

# Ἀντιλήμψεις as “Spiritual Gift of Helps” (1 Cor 12:28): Hope for the ‘*Pananábangan*’ of the Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan

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**Abstract:** This work explores Paul’s hapax use of ἀντιλήμψεις (antilempseis) as “helps” in a list of spiritual gifts in 1 Cor 12:28, by analyzing its theological and scriptural impacts and reframing it to the *Pananábangan* spirituality and pastoral thrust of the Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan, Pangasinan, Philippines. Using the methods of Reception History and Recontextualization, this study investigates the renewed relevance of the spiritual gift of helps in a local Church program of stewardship in communion by the sharing of time, talent, and treasure. It highlights thematic parallels between 1 Cor 12 and *Pananábangan*, particularly stressing assistance, justice, mutual aid, gratitude, and empowerment. The work also reaffirms the enduring value of ἀντιλήμψεις in the hope of deepening *Pananábangan*’s living out through the Spirit’s enabling gift of helps.

**Keywords:** ἀντιλήμψεις, spiritual gift of helps, *Pananábangan*, recontextualization, reception

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## Introduction

On May 19, 2024, Most Rev. Socrates B. Villegas, D.D., Archbishop of Lingayen-Dagupan (ALD), Pangasinan released a circular letter which quickly circulated on social media as it denounced the reimposition of fixed rates or payments being asked for sacraments and sacramentals—known as arancel—in some parishes of his archdiocese, a practice which was already officially abolished in ALD since 2013.<sup>1</sup> Villegas laments that this practice is a hindrance for the poor to receive grace and blessings,<sup>2</sup> insisting that Church services are not for sale and emphasizing that Church giving must be voluntary.<sup>3</sup> He urges, “It is our collective responsibility to address these practices, to nip them and stop them lest they spread and influence others.”<sup>4</sup> Stressing that GOD<sup>5</sup> entrusted the sacraments to the Church as an enduring sign of His generosity for the sustenance of the Church, he reiterated that the people of GOD deserve His blessings and the ministry of the ordained is not out of justice from monetary offerings, but pastoral charity.<sup>6</sup> This concern points to a deeper issue – a subtle drifting from ALD’s vision of *Pananábang*, communion in stewardship. Much like Paul’s correction in his first letter to the Corinthians (12:1-31), the circular calls the community to realign with their spiritual mission, where ἀντιλήμψεις (antilempseis, v. 28), or “helps,” appears not as rare but as a meaningful gift in service of the Church in varied expressions and capacities. The arancel becomes unnecessary when believers generously offer their time, talent, and treasure for the Church’s mission, which comes from the realization that every member of the Church is gifted to give and every baptized is enabled for the building up of the Church. This work will thus explore how a deeper understanding of ἀντιλήμψεις can renew ALD’s practice of *Pananábang* and help restore its pastoral direction.

Reception history, from Gadamer’s *Wirkungsgeschichte*,<sup>7</sup> assesses ἀντιλήμψεις as understood, received, and handed to later Christian traditions from

<sup>1</sup> See Villegas, Socrates B. *Circular 2024-13: RE: Fixed Rates for the Sacraments and Sacramentals*. May 19, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> See Valles, Romulo G. *CBCP Pastoral Statement on Stewardship*. January 28, 2021.

<sup>3</sup> See Boñon, Wilhelm B. *The Pananábangan in Light of the Concept of Participation by Karol Wojtyła*. STB Thesis. Philippine Dominican Center of Institutional Studies, Manila, 2017, 48-49.

<sup>4</sup> Villegas. *Circular 2024-13*.

<sup>5</sup> The use of ‘GOD’ in capital letters is a reverential designation that follows a theological convention the writer learned from the Universidad de Navarra, reflecting a tradition of reverence for the divine name, as in the OT. In biblical Judaism, the Tetragrammaton (YHWH) was considered too sacred to be pronounced, leading to its substitution with titles such as ‘Adonai’ or ‘Elohim’ in reading and writing (cf. Exod. 3:14; Lev. 24:16).

<sup>6</sup> See Villegas. *Circular 2024-13*.

<sup>7</sup> *Wirkungsgeschichte* is a German term meaning “history of effects” or “reception history.” It refers to the study of how a text has been received, interpreted, and influenced communities, cultures, and theological thought over time.

