

## **Pastoral Message on the Human Rights Day Celebrated by the Church in Thailand 2016.**

### **King Rama 9 The King Who Promotes Human Rights of the Peoples in Thailand**

To Catholic Brothers and Sisters

As the Catholic Church in Thailand commemorates Human Rights Day on Sunday, November 20, 2016, it is particularly important moment in time for Catholics in Thailand to join all the peoples all across Thailand in the mourning for the soul of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the 9<sup>th</sup> King of Chakri Dynasty, the leader of the Kingdom of Thailand, while paying tribute and gratitude to His Majesty as the King who promoted human rights of the peoples in Thailand.

**"We will reign the country with righteousness for the benefit and happiness of the Siamese people ".**

The above is the first public address of His Majesty the King, short but clear and meaningful, indicating his intention. During the 70 years of his kingship, His Majesty was head of the Royal Thai Kingdom under monarchical democracy firmly holding the principle of 'Dharma Thippatai' (moral democracy), ruling with righteousness and being invaluable witness as a democratic King of the Thai peoples.

His Majesty King Rama 9 had lived a democratic life, being a model reflecting his intention that is consistent with the teachings of Jesus Christ in the practice of love, charity, compassion, justice, and dedication to the common good. In the context of human dignity protection, His Majesty was primarily concerned with the welfare of the people regardless of their race, religion, political ideology and social status. His Majesty was concerned with problems and situations in society. He exhorted all parties on livelihood and administration of the country by adhering to honesty, performing tasks with attention and sincerity for the common good. His Majesty applied his knowledge and understanding on democratic politics and administration in non-violent resolving of major national political crises.

If human development means focusing on the people first, the human development framework should be based on His Majesty's sufficiency philosophy. He is a development King holding human person as the center of sufficiency development, middle path, rationality, search for new, useful knowledge, and nourishing immunity in each person by making a living based on the virtue of honesty, respecting other people and non-exploitation. These qualities are the core for human development also found in Papal Encyclical 'Populorum Progressio' by the Blessed Pope Paul VI. Human person centered aims at helping each one to be aware and respect human dignity of each other. Living with sufficiency is also an act of fraternal love with concern for one another and sharing basic necessities for modest livelihood.

Regarding ensuring rights and freedom of each person based on fundamental principles of human rights, His Majesty King Rama 9 respected religious freedom of people of different faiths. His Majesty extended educational opportunity for the less-advantaged. He realized that the rights to land is the foundation responding to security in life. He promoted occupations of farmers and ethnic peoples for food security. He supported access to medical for people in general. No less important is that His Majesty called for the people to participate in politics as citizens in democratic system. These outstanding intellect and prudence are the image reflecting the role of King of Development promoting rights of human person, all of which are not for anything but for common good deserved by all.

On the commemoration of Human Rights Day of the Catholic Church in 2016, as Bishop Chairperson of Justice and Peace Department in Caritas Thailand, I do not have anything to say for this great loss of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the great King who is loved and the King of all peoples in Thailand and Thai Catholics. Apart from being grateful to His Majesty, who dedicated to work hard to promote, develop and protect rights of the people during the 7 decades of his kingship. I pray to Our Father, the Prince of Peace to have mercy on the King Bhumibol Adulyadej for his soul to enter your Kingdom of Heaven. I also pray to Our Lady Mary to lead His soul into heaven.



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