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REGAINING DIGNITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION: STREET HOMELESSNESS IN MANILA AND STRATEGIES FROM BELOW

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INTRODUCTION

In August 2005 the plight of the constantly increasing number of street families all over Manila caught the attention of Cynthia Calubaquib, current director of the Kariton¹ Empowerment Center. The idea of reaching out to these families started to take root and possibilities were explored. Meanwhile Cynthia's enthusiasm had 'infected' Nicole Tilman and the late Ed Legson, and the three shared a dream of rendering a holistic service to these least privileged, and most 'unwanted' members of society. This led to the birth of the Kariton Empowerment Center (KEC). On July 7, 2007, a non-governmental organization (NGO) that aims at the rehabilitation and empowerment of street families, helping them to regain dignity and social inclusion was born and this is the story we share here.

In this article we first briefly describe the situation of the street homeless in Metro Manila, the underlying causes of their condition and the – unfortunately still inadequate – responses of the government. Second, we review our, and hopefully also the Philippine Church's, motivation and inspiration to engage in this kind of service. It includes the biblical story of the Syrophenician woman, two pertinent Church documents, as well as international and national human rights frameworks. Finally, we look at the 'strategies from below': the street families' strategies for survival, KEC and other Church organization's existing responses and challenges, as well as what would be needed for the Church to work more efficiently toward ending street homelessness in

Manila. KEC aims indeed at the empowerment of the street families through capacity building and livelihood programs so that they eventually will be able to leave the streets.

STREET HOMELESSNESS IN MANILA

Situation of Street Families in Metro Manila²

Nobody really knows how many street homeless live in Metro Manila (MM), but it is safe to infer from available data³ that there are at least tens of thousands of homeless families, as well as individual children and adults. In part, a reliable count is hindered as most try to make oneself as 'invisible' as possible in order not to be picked up by police or other local government agencies. Indeed, although the anti-vagrancy law was decriminalized in 2012, homeless people are at risk of being 'rescued' from the dangers of the street and brought to the Jose Fabella Center (JFC) in Mandaluyong City, a facility that also shelters mentally ill young men. Children who are alone are 'accommodated' in a local government-run 'Boys-Town.' Aside from this, there is also the relatively recent Presidential Directive to the police force, known under the name 'anti-tambay⁴,' a word derived from the English 'stand by.' It allows the police to apprehend people on the street, not because of vagrancy, but supposedly because of violation of local laws or ordinances, like drinking liquor on the streets, or smoking, gambling and going shirtless in public places.

The majority of street dwellers were not able, usually because of poverty, to finish high school or even elementary school which makes it very

difficult for them to land a job. Several of our members even hardly know how to write or to compute. They therefore usually find only low-paying jobs as scavenging and recycling, street vending, construction work, begging, as well as working as barker, pedicab-driver, cemetery-care taker, parking attendant or canteen helper⁵. Few of them end up in prostitution, drug-pushing, or engage in petty thefts. Most street families have children who go –albeit irregularly– to public schools. The parents hope that their children will be able to obtain a diploma and so a better life than their parents. Sometimes though, the children are made to work with their parents, especially as vendors or beggars.

Street dwellers live their daily lives facing poverty, constant inconvenience and danger. The polluted streets and the fact that they don't have even running water or basic toilet facilities, make them prone to a plethora of diseases. Most street families live also day in and day out with some degree of hunger⁶. Children sometimes sniff solvents in order not to feel the pain of hunger.

And women are always in danger of violence and sexual abuse, especially during the nights. But maybe the worst of all is the lack of human dignity. People pass them by without even noticing them, and that has also become how they regard themselves: as non-persons.

Underlying Causes of Street Homelessness

When asked why they ended up living in the streets, our members' most common answers were: lack of money, loss of income or livelihood, family problems, being gay, lesbian, or transgender, domestic violence, demolition of their house, or disasters.⁷ But underlying these personal reasons, we can find deeper structural causes of poverty and homelessness.

