

# “Who is this stupid God” -

*Rodrigro Duterte, President of The Philippines*

On June 28, 2018, Duterte gave a speech at his hometown, Davao City, where he slammed the “God” from the book of Genesis as “Stupid”.

“What He did was, Eve eats the apple, then she wakes up Adam... So Adam eats the apple. Then malice was born. Who is this stupid God ? That [expletives] is really stupid if that’s the case,” Duterte said.

This “God” that he was referring to is “the Alpha and the Omega”. God is omnipotent. God is bigger than anything, everything, and anyone.

God does not need defending nor proving.

Any speeches against our God are irrelevant including that of Duterte’s. Such blasphemous speech was a blessing in disguise that paved the way to a sudden national awakening.

Filipinos have realized that the popular President, who was then against our Pope, is really against our God, the Father, and against our Christ.

As a result, the President’s popularity and approval ratings went downhill from 72% in December 2016 to 45% in June 2018, according to the country’s Social Weather System (S.W.S.).

The way to enlightenment has been hard and excruciating. The majority of the population have become disoriented. There has been no clear leadership to oppose the populist. They do not know where to stand and whom to trust.

Based on my observations, many families, organizations, and friendships have been destroyed because of the different political beliefs, disorder, and massive fandom. Moreover, many people have fallen prey to the systemic propaganda and fake news that eventually became that of Duterte’s administration sponsored tactics. Similar to cancerous cells, these poisonous tactics have affected the entire nation and the whole world of social media.

Sadly, the majority of the population are still numb or have become desensitized to the casualties that have affected the country. According to the statistics provided by the Philippine National Police, the killings have already reached over 23,000 Filipino - mostly from those living in poverty or below the poverty lines. And the number is growing. These lives lost have also affected the psyche of thousands of families. Loved ones gone have affected their families and relatives, resulting in a feeling of sadness, grief, depression, post traumatic stress disorder, and hungry orphaned children, to name a few.

The devil has corrupted the minds of the people, from the simple to highly respected ones.

In a recent speech of Fr. Albert Alejo S.J. during the Philippine Conference on New Evangelization 5, he shared one conversation with an unnamed Monsignor who was told to be justifying the killings with a “ready theology” quoting the Bible from the book of Luke.

Still, there remains various groups and individuals holding the line and bravely lifting their lights during this dark times.

From the get-go, during the first month of the killings, a group called HEMA, which stands for Holy Eucharistic Mass Action, headed by Fr. Bong Sarabia, CM, had gathered together with the bereaved families of the victims of Extra Judicial Killings (EJKs) in three separate Requiem Masses and other outreach programs. It was also a gathering of many volunteers from different sectors, which provided spiritual, legal, psychological, materials, financial assistance, media coverage, and even music therapy through curated Mass songs.

A throng of courageous disciples came together and we strongly shouted: "Stop the Killings!"

Initiatives from many groups have created a rippling effect against the gruesome "War on Drugs". Compassion went a long way and it has served as a weapon to combat the cycle of violence.

The current socio-environment temperament in the country has also left many wondering: 'What is happening to the commodities in our country?' When the inflation rate soared to 5.2% as reported by the Philippine Statistics Authority in July 2018, it was not surprising to see people becoming distressed or agitated because this directly affected their stomachs and their pockets. Basic commodities have skyrocketed since then. Millions of marginalized population have been hit the most because their incomes are less than that of their expenses.

The rich becomes richer and the poor becomes much poorer in my country.

Also, numerous anomalies and scandals have been discovered, which were committed by the highest appointed officials, and have rattled the Government.

Outside of the country, the ongoing territorial issue between China and the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea is making international headlines. Failure to fight for our rights will result to a deprivation of the entire Philippine population from its riches.

In the south of the country, the war in Marawi has just ended and has left an unlivable condition due to massive destruction. The force evacuation of many natives in Mindanao where Martial Law is still enacted.

The list of suffering is long.

Yet Filipino people endure. My people have been known to be resilient. We have endured colonizations, dictatorships, poverty, hunger, and even storms that wiped out entire towns and cities.

On July 23, 2018, about 40,000 people from different churches, schools, organizations, and individuals had united and marched on the streets of Manila. Various reports cite that this gathering has been the biggest to voice out their disapproval of Duterte and his administration during the President's State of the Nation Address (S.O.N.A.). Moreover, rallies had also been organized and well attended at major cities around the country, and other parts of the world.

For God has put down the mighty from their thrones and He has exalted the humble.

*Nonon Baang*

*He was the official Cantor during Pope Francis' Mass at the Manila Cathedral in his 2015 visit to the Philippines. He was then called by the local and International Press as "The Pope's Cantor".*

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