Paul’s use.<sup>8</sup> The biblical notion of ἀντιλήμψεις in 1 Cor 12 and related themes will be read and applied to the ecclesial settings of *Pananábangang* by recontextualization. The hope is that Paul’s vision in 1 Cor 12 is grasped in ALD’s vision of co-responsibility in the active sharing of time, talent, and treasure in stewardship and pastoral support of the Church.<sup>9</sup> *Pananábangang* urges for authentic renewal from a spirituality that confesses that all are called, all are needed, and all are enabled to share because all are gifted.

### Ἀντιλήμψεις as Spiritual Gift of “Helps”

ΠΡΟΣ ΚΟΡΙΝΘΙΟΥΣ Α' 12:28	1 CORINTHIANS 12:28
Καὶ οὗς μὲν ἔθετο ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρῶτον ἀποστόλους, δεῦτερον προφῆτας, τρίτον διδασκάλους, ἔπειτα δυνάμεις, ἔπειτα χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων, ἀντιλήμψεις, κυβερνήσεις, γένη γλωσσῶν.	And whom GOD has appointed in the church, first, apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers; then, miracles; then, gifts of healing, helps, administrations, and varieties of tongues.

Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians is one of his two correspondences reacting to negative reports from Corinth (1:11; 16:17, 18).<sup>10</sup> Its authenticity is universally recognized<sup>11</sup> as one of the seven undisputed letters.<sup>12</sup> 1 Cor was written at the end of Paul’s stay in Ephesus (57 AD)<sup>13</sup> in koine Greek, with no extant original manuscript but copies with variations.<sup>14</sup> It features Paul’s amalgam of higher koine (and classical language) with colloquial speech<sup>15</sup> addressed “to the church of GOD

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Fish, Stanley. *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities*. MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1980, 323-371; Gadamer. *Truth and Method*, 336-337; Jauss, Hans Robert. *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*. MN: Univ. of Minnesota, 1982, 46-75.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Segovia, Jeffrey S. *Reading Ἀντιλήμψεις as “Spiritual Gift of Helps” (1 Cor 12:28): Its Reception History and An Ecclesiological Recontextualization in the ‘Pananábangang’ of the Archdiocese of Lingayen Dagupan*, SThD Thesis, Univ. of Sto. Tomas, 2025.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Carro, Daniel, José Tomás Poe, and Rubén O. Zorzoli. *Comentario bíblico mundo hispano*, 1 ed. TX: Editorial Mundo Hispano, 1993, 20. Digital Ed.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Schmiedel, Paul W. *Die Briefe an die Thessalonicher und an die Korinther*, Hand-Commentar zum Neuen Testament, 2, 1. Freiburg: Mohr Siebeck, 1892, 47-94.

<sup>12</sup> See Pérez Millos, Samuel. “1<sup>a</sup> Corintios.” *Comentario exegético al texto griego del Nuevo Testamento*. Viladecavalls: Editorial Clie, 2019, 35. Digital Ed. The seven undisputed letters are Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon.

<sup>13</sup> Casciaro, J.M., ed. *The Letters of Saint Paul. The Navarre Bible*, NY: Scepter Publishers, 2003, 176.

<sup>14</sup> There are at least 5200 NT manuscripts with more than 250,000 variants in which copies of Greek text were produced. About 3000 manuscripts copied between 2nd and 17th centuries were preserved, with fragments arranged for public liturgical reading from the 7th century onwards. Cf. Pérez. “1<sup>a</sup> Corintios,” 42.

<sup>15</sup> Blass, F. and A. Debrunner. *Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. by Robert W. Funk. USA: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1961, §281.

which is at Corinth,” “to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus,” and extended “to all who call on the name of our LORD Jesus Christ” (1:2).<sup>16</sup> It is called the “book of the Church,”<sup>17</sup> as it instructs and reproves the Corinthian Christians,<sup>18</sup> tackling church problems (1:11-4:21; 5:1-13; 6:1-11; 6:12-20), questions (7:1-24; 7:25-40; 8:1-11:1), rules on public worship (11:2-16; 11:17-34; 12:1-14:40), and about the resurrection (15:1-58).<sup>19</sup> Corinth’s circumstances primarily impact the letter’s structure, tone, and wording, while teaching the faith with pastoral and doctrinal value.<sup>20</sup> 1 Cor 12 talks of a community seeking aid in times of conflict, stressing unity in the one Body. Spiritual gifts are freely given, not earned, from Father, in Jesus, through the Holy Spirit to the Church. 1 Cor has the lengthiest NT treatise on spiritual gifts,<sup>21</sup> as functions, powers, and capacities in the Church from the Holy Spirit, to serve others for GOD’s glory.<sup>22</sup>

