

THE VINCENTIAN FAMILY STATEMENT ON THE DENIAL OF ABS - CBN FRANCHISE

“A good Catholic meddles in politics offering the best of herself/himself so that those who govern can govern well.” (Pope Francis)

WE, the Vincentian Family in the Philippines, strongly express our voices of rage, dismay and frustration over the decision of the Committee on Legislative Franchises of the House of Representatives denying the petition to renew the franchise of the ABS-CBN media network.

We feel sad for our country and for our people especially for the 11,000 employees and their families. We feel dismayed by our legislators. We feel frustrated for the disrespect of persons we witness in Congress’ hearings. We are dismayed of the voices of our representatives who sounded like wolves motivated as they are by their own personal political interests. Their decision is a great violation to our Constitution.

We affirm the many dissenting voices of Filipino people on the closure of ABS-CBN.

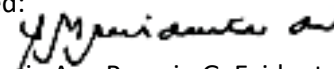
- We have followed the hearings in Congress; and according to the best legal minds, none of the accusations hurled upon the network has been proven.
- We believe that the ABS-CBN’s franchise renewal is not merely an issue of business permit, but more so, of upholding the fundamental rights of press freedom and free and equal access to information.
- We are in contact with the many people at the margins, especially those in rural areas, whose only source of news is through this network. To deprive them of basic information is a grave injustice to the poor.
- We also hear the painful cry of thousands of families who are deprived of jobs during these struggling moments of COVID-19 pandemic.
- We appreciate the values and Filipino spirit ABS-CBN gives our people through its programs, the relief assistance in times of calamities, and the wholesome entertainment accessible to all.
- We have heard earlier decisive intent of the President for the non-renewal of its franchise; thus, his present protestation of neutrality on this matter is quite suspect. To weaponize the law in order to implement a personal vendetta is an unworthy conduct of an elected official.
- We know that the 70 Committee members who voted on its closure are Duterte’s allies; we suspect the “under the table” deals and exchanges of political favor as “reward” for these votes.


WE call on our lawmakers and political leaders to respect our Constitution, the sanctity of the rule of law, and the freedom of the press.

We call on all our institutions, our partners in mission and members of the Vincentian family to support cases and petitions in Supreme Court, issue statements of protest, join a noise barrage or any virtual activity to defend life, human rights and freedom.

Stand Together. Resist. Speak.

Signed:


Sr. Maria Ana Rosario G. Evidente, DC
Visitatrix-Daughters of Charity
Province of St. Louise de Marillac- Asia


Rev. Fr. Gregorio Banaga, Jr., CM
Visitor- Congregation of the Mission
Philippines

AND MEMBERS OF THE VINCENTIAN FAMILY