The 2017 report of the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) shows indeed that despite the recent growth of the gross domestic product

(GDP) and the GDP per capita, this has not been translated in a reduction of poverty, unemployment and inequality in the country⁸. The report claims that this is the case because the Philippine economy remains 'trapped in a cycle of underdevelopment' due to the following factors: 1) agricultural backwardness and non-industrialization with as consequence lack of job-creation, 2) a disproportionately consumption economy that becomes more and more a service economy rather than a production economy, 3) liberalization and increasingly market-oriented reforms since the 1980s, 4) policies that overly rely on overseas remittances⁹ and foreign investments, 5) inequitably distributed income, assets and opportunities, 6) elite policy making which favors the oligarchs, and 7) inadequate social services and limited social protection. All these go back to the mid-1970s and especially the year 1981, with the intensification of the implementation of globalization policies.

Although globalization may have some positive effects, especially in the field of communication and global interconnectedness, most

of the poor in the world are negatively affected by the economic globalization that came along. Theologian David Hollenbach (2006) rightly acknowledges the "recent economic developments that have been accompanied by both increased poverty and increased inequality in developing countries." And sociologist Anthony Giddens writes about the 'social exclusion' that is brought about:

Underclasses are not just pockets of deprivation within national societies, they are fault lines along which the Third World rubs up against the First. The social isolation which separates underprivileged groups from the rest of the social order within nations mirrors the division of rich and poor on a global scale. (Giddens, 1994, p. 148)

"Street dwellers live their daily lives facing poverty, constant inconvenience and danger."

It might thus be good to heed the suggestion of Dominador Bombongan (2008) that “social exclusion is a more appropriate way to speak of poverty in the context of neo-liberal globalization.” The deprivation of street dwellers is indeed more than just about income, it is actually “capability deprivation”: due to different factors in their lives they are prevented from true participation in society in which they consequently have no voice (Lanaria, 2015).

Responses of the Government

The different administrations over the years have developed their own flagship anti-poverty programs. The most extensive and reasonably successful program is the present *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program* (4Ps), also called the Conditional Cash Transfer Program (CCT) which formerly started in 2008, and has already served 4,875,760 poor households nationwide as of September 30, 2018. Since the original program did not include homeless street families (as well as other poor sectors like the indigenous people), a bridging program called the Modified CCT¹⁰ was later on initiated for these families till the time they would be able to be mainstreamed in the regular program. The families receive cash grants, house rental assistance, help with access to health and educational services, and job and livelihood opportunities (usually street sweeping and road building for governmental agencies). There is of course a list of conditions with which the families have to comply. As of July 31, 2018, the number of street families that benefitted from this program is 4,578 (Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, n.d.)

Unfortunately, the MCCT program still has many flaws, like sudden interruption of the cash grant, house rental, or job allowance, when temporarily no money is available in the local Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) branch, which for the street families of course is disastrous. Many street families also feel pressured by all the conditions they have to comply with.¹¹ But even more important is the fact that all these anti-poverty programs, including the 4Ps, only address the immediate short-term problems of poverty, but

not the structural underlying roots that cause this poverty (NAPC, 2017, p. 28-29). They may be a welcome plaster on the wound, but they will never get to cure the disease that causes that wound.

MOTIVATION AND INSPIRATION

Story of the Syrophoenician woman (Mk 7:24-30; Mt 15:21-18)

From in the very beginning of our venture with the street families, this biblical story became a very important inspiration to work with them for change. The reason is of course that the street dwellers are a lot like the Syrophoenician woman as will be shown further on. It is not our aim to do an exegesis of the passages involved but rather to draw some parallels between the woman in the story and the street folks. Special attention will be given to the two values they are always at risk of losing: dignity and social inclusion.

The story starts with Jesus crossing the border to Tyre, a territory not only Gentile, and therefore ‘unclean’, but also potentially hostile to the Jews. Very few people cross the barrier to the street families. Since many of them are involved in scavenging they are also considered as ‘unclean.’ Besides, they are often believed to be pickpockets or at least a bit dangerous for the rest of society. They are in fact ‘unwanted’ people from whom one should stay away.

One of them, a Syrophoenician woman, approaches Jesus and throws herself at his feet, asking him to heal her daughter who is plagued by an evil spirit. For sure she is triply ‘unclean’: as a Gentile, as a woman (who should never throw herself at the feet of a Jewish man and so bring disgrace on him), and as the caretaker of a daughter with an unclean spirit. But she must have been fully determined to save her child, even though she probably knew how the Jews despised her. So are the street families: they know people look down on them, in a way that makes them almost lose their dignity, but they are very determined to fight for their children, whatever it takes.