Ἀντιλήψεις is ‘helps’ or helpful deeds,<sup>23</sup> an aid in the church, to the weak and needy,<sup>24</sup> by any class in any way.<sup>25</sup> Its inclusion in Paul’s spiritual gifts<sup>26</sup> stresses helps as a Spirit-enabled ability,<sup>27</sup> which enables the building up of the Church.<sup>28</sup> Ἀντιλήψεις is a more ordinary spiritual gift, unlike miracles, healing, prophecy, tongues, etc.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>16</sup> See Pérez. “1ª Corintios,” 32-33.

<sup>17</sup> Clark-Soles, Jaime. *1 Corinthians, Searching the Depths of GOD*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2021, 15.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Naselli, Andrew David. The Structure and Theological Message of 1 Corinthians, *Presbyterion* (2018): 98-114, 99.

<sup>19</sup> See Pérez. “1ª Corintios,” 33-35.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Casciaro. The Letters of Saint Paul, 177.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Taylor, Mark. 1 Corinthians. *The New American Commentary* 28. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2014, 339.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Storms, Sam. *Understanding Spiritual Gifts, A Comprehensive Guide*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020, 48.

<sup>23</sup> See Vine, W. E., Merrill F. Unger, and William White, Jr. *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1985, 2737. In 1 Cor 12:28 of ἀντιλήψεις is “helps” (G484), See Strong, James. *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007, 504. Cf. Danker, Frederick W., and Walter Bauer, ed. “ἀντιλήψεις,” *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (BDAG). London: The Univ. of Chicago Press, 2000, 169.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Vine. *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, 2737.

<sup>25</sup> See Barnes, Albert. Commentary on 1 Corinthians 12. <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/bnb/1-corinthians-12.html>. 1870. Accessed: February 5, 2023.

<sup>26</sup> There is no complete list of spiritual gifts in the Sacred Scriptures (SS), but in 1 Cor 12:8-10; 12:28; Rom 12:6-8; Eph 4:11 and 1 Pet 4:10. They are GOD’s actions as manifestations of the Holy Spirit for the common good. Cf. Dunn, James D.G. *Jesus and the Spirit: Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, 209.

<sup>27</sup> Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000, 1016.

<sup>28</sup> See Storms. *Understanding Spiritual Gifts*, 51.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Grudem. *Systematic Theology*, 1016.

It refers to all kinds of assistance,<sup>30</sup> especially given to the poor or needy.<sup>31</sup> Helps as a spiritual gift points to the Spirit’s vital sustaining role in the Church.<sup>32</sup> This list of spiritual endowments is only found in Paul (1 Cor 12:8-10; 12:28; Rom 12:6-8; Eph 4:11), viewed as GOD’s actions, revealed by the Spirit, for the common good.<sup>33</sup> In 1 Cor 12-14, Paul enumerated these gifts to Gentile converts to edify the church.<sup>34</sup> They are unmerited and must be used in ministry, as the Spirit’s transforming power in the believers.<sup>35</sup> Ἀντιλήμψεις as “helps” (1 Cor 12:28) is set in chapter 12’s treatise on spiritual gifts (vv. 1-3), many gifts, one Spirit (vv. 4-11), many parts, one body (vv. 12-14), a call for unity (vv. 15-26), and various gifts in the one body (vv. 27-31). Paul mixed ministries, supernatural gifts, and services in an expanded staging of spiritual gifts in the Church, and ἀντιλήμψεις presents a unique take on help as a gift first received. This stresses the role of the Holy Spirit as the Church’s sanctifier, the life and source of unity and giftedness (1 Cor 12:4-11) by whom believers were baptized into one body (1 Cor 12:13) and directs the Church’s mission and ministry (Acts 13:2-4; 20:28).<sup>36</sup> To help with one’s time, talent, or treasure is a divine enabling of stewards. We do not give because we can or we have; all are gifted by the Holy Spirit; all are gifted for the Church.

