

Dear Friends

As the Church celebrates the rejuvenation that Eastertime brings, the winds of change are blowing in other sectors of our country. News sweeps in of unemployment, the H1N1 pandemic, and of course, the Aware saga which I am sure many of us have been following closely.

Some of us may have found it confusing that Archbishop Chia spoke up to distance the Church from the internal leadership dispute between Aware's diversified and decidedly secular 'old guard' and the predominantly Chinese Christian 'new guard'. (Straits Times, 3 May 2009)

We might ask: what's wrong with supporting a takeover of a secular group to infuse Christianity in it? Shouldn't the Church act to transform society in the light of the Gospel?

Politics comes from the Greek word *polis* meaning city or state. Taken in a national context, it is the process by which the government, civil groups, and the citizenry are concerned with the common good of society.

Christian participation in this process is clearly outlined in paragraph 76 of the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World;

"It is of supreme importance, especially in a pluralistic society, to work out a proper vision of the relationship between the political community and the Church, to distinguish clearly between the activities of Christians acting individually or collectively in their own name as citizens, and their activity acting along with their pastors in the name of the Church."

This distinction enables the Church as a whole to remain faithful to its spiritual purpose and not be associated to any one political view. The Church must stand for the Gospel and take part in the work for the common good, but it does so using its own voice, engaging others in respectful dialogue in the public square. We proclaim the Good News by reasoned persuasion, not by coercive force.

Arthur

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THE MONTH OF MAY

1 May - Labour Day

3 May - Vocation Sunday

9 May - Vesak day

10 May - Mother's day

15 May - International Day of the Family

17 May - World Telecommunication and Information Society Day

21 May - Ascension of the Lord

24 May - World Communication Sunday

31 May - Pentecost Sunday



