

PROCMURA *Newsletter*

ISSUE NO: 003/2013

The General Adviser's Reflection (contd...)

NEGATIVE SOLIDARITY AS A CHALLENGE IN CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT FOR PEACE AND PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE.

Those who are conversant with PROCMURA and its work are aware that one of its principal focuses is to work towards Christian and Muslim constructive engagement for peace in society and peaceful co-existence between adherents of the two religions, towards the wholistic development of the human family and the environment.

In our last reflection, we raised pertinent issues related to the universality of Christianity and Islam with a focus on the Body of Christ and the *Ummah* and how these concepts can and have been used to violate the principle of peace-shalom and salaam. We went ahead and raised practical questions on whether Christians see themselves as African Christians or Christian Africans and whether Muslims see themselves as African Muslims or Muslim Africans.

We explained that the analogy was not the preserve of Africa but also of every continent and indeed every country, when it comes to the question of identity. The apex of the question, we contended is whether one is a Christian that happens to be a human being or one is a human being that happens to be Christian. It may be useful to read this reflection on our April-May newsletter on our website so as to appreciate our current reflection on "Negative Solidarity."

We have in a number of our presentations in Africa and beyond, described Negative Solidarity in the context of Christian- Muslim relations as that which propels some Christians and some Muslims to be in solidarity with their co-religionists at all and any cost. It propels them to be in solidarity even when heinous crimes that are religiously and morally reprehensible in their own religious precepts and etiquette are committed. They tend to do so when such crimes are not committed against their own religious kind - their co-religionists. In situations that we have described, such solidarity is human made and does not proceed from God (Allah). It is in fact anti-religion as it is also anti-God who is regarded as loving (Christianity) or All Merciful and Just (Islam and Christianity).

Genuine Christian and Muslim constructive engagement for peace in society and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims towards the wholistic (holistic) development of the human family and the environment as PROCMURA advocates, is only achievable when the good precepts in Christianity and Islam which have the largest following in Africa and indeed the world deal with Negative Solidarity. In other words when Christians and Muslims are able to 'sanction' their own when they are wrong and desist from being in solidarity with them at all and any cost - even (as we said in the last reflection) to the extent of being partners in crime.

Christians and Muslims have to work tirelessly to ensure that the good precepts of peace that the two religions proclaim loudly on the roof tops are translated into practice in everyday living and relations. It is only in such a situation that religion (Christianity and Islam in the context of our discussion) can be appreciated even by its detractors, that it holds value for the physical and spiritual development of humankind.

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