The NT abounds with the Spirit’s enabling help who led Simeon to the infant Jesus (Lk 2:27), and Philip to the eunuch (Acts 8:29; 39); told Peter to meet Cornelius’ men (Acts 10:19, 11:12); guided Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:2,4; 16:6,7); settled disputes in Antioch (Acts 15:28); urged Paul to testify in Jerusalem (Acts 20:22,23); sustained in weakness (Rom 8:26); and caused joy in adversity (Acts 13:52, 1 Pet 4:14; cf. Lk 10:21, 1 Thess 1:6).<sup>37</sup> The Spirit’s help is a ministry: a partnership in the Gospel (Phil 1:3-5), enabling Paul’s work to continue (Phil 4:15-16). Divine help in Heb 4:15-16 points to Jesus as the ultimate source. Jas 1:27 taught genuine faith as care for orphans and widows in the community (2:15-16). 1 Jn 3:17-18 revitalized the Jewish duty of the wealthy to assist the community. 1 Pet 4:10-11 exhorted the use of gifts to serve others. The Spirit’s help was also realized in people as helpers: Phoebe (Rom 16:1-2), Epaphras (Col 1:7-8), Justus (Col 4:11),

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Garland, David E. *1 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003, 749.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Montague, George T. *First Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011, 260.

<sup>32</sup> See Hitchcock, James. *History of the Catholic Church From the Apostolic Age to the Third Millennium*. SF: Ignatius, 2012, 11. Digital Ed.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Dunn, J.D.G., *Jesus and the Spirit: Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, 209.

<sup>34</sup> See Schoemaker, William Ross. “The Use of רוח in the Old Testament, and of πνεῦμα in the New Testament: A Lexicographical Study.” *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 23/1 (1904): 13-67, 58.

<sup>35</sup> See Schoemaker. “The Use of רוח in the Old Testament,” 57-58.

<sup>36</sup> See Shenk, David W. and Ervin R. Stutzman. *Creating Communities of the Kingdom: New Testament Models of Church Planting*. Ontario: Herald Press, 1988, 23. Digital Ed.

<sup>37</sup> See Schoemaker. “The Use of רוח in the Old Testament,” 56.



John (Acts 13:5), Tabitha (Acts 9:36), and Lydia (Acts 16:14-15).<sup>38</sup> And in 1 Cor 12:28, Paul's idea of help is elevated in his listing of ἀντιλήμψεις as a spiritual gift of helps. Paul's inclusion of ἀντιλήμψεις in 1 Cor 12:28 reveals that "helps" is not just a generic act of service but a divinely enabled gift, grounded in the work of the Holy Spirit for the building up of the Church. Set within Paul's vision of the Church as one body with many members, the gift of helps emerges as a foundational ministry, often ordinary, yet essential. This notion situates help as an ecclesial charism that fosters unity, edifies the community, and calls each member to active participation.

### **Pananábang: Communio and Stewardship**

The Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan is part of central Pangasinan, in Northern Luzon, with 2 cities and 15 towns, and a land area of 1,565 square kilometers.<sup>39</sup> In 2023, 80.13% of the area's 1,490,094 total population, or 1,193,734, are Catholics.<sup>40</sup> ALD is the metropolitan seat with the suffragan dioceses of Alaminos, Cabanatuan, San Fernando (La Union), San Jose (Nueva Ecija), and Urdaneta.<sup>41</sup> As of 2024, ALD has 130 diocesan and religious priests, 15 communities of men and women in consecrated life, 151 seminarians, and 17 Catholic schools.<sup>42</sup> ALD's vision is that of the living Body of Christ through witnessing, worshipping, serving, and evangelizing the community with the mission of renewed and intensive evangelization; renewed and intense living of Gospel values; development of the spirit, charisms, and capabilities of the presbyterium; promotion, encouragement and maximization of the ecclesial participation of the laity.<sup>43</sup> ALD's *Pananábang* spirituality and pastoral thrust was launched on May 1, 2015, by Archbishop Socrates B. Villegas. It is the Pangasinan word for communion (Latin, *communio*) in "*Pananábang* day Sasantos" (communion of saints) of the Apostles' Creed,<sup>44</sup> derived from "pinanabang" (sharing or partaking).<sup>45</sup> It is a stewardship inculturated as participation and support for Church mission,<sup>46</sup> based on the ecclesiology of the "communio" of the Father,

<sup>38</sup> See Sumrall, Lester. *The Gifts and Ministries of the Holy Spirit*. PA: Whitaker House, 2005, 197-198.

<sup>39</sup> See Romero, Reynaldo and Regalado Trota Jose. "The Genealogy of the Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan." *Pananisia: Heritage and Legacy*, ed. by Jose Trota et al. Dagupan: ALD, 2014, 174-183. The 15 municipalities: Lingayen, Calasiao, Santa Barbara, Mangaldan, Manaoag, Bayambang, Binmaley, San Fabian, San Jacinto, Mapandan, Malasiqui, Bautista, Urbiztondo, Basista, Vilanueva; 2 cities: San Carlos and Dagupan.