Then follows something unconceivable: Jesus

first compares the woman and her daughter to dogs! The Jews did not keep dogs inside the house as pets. For them dogs had to remain outside, scavenging the streets for food. Gentiles were sometimes called dogs (Dufton, 1989, p. 417)! But the mother keeps calm and replies to Jesus with the same metaphor: the dogs under the table eat the crumbs that the children have given them. For the Greek, dogs were indeed pets that could stay in the houses. The woman showed strength, wit and “indirect resistance” (Nelavala, 2006, p. 66) to what Jesus said! Above all she retained her own identity and dignity. In the Matthew version she is even praised for her faith. The street families are also outside on the streets where they work and live. They don’t even want the crumbs of society, but just their junk. They also have faith: faith that they can live as a family from that junk if they work hard. For this they need the strength and wit that only determination can give. And they need to show “indirect resistance” and dignity to all those who want them to just disappear from society.

At the end it was the woman who had reminded Jesus of what he believed in, and she had challenged him from too much exclusivity to radical inclusivity. Jesus the teacher had been taught by the Gentile woman! The street dwellers can also teach us a lot. Usually at the start of our organized immersions, students, religious sisters, and seminarians always start off thinking they have a lot to teach to the street families, but at the end, they have to recognize that they were the ones who learned most from the simple street dwellers. And they were shown what inclusivity means when the poor street folks shared the little food they had with them, and when they gave them the best cartons to sleep on, on the hard and cold cement of the road.

Two Pertinent Church Documents

The Church Documents that respectively refer clearly to ‘dignity’ and to ‘inclusion’ are *Gaudium et Spes* and *Evangelii Gaudium*. They keep motivating us in our work with the street families who need so badly to recover both, their basic human dignity and social inclusion.

The first chapter of the first part of the “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World” (*Gaudium et Spes*) deals with “The Dignity of the Human Person.” It tells us that “The root reason for human dignity lies in man’s [sic] call to communion with God.” Indeed, people are “created by God’s love and constantly preserved by it,” and the human person is “called as a son [sic] to commune with God and share in His [sic] happiness” (Vatican II, 1965, para. 19, 21). And, in Christ, “human nature . . . has been raised up to a divine dignity . . .” (para. 22). Furthermore it stipulates the resulting task of the Church: “the Church knows that her message is in harmony with the most secret desires of the human heart when she champions the dignity of the human vocation, restoring hope to those who have already despaired of anything higher than their present lot” (para. 21).

In the “Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today’s World” (*Evangelii Gaudium*), we find the section on the inclusion of the poor in society in the fourth chapter. The basis for this inclusion is that Christ was born into poverty and was always close to the poor. And so, all Christians “are called to be an instrument of God for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society” (Francis, 2013, para. 186-187). This consists of both “small daily acts of generosity,” as well as elimination of “the structural causes of poverty” and “integral development of the poor.” It requires a “new mindset” that “thinks in terms of community and the priority of the life of all over the appropriation of goods by a few” (para.188). Indeed, hunger is “the result of a poor distribution of goods and income.” But “a general temporal welfare and prosperity” also includes education, health care and especially employment (para. 191-192).

Francis then uses very strong language when he talks about the economy: the problems of the poor will only really be resolved by “rejecting the absolute autonomy of markets and financial speculation...” because “Inequality is the root of social ills.” What is needed are “decisions,

programmes, mechanisms and processes specifically geared to a better distribution of income, the creation of sources of employment and an integral promotion of the poor which goes beyond a simple welfare mentality” (para. 202, 204). He calls for special “concern for the vulnerable” which our “current model, with its emphasis on success and self-reliance...” is not providing. In another section the pope then places the homeless people among the “new forms of poverty and vulnerability” (para. 209, 210).

It is thus an imperative for the believer to do something about structural poverty. Especially for those who have studied these documents, remaining lukewarm to them without enfleshing them, is equivalent to destroying all that makes up the Reign of God among us.

International and National Human Rights Frameworks

Since our NGO also engages in advocacy work on behalf of the street dwellers, we have to be aware of all the legal frameworks that support equal dignity and social inclusion. On international level, the Philippines is a signatory of practically all international human rights treaties. Particularly important among these is the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) which guarantees right to work, to social security, to an adequate standard of living (food, clothing, housing, improvement of living conditions), to freedom from hunger, to mental and physical health, to education, and to cultural life. The country also recognizes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which sets the minimum standards in human rights protection, based on the inherent dignity of all people (NAPC, 2017, p. 61).

