



**"WHAT IS GOOD?"  
(CBCP Statement about People's Initiative on Charter Change)**

*Jesus answered, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments of God..." (Mark 10:18-19)*

Beloved People of God,

May we always be guided by the light of the Lord.

Indeed, only God is truly good, as our Lord said! And all become truly good when united with the God of goodness. As Filipinos, we are a blessed nation in countless ways, with bountiful natural resources, very skilled citizens and, above all, God-fearing in character, attitude, and behavior. That is good!

As a nation, we have a Constitution crafted after our peaceful liberation from a dark period in our history. It was created to ensure the well-being of every Filipino citizen. As the former 20<sup>th</sup> Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Hilario Davide Jr., said about our Constitution: "...It is the only Constitution that is pro-God, pro-Filipino, pro-People, pro-Poor, pro-Life, pro-Law, pro-Family, pro-Marriage, pro-Human Rights, pro-Women, and pro-Environment..." That is good!

Therefore, any discussion about it is crucial and should not be taken lightly.

Dear brothers and sisters, we are writing to you again regarding the Charter Change:

We are concerned about the reports of signatures gathered across the country for a so-called People's Initiative. Many could sign for various reasons, but it is clear that their signing is not the result of a careful study and discussion. It seems that this People's Initiative was initiated by a few public servants and not truly from the initiative of ordinary citizens. If that is the case, it involves deception and disregard for our true and free participation in the democratic process of our country. Is that good?

This is not a simple signature. By signing, you are giving our lawmakers the power to change our Constitution. The discussion may focus on economic aspects, but even senators acknowledge the possibility of broader changes if this People's Initiative succeeds. Some experts have already pointed out that addressing economic concerns can be done without amending the current Constitution. Many economists and sociologists point out that our Constitution is not the real hindrance to our progress. As the International Trade Administration states, "The Philippines continues to lag among Asia-Pacific peers due to poor infrastructure and a decline in government and business efficiency..." (ITA, January 23, 2024) It seems clear what is not good!

COMELEC has made a decision temporarily dismissing these petitions for the People's Initiative. However, we should not be complacent, as there may be other attempts for this Charter Change. We will strive to initiate discussions about the Constitution and the issues facing our nation. Our hope is to reflect and decide for the genuine good of all!

Our prayer is that we will not sign or agree to any petition without careful discernment, discussion, and prayer. Let us not allow such deceptive systems to continue, encouraging those who continuously exploit our nation. Truly, this is not good!

May we all be blessed and guided by our Almighty, who is truly good!

For the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines,

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31 January 2024