- **Coalition Against Death Penalty (CADP).** The coalition, which is a non-stock, non-profit organization est. in 1994 aims to abolish the death penalty. It is composed of 18 organizations and 9 individual members .
- **Philippine Action for Youth Offenders (PAYO).** The organization has 21 members- 19 organizations from non-governmental org. and government org. and 2 individuals that aims to address concerns affecting children in conflict with the law.
- **Integrated Correctional Association of the Philippines (ICAP).** It is a non-stock, non-profit organization whose goal is to seek reform and changes in the correctional field.

- **Pope John Paul II Foundation for Prisoners Welfare (FOPRIW).** It is a non-stock, non-profit religious organizations establish by ECPPC with the sole purpose of raising funds to finance the program of the ECPPC.
- **International Prison Chaplains Association (IPCA).** It is an international organization of different interdenominational group involved in prison work. It seeks to establish linkages among the prison workers worldwide and to support each other.
- **International Commission of Catholic Prison Pastoral Care (ICPPC).** It is an international group of catholic chaplains that seek to institute reforms in the penal system and establish strong relationships among catholic prison workers worldwide.
- **Technical Committee on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice of the National Police Commission.** This body is composed of the members of the 5 pillars of the criminal Justice system that meets quarterly to address concerns affecting the criminal justice system



B. Advocacy and Lobbying

- **Adoption and advancement of restorative interventions in our justice system**
- **Total Abolition of the Death Penalty**
- **Reforms of the Criminal Justice System**

3. Special Projects

- **Annual Prison Awareness Sunday** Celebration every last Sunday of October to awaken the public on the plight of the members of the prison community. This coincides with the celebration by the government of the National Correctional Consciousness Week. Each VIPS unit prepares their activities.
- **Paralegal Training Seminars** are given to volunteers who would provide paralegal assistance to inmates.
- **Service Consciousness Seminars** are conducted to the correctional employees to inculcate the value of service and to imbibe among them the gospel values
- **Seminar Workshop on Restorative Justice-Justice That Heals and Summit for LIFE** are held to promote and advance the adoption of restorative justice paradigm and alternatives to imprisonment in addressing the problem of criminality.

4. Sustained Program for ECPPC Staff and Volunteers

The commission holds reflection seminars for the staff and resource persons to deepen their commitment and understanding of the prison ministry.

The following activities are held:

- Advent and Lenten Retreat
- Evaluation and Planning twice a year
- Study and Reflection Day every first Friday
- Theological and Pastoral Updating
- Fellowship every Summer and Christmas
- Staff Meeting and Faith Sharing session once a month

5. Direct Services of the ECPPC

- **Para-legal Assistance.** The commission gives para-legal assistance mostly to convicted prisoners by way of interceding for executive clemency and parole.
- **Educational Assistance.** The commission provides educational support to children of prisoners and ex-prisoners.
- **Medical Assistance** to prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families whenever the need arises.
- **Other assistance.** The commission also grants transportation assistance to release inmates, funeral assistance and counseling services.

6. CBCP-ECPPC MANPOWER

CBCP-ECPPC BISHOPS

Chairman: Most Rev. Joel Z. Baylon, DD

Vice Chairman: Most Rev. Victor Bendico, DD

Members: Most Rev. Romulo T. Dela Cruz, DD

Most Rev. Oscar Jaime Florencio, DD

Most Rev. Isabelo C. Abarquez, DD

Most Rev. Leopoldo C. Jaucian, DD

Most Rev. Socrates C. Masiona, MSP, DD

Consultant: Most Rev. Pedro D. Arigo, DD (Retired)

Consultants/Resource Persons

a) Auditor/Finance:

Juliet B. Rafael

b) Publicity/Promotion:

John Nelson Tan

c) Volunteer Organization:

Gerard Ian Bernabe

Lee Fresnosa

CBCP-ECPPC STAFF

Exec. Secretary: Fr. Nezelle Lirio

VIPS Coordinator: Gerard Ian V. Bernabe

Pastoral Program Officer:

Michael V. Bartolome

Office Accountant: Angelito J. Carias

Secretary: Ester G. Alicante

Office Assistants: Dolly L. Pangilinan

Rolando C. Arriola

Consultant: Rodolfo D. Diamante

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Chairman and Members

Executive Secretary

Resource Persons

**Administrative
Officer**

Accountant
Secretary
Clerk
Messenger
Janitor

Program Director

VIPS Coordinator
Pastoral Program
Officer
Paralegal Officer

Media Director

Newsletter Editor
Documentation
Officer

Finance Director

Arch/Diocesan Commission

Volunteers In Prison Service Units

Formation

Worship

Services

Finance

Linkages

**Advocacy /
Lobbying**

Prison Society