But also the Philippine 1987 Constitution sees poverty as an issue of social justice, human dignity, and human rights. The State has therefore to protect all people’s human dignity, reduce social, economic, and political inequalities, and diffuse wealth and political power for the common good (NAPC, 2017, p. 60). Both international and national frameworks can thus serve as enough

foundation for the so necessary radical reforms: strategies and policies that bring about the equal dignity and inclusion of all, among whom also the homeless street dwellers.

STRATEGIES FROM BELOW

Coping Strategies of the Street Families

Meanwhile, the street families have their own strategies to cope with their depressing situation. The first series of strategies are the ‘negative’ ones in the sense that they don’t lead to rehabilitation or increase in dignity or inclusion, but rather to further depression, non-acceptance of their ordeal, perpetual ‘rough sleeping’ and even to jail time. Some indeed engage in criminal activities as theft (even from the people that are helping them, which is the worst), drug-pushing and prostitution. Others get drunk or take drugs in order not to have to think about their condition. Some spend their time in illegal gambling. Then there are those who are plagued with constant mood alterations and go around blaming others for their fate or are always quarreling with just anybody. Finally we have those who prefer begging than working, especially the ones that are into ‘situation instrumentalisation’¹² and even make use of their babies to pressure passer-byers to give money.

But many more are exhibiting ‘positive’ strategies that are helping them to climb out of their seemingly hopeless fate. They look for jobs, usually menial ones like those mentioned above. Most of our members are pushing a *kariton* and collect recyclable junk. Some are even ‘creating’ odd jobs like ‘subcontracting’ the peeling of onions for restaurants, ‘barking’ for passengers to fill up a jeepney, carrying bags or holding umbrellas for people that are on a shopping-spree, and calling for a taxi for others. They are usually motivated to work because of their families: children have to be fed and to be raised. Together with that determination, comes the hope for a better life in the future. Friends and even pets can likewise mean encouragement to ‘keep-on-going.’

Another strategy is to stay nearby ‘givers,’ like convents or churches, and wet markets or fast-food restaurants, from which they can get either

the already ugly outer leaves of vegetables or half-eaten leftovers which then all can be re-cooked. Almost all also engage in ‘church-hopping.’ Indeed several churches (of whatever denomination) and convents have a ‘feeding program’ for street dwellers on one particular day of the week. They are then usually also asked to attend a prayer service, a mass, or a recollection, which they consider as their ‘payment’ for the meal. They so ‘hop’ from one church or convent to another during the week. That is why for many of the street families all Christian (including the Catholic) denominations are the same. Some of them, usually women, do find strength in prayer and faith sharing though. Among the ‘givers’ is of course also the DSWD with their MCCT program as mentioned earlier, although the families usually find it very difficult to comply on time with their ‘conditions’¹³. Finally, for several, being part of a group like our KEC is their coping strategy.

KEC’s and Other Church Organizations’ Strategies and Challenges

KEC aims at the empowerment of street families in order to enable them to address more creatively and responsibly their own situation. We do this by means of six program components: 1) organizing them into a self-help group that is committed to the plights of the families living in the streets of Metro Manila, 2) providing capacity building activities like skills trainings, socio-economic-political awareness, Christian values formation, and leadership trainings, 3) facilitating livelihood opportunities (as of now we have a small eatery and a junkshop where the members can work), 4) organizing advocacy programs (through cooperation with human rights organizations, but also through the holding of exposures to and immersions in the life of street families, for students, religious, and seminarians), 5) engaging in national and international networking, and 6)

providing the following services when needed: tutorial classes for the children of our members, counseling, facilitating legal aid and medical services, and a loan-savings program for the members. It is not our intention to describe in detail what each of the components entails, but instead we would like to highlight some of the challenges we have met and learnings that we have acquired over the years.

"We who are helping have to learn from them about their real situation, hearing their stories, experiencing what they experience, getting into their lives."