<sup>40</sup> CBCP. *Catholic Directory of the Philippines, 2022–2023*. Manila: Claretian Publications, 2022, 182.

<sup>41</sup> Boñon. *The Pananábang in Light of the Concept of Participation*, 47.

<sup>42</sup> See Villegas. "Formed Like Crystal." A Pastoral Letter on his 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary as installed bishop of ALD (November 3, 2024).

<sup>43</sup> ALD Official Website. <https://lingayendagupan.org/history>. Accessed: August 27, 2024.

<sup>44</sup> "Manisia Ak Onung Ed Saray Apsotol." Pangasinan Liturgical Commission, 1987, 340.

<sup>45</sup> See Boñon. *The Pananábang in Light of the Concept of Participation* by Karol Wojtyła, 52-53.

<sup>46</sup> Boñon. *The Pananábang in Light of the Concept of Participation*, 1-2.

Son, and Holy Spirit, and of the Church.<sup>47</sup> “*Pananábang* as a spirituality and a way of life shall always be integrated in the evangelization and formation program of the Archdiocese, ensuring that it becomes part of the way of life and spirituality of the community and its members, leading to a life of communio with the Trinity and the Church.”<sup>48</sup> The vision of communio is linked with the Church’s mission, in communion with the Trinity and with one another.<sup>49</sup> “Communio is the summary of the task of the Church.”<sup>50</sup> Evangelization in the practice of *Pananábang* in ALD must integrate faith and life (PCP II, 68) in a common sharing to serve, especially to the poor.<sup>51</sup> It also invites a more outward-looking Church – from a Church that receives to a Church that gives.<sup>52</sup>

ALD, through the *Pananábang*, follows the path of stewardship rooted in communio as the key to becoming a more sharing Church<sup>53</sup> that only makes sense in Jesus: “It is only in Christ, with Christ and through Christ, that we will and can survive the journey to a real communion as an ALD.”<sup>54</sup> ALD hopes for communion-in-mission, a sharing not only of goods but of faith.<sup>55</sup> *Pananábang* is communion with GOD and encounter with others.<sup>56</sup> It affirms each’s giftedness<sup>57</sup> and exhorts active sharing in the mission of evangelization, charity, and service.<sup>58</sup> Stewardship admits the Holy Spirit’s gracious action that conforms us to Jesus Christ and to

<sup>47</sup> Joseph Ratzinger’s understanding of communion is expressed in this: “I would contribute my charism, if I may call it that, and contribute using the theological experience and competence that had been given to me, so that the Church might be rightly led in this hour and the heritage of the Council rightly appropriated.” Ratzinger, Joseph. *Salt of the Earth: Christianity and the Catholic Church at the end of the Millennium, An Interview with Peter Seewald*, trans. Adrian Walker. SF: Ignatius, 1997, 81-82. Cf. Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan. *Pananábang (communio): A Stewardship Formation Program of the Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan*. Dagupan: St. John Press, 2013, 1.

<sup>48</sup> ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission: The Second Synod of the Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan*, Dagupan, September 2-9, 2017, 81.

<sup>49</sup> See Ratzinger, Joseph. *The GOD of Jesus Christ: Meditations on the Triune God*, trans. by Brian McNeil. SF: Ignatius, 2008, 109.

<sup>50</sup> ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 26.

<sup>51</sup> See Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Vaticano: Liberia Editrice Vaticana, 2005, 194.

<sup>52</sup> See Soriano, Arvin. “The Ecclesiology of Communio of Joseph Ratzinger: Its Impact on the *Pananábang* Pastoral Thrust of the Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan, Philippines.” SThD Thesis, Univ. of Sto. Tomas, 2017, 98.

<sup>53</sup> See Broderick Pabillo, Talk on “Stewardship Challenge to the Church in the Philippines in the Context of the New Evangelization” at Pius XII Catholic Center, Intramuros, Manila (January 22, 2013). In ALD. *Pananábang (communio)*, 4.

<sup>54</sup> See ALD. *Pananábang (communio)*, Introduction.

<sup>55</sup> See Soriano. “The Ecclesiology of Communio of Joseph Ratzinger,” 110.

