

# origins

CNS documentary service

## Statement on Vigilante Violence in Philippines

Archbishop Villegas

*After vigilante violence in the Philippines left hundreds of people dead in recent months, Archbishop Socrates Villegas of Lingayen-Dagupan, president of the Philippine bishops' conference, appealed to Filipinos' sense of humanity. He said he was "in utter disbelief," adding that the killings "are too much to swallow." In a statement read in churches in his archdiocese in early August, the archbishop said, "There is a little voice of humanity in us that I believe is disturbed by the killings." He said the "voice of disturbed humanity is drowned out by the louder voice of revenge or silenced by the sweet privileges of political clout." The new president of the Philippines,*

*"Is not humanity going down to the dregs when bloodthirsty humans encourage the killers and ask for more blood?"*

*Rodrigo Duterte, ran on a law-and-order and anti-corruption platform. He has called on police and citizens to kill suspected drug dealers and users. Duterte also has been sharply critical of Catholic Church leaders, calling them "hypocrites" and "sons of whores." In his statement, Archbishop Villegas asked, "In our dream to wipe out drug addiction, are we not becoming a 'killing fields' nation?" He added, "From a generation of drug addicts, shall we become a generation of street murderers? Will the do-it-yourself justice system assure us of a safer and better future?" The archbishop's statement follows.*

I do not have to be a bishop to say this. I do not have to be a Catholic to be disturbed by the killings that jar us every time we hear or watch or read the news.

Lay aside the bishop's robes and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines position. I am only a human being. My humanity is in grief. I am in utter disbelief. If this is just a nightmare, wake me up and assure me it is not true. This is too much to swallow.

I am a human being. That is all it takes for me to stand up and say ENOUGH. The humanity in me is hurting each time a fellow human is hurt. A portion of my humanity dies when a fellow human dies. Who can say the killed is innocent or guilty? Both the guilty and the innocent are humans.

The humanity in me bleeds each time a fellow human is killed. The humanity in

*continued on page 210*



### contents

- 209 Statement on Vigilante Violence in Philippines  
*by Archbishop Socrates Villegas*
- 210 Committed to Work for Racial Justice and Harmony  
*by Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory*
- 212 Faithful Witness to Marriage  
*by Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski and Bishop Richard J. Malone*
- 213 World Youth Day 2016: Meeting With Polish Bishops  
*by Pope Francis*
- 218 World Youth Day 2016: News Conference Aboard Plane Returning to Rome From Poland  
*by Pope Francis*
- 220 Visit to Assisi to Mark Eighth Centenary of Pardon of Assisi  
*by Pope Francis*
- 222 Celebration of Anniversary of Retired Pope Benedict XVI's Priestly Ordination  
*by Pope Francis and Retired Pope Benedict XVI*
- 224 Datebook and On File

**Aug. 25, 2016**  
**Volume 46**  
**Number 14**