A first learning is the fact that it is only the street families themselves who can say how they can be assisted. We who are helping have to learn from them about their real situation, hearing their stories, experiencing what they experience, getting into their lives. Just naively assuming what their lives are all about will not have any impact. We learned it the hard way, and from the very beginning, when, knowing that they need money, we started off with microfinancing (meat

processing and selling), but without understanding the ‘economic’ dynamics of their street lives. So, their supposedly ‘running’ capital was always finished right away because they could not refuse to ‘sell’ the meat to their friends who promised to pay later but never did.

Secondly, livelihood programs have always to go together with close, compassionate, and patient accompaniment. Indeed, aside from structural causes for their poverty, there are also personal reasons, like always living in the present and having no foresight, not understanding that both actions and non-actions have consequences, etc. They have not only to ‘unlearn’ habits, but also come to understand many simple things they were not able to learn from their parents or in the street milieu. They need for example accompaniment to discern how to claim their rights from government agencies, and to identify what government resources and services there are for them to tap. But maybe foremost, they need accompaniment in order to believe that they have a contribution to society, that they are experts in things others do

not know. That is why our program is taking them to schools where they can become like ‘teachers’ who share their rich experience of segregation and recycling junk with pupils and students.

Thirdly, since the problem of the street dwellers is so huge, networking is of uttermost importance. Organizations should be able to share their learnings, otherwise every new venture will have to start from scratch, making the same mistakes over and over again. This can be ‘short-cutted’ by knowing each other, and recognizing each other’s strength, capacities and programs. Even a congregation with a just a small project for the homeless might have gained plenty of experience through their regular contacts with street families over the years, which is worthwhile sharing with others. When we started KEC, there were a good number of shelters for street children but practically nobody was ‘into street families.’ Now there are a few more, although mostly engaged in semi-shelters and feeding programs. Still, there is great need for more networking and coordination.

What Can the Church Do?

Many challenges for the Church are transpiring from above reflections, but only two, in our opinion the most important ones, will be touched in what follows. First of all, there has to be a re-commitment to being a poor Church for the poor (Francis, 2013, para. 198). The Church has claimed for a long time that it wants to be a Church for the poor¹⁴, but in reality we are still miles away from the realization of this goal. Among the street homeless, the Church is hardly present. Is it because we have grown too accustomed to see them pushing their *kariton* around, so that we are not disturbed anymore by so much poverty? Is it a lack of conviction that our Church should be an inclusive one? Or do we just lack an inclusive heart that can contain the least, the last and maybe even the lost? Or is it a question of formation? Are we aware that being with the poor is not just a matter of occasionally feeding them and doling out money or goods on Christmas, but that it is about forming communities that include wholeheartedly the marginalized, those at the peripheries of God’s mission?

Secondly, there is a need for networking an even ‘globalization-from-below.’ Within the country there should be a kind of ‘desk’ or ‘umbrella structure’ that could bridge the gap among all the organizations involved with the street homeless. This could avoid duplication of programs and resources, and could instead advance a ‘task division’ among these institutes based on talents and resources of each. It would be a venue for the diverse organizations to meet, share and collaborate with each other, and to gain deeper insight in and learn from each other’s experiences. Would the Association of the Major Superiors of the Philippines, or the Catholic Bishops’ Conference be up to such task?¹⁵ Internationally, a ‘globalization-from-below’ could counteract the negative effects of economic globalization that lie at the basis of structural poverty and social exclusion. Our ‘global’ Church could strengthen and connect all groups in the world that address homelessness, which entails the possibility of common activities and policies. Together we could engage in solidarity with the poor, employing a prophetic critique of all the structural and systemic evils in our global world that have pushed and kept our street families in their present deplorable condition.

CONCLUSION

In this paper we have first reflected upon the situation of the street families, as well as our motivations to work toward ending street homelessness. Based on these we have suggested two strategies and challenges for our Catholic Church: 1) re-commitment to becoming a poor Church for the poor, 2) organizing work with street dwellers on national and global levels, so that our ‘globalization-from-below’ can gradually contribute to a world where nobody has to experience loss of dignity and social exclusion because of extreme poverty and capability deprivation. After all, it is nobody’s calling to become rich, but rather to become sisters and brothers who know how to use the available resources to build the Reign of God for all.

