



## **ASIA/PHILIPPINES - "Contraception is Corruption": Bishops' Letter for the Christmas Novena**

Manila (Agenzia Fides) - "Contraception corrupts the young" and is "the mother of abortion" says a pastoral Letter released by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, to offer the faithful a "compass" in the debate on the Reproductive Health Bill approved in past days by the House and the Senate on the eve of the vote (see Fides 13/12/2012). The Letter, sent to Fides Agency, is entitled "Contraception is Corruption," and is signed by the vice president of the Conference, His Exc. Mgr. Socrates Villegas, Archbishop of Lingayen-Dagupan. As reported to Fides by the local Church, the text will be read in all the churches and parishes of the country tomorrow evening, when the Catholic community begins the solemn Novena of preparation for Christmas with the so called "Misa del Gallo", liturgy celebrated according to an ancient tradition, in the early hours of the morning.

The text reiterates, on behalf of the Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, that "the bill may harm our nation." In fact, he says, "contraception corrupts the soul. The RH Bill is being gift wrapped to look like a gift for maternal health care. It is not so. It will lead to greater crimes against women."

From an economic point of view "the money that the government will invest to ensure the contraceptive methods can be better used for education and authentic health care." From a moral point of view, the Bishops continue, the message that the bill passes to young people is "sex before marriage is acceptable, provided you know how to avoid pregnancy." The bill, therefore, "put the moral fiber of our nation at risk," since "a contraceptive mentality is the mother of an abortion mentality." The risk is that marital infidelity is encouraged in the Philippine society. Congratulating the 104 members of Congress who voted "No", the Bishops invite all the faithful to pray during this Christmas period, so that "our MPs are faithful to their call to serve the true interests of the Filipino people. This means upholding life, saying No to contraception, which is corruption, and being faithful to the Christ child." (PA) (Agenzia Fides 15/12/2012)