



Friends World Committee
for Consultation

WORLD OFFICE

How does God call us to act?

An Online Conference with Friends worldwide (22.02.2020)

A Transcript from Speaker Three – Crisanto De la Cruz

Good day, my name is Crisanto de la Cruz. I'm the National Director of Philippine evangelical friends International Ministries, or PEFIM. We belong to the greater body of Quakers particularly the Asia West Pacific section or AWPS.

I am greatly honored and grateful to be one of your speakers in this FWCC sustainability online conference. Thank you very much for having me

What is God calling us, as Quakers, to be and to do?

As evangelical Friends, or Quakers, our belief is strongly rooted in the Scriptures or the Bible. In the first book of the Bible, in Genesis, it tells of the story of God's creation and interestingly it tells of God's act of planting a garden and putting Humanity in it. In this story we can see God providing sustainability for Humanity and for his creation.

As evangelicals, our being is defined by the Supreme Being, who is our Creator. and The Bible tells us that we can learn from his words that we are meant to be stewards of God's beautiful creation. God planting a garden, and putting Humanity in it, and telling Adam and Eve to tend it and care for it is representative of us. As well needing to care and nourish our environment and the creation that we now enjoy.

In the same story, in the book of Genesis it tells us that humanity rebelled against God; they ruined their relationship with God and therefore ruined their relationship with one another and ultimately ruined their environment. they became greedy, they abused the environment and abused each other. You see, it is in this ruined relationship with God which is the root cause of all the destruction that is happening in our world today. to ask 'what am I to do as Quaker?' is to ask about my purpose and our purpose. as evangelical friends or Quakers, is to restore that ruined relationship with God so that our relationship with humanity, with one another and God's creation may be restoring as well

What does sustainability mean to you? Well, let me give emphasis to two things, firstly, when we talk about sustainability it presupposes sustainability of life and life must be sustained because life is sacred, and life is sacred because it came from God, who made the heaven and earth and who created humanity. It is the sanctity of life that makes sustainability relevant in our time.

Sustainability efforts must be reflective of God's purpose for his creation. In the New Testament Paul says that all of creation is meant to reflect the glory and majesty of God, our Creator. Unfortunately, not many still see the beauty of God when they see the creation around because people have destroyed it already. as evangelical Friends we are here to preserve the beauty of our environment, in fact, to nurture our environment, so that it will become better than the first time we saw it. This way we are able to once again reflect the glory of God through the creation. so our sustainability efforts must be reflective of God's purpose.

it is God's desire and purpose as well, for us Quakers to extend the love of Christ to humanity that we show genuine care and concern for one another that we don't just care for our survival, that we don't just care for our well-being, but for the well-being of each and every one of us. We are tasked to love our neighbors, just as we love God.

Sustainability efforts must also be responsive to the most vulnerable in societies here in the Philippines, we are faced with so much poverty around us, food can be scarce, resources are limited, opportunities are few, especially to the poor. Therefore our efforts of sustainability must address this particular need as well. Specifically, for us here in PEFIM we give emphasis on tree plantings, especially trees that will bear fruits so that people will get something from it. we encourage our brethren to seek high yield crops to discover what's best to be planted in their environment so that the community will benefit and their need for food will be addressed at the same time.

and so, as we pursue sustainability, I ask that we reflect on the purposes of God and that we reflect on the needs of the people around us. especially the most vulnerable. once again thank you very much and God bless everyone