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NOTES

- 1 'Kariton' is a Tagalog word that refers to a wooden push cart that many street dwellers push around while collecting recyclable junk, but that also serves them as a 'shelter' at night.
- 2 The City of Manila is the capital of the Philippines as well as one of the 16 cities that comprise 'Metropolitan' or 'Metro' Manila. Generally, when people speak about 'Manila' they are actually referring to "Metro Manila." KEC is predominantly working with street families in the cities of Manila and Quezon City without excluding others belonging to Metro Manila.
- 3 According to the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) there would be more than 12,000 street dwellers in MM as of 2013, among which more than 1,000 street children, which means an increase of 139% in 3 years. Retrieved December 18, 2018, from <https://www.pids.gov.ph/pids-in-the-news/1779>. The 2010 Census of Population and Housing of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) on the other hand reveals that 5,599 households are living in caves, karitons, abandoned buses and buildings: Minerva Eloisa P. Esquivias, "The Quality of Housing in the Philippines" (paper presented at the PSA 13th National Convention on Statistics, 3-4 October 2016), quoted in NAPC (2017, p. 16). The alliance of 3 NGOs for street children 'Hope' believes that 1 to 3% of the children and youth of the major cities are street children, which would amount to 30,000 in MM and the National Capital Region, and 250,000 nationwide. Retrieved on December 18, 2018 from www.hope.org.ph/street-children-at-risk.html. And the 'homelessworldcup' organization speaks about 3.1 million homeless in the Philippines among which 1.2 million children, with 70,000 in Manila (Retrieved on December 18, 2018 from <https://homelessworldcup.org/homelessness-statistics/>).
- 4 According to the ABS- CBN news-channel, this intensified anti-tambay drive started since June 13, 2018 (Retrieved on December 18, 2018 from <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/20/18/pnp-chief-clarifies-tambay-arrests-due-to-violation-of-local-laws>).

5 See also: <https://www.pids.gov.ph/pids-in-the-news/1779>.

6 Recent trends show that more children and their families are poorly nourished. The prevalence of underweight children under five increased from 19.9% in 2013 to 21.5% in 2015. The food intake of more and more households stays below 100% of the daily requirements. The high prevalence of growth stunting is therefore understandable, especially among the poorest families: National Economic and Development Authority. (2017). *Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022*. NEDA quoted in NAPC (2017, p. 15).

7 The same reasons for street homelessness can be found in several government statistics as for example in: <https://www.pids.gov.ph/pids-in-the-news/1779>.

8 NACP (2017, p. 2-22): 1) poverty: 21.9 million people are officially considered income-poor; 2) unemployment: between 39 and 77% of the total employed people belong to the 'informal sector' (which means in precarious, irregular or vulnerable employment), 3) inequality: the inequality is still severe as 50 to 60 % belong to the very low income levels.

9 These are the remittances of the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs)

10 Our KEC has been very instrumental in the incorporation of the street families in the program.

11 For example, a single mother who has work, must every time take a leave of absence during weekdays to attend the family development (and other) sessions that they are obliged to follow.

12 This happens when people exaggerate their situation in order to maximize the level of assistance or help offered to them: Lindovská, Eliška. (2014). Homelessness Coping Strategies from Housing Ready and Housing First Perspectives. *European Journal of Homelessness*, 8,1, 100.

13 The conditions include: 1) children aged 3-5 must attend day-care or pre-school classes, 2) children aged 6-18 must attend elementary or secondary education, 3) pregnant women must avail of pre- and post-natal care and they must deliver in a birthing facility, 4) children aged 0-5 must avail of immunization and monthly weight monitoring, and children aged 6-14 must take deworming pills, 5) parents must attend the regular Family Development Sessions.

14 The Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) in 1970, the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCPII) in 1991: Ferdinand D. Dagmang, Ferdinand D. (2016) *Basic Ecclesial Communities: An Evaluation of the Implementation of the Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCPII) in Ten Parishes in the Philippines*. n.p., 1-8.

15 For some time, Bishop Broderick Pabillo, had started to convene all groups involved with street dwellers, but this unfortunately did not continue when he received another assignment.

16 The City of Manila is the capital of the Philippines as well as one of the 16 cities that comprise 'Metropolitan' or 'Metro' Manila. Generally, when people speak about 'Manila' they are actually referring to "Metro Manila." KEC is predominantly working with street families in the cities of Manila and Quezon City without excluding others belonging to Metro Manila.

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