<sup>56</sup> See ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 14.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Villegas. *On the Five Pillars of Stewardship*, 2.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. LG, 33. Second Vatican Council. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*. AAS 57 (1965).

the Church.<sup>59</sup> It is a sharing of gifts, with the Holy Spirit as a great force in her life and mission.<sup>60</sup> Viewed as GOD's gift and the Church's task, ALD must reach those on society's fringes.<sup>61</sup> *Pananábangán* is a localized expression of stewardship – a sharing of time, talent, and treasure – in a concrete and inculturated way of living ecclesial participation in mission, as gifted and enabled, acting on the call of the times in the synodal journey of hope.<sup>62</sup> It is “being with and sharing in the situation of others,”<sup>63</sup> engaging with those struggling in the growing gap between rich and poor, facing illegal and immoral enterprises, e.g., black sand mining, prostitution, drugs, gambling, corruption, etc.<sup>64</sup>

*Pananábangán's* communio is rooted in the *koinwvía* (*koinonia*) – fellowship – of the Christian proto-community (Acts 2:42; 4:32), a stewardship in communion, a sharing in common in the bond of Christ's love.<sup>65</sup> “All the believers continued together in fellowship and shared their belongings with one another.”<sup>66</sup> Communio leads to valuing others: “Since all the faithful form one body, the good of each is communicated to others.”<sup>67</sup> ALD hopes for a sharing that identifies with Christ in loving service of the Church.<sup>68</sup> Stewardship is a daily personal relationship with the LORD.<sup>69</sup> “To be an authentic ‘manangasikaso’ (steward) is the call to every disciple of Christ in the Archdiocese whose spirituality is centered on *Pananábangán*, a life of communio.”<sup>70</sup> Christian living is Christian sharing; giving is a privilege and a duty of stewards.<sup>71</sup> “A Christian steward is one who receives GOD's gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner, shares them in justice and love with all, and returns them with increase to the LORD.”<sup>72</sup> *Pananábangán* is not only about money.<sup>73</sup> Founded in one's professed faith received in Baptism, stewardship is helps for Church mission with one's time, talent, and treasure, as

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<sup>59</sup> See United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response, A Pastoral Letter on Stewardship*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Washington DC: USCCB, 2002, 17-18.

<sup>60</sup> See Soriano. “The Ecclesiology of Communio of Joseph Ratzinger,” 108-109.

<sup>61</sup> See Soriano. “The Ecclesiology of Communio of Joseph Ratzinger,” 115-116.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Soriano. “The Ecclesiology of Communio of Joseph Ratzinger,” 150.

<sup>63</sup> “Pi-piopol, pitatagnawa, pigagamal, parigo, pi-to-too.” ALD. *Pastoral and Administrative Documents*, promulgated on the occasion of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Assembly. Dagupan City, November 9-December 7, 1996, 68.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Soriano. “The Ecclesiology of Communio of Joseph Ratzinger,” 81-83.

<sup>65</sup> Boñon. *The Pananábangán in Light of the Concept of Participation*, 60.

<sup>66</sup> Acts 2:44.

<sup>67</sup> CCC, 947.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Picardal, Amado. “Active, Seasonal and Nominal Catholics: How many?” *CBCP News*, April 18, 2013, <http://www.cbcpnews.com/cbcpnews/?p=17675>. Accessed: September 13, 2024.

<sup>69</sup> See USCCB. *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, 26-27.

<sup>70</sup> ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 54.

<sup>71</sup> See Cook, Charles A. *Stewardship and Missions*. PA: American Baptist Publishing Society, 1856, 7-8.

<sup>72</sup> USCCB. *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, 48.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Villegas. *Stewardship Homily*, Second Sunday of Lent. March 16, 2014.



received and enabled.<sup>74</sup> “Jesus shines forth as the very center of *Pananábangan*. When we encounter Christ, we are called to this spiritual journey of communion geared towards mission.”<sup>75</sup>

## Ἀντιλήμψεις and Pananábangan

Ecclesiology is central to understanding Paul’s soteriology as salvation with communal reference (e.g., 1 Cor 12:12-27; Eph 2:11-22; Gal 3:26-28; Rom 1:16; 8:24; 11:11, 14).<sup>76</sup> His vision of redemption is inseparable from the identity and unity of the Church as the Body of Christ, where individuals are saved into a community shaped by faith, grace, and mutual belonging. *Pananábangan* profits from Paul’s vision, as an ‘indispensable guide’ to being the Church today.<sup>77</sup> The Church as the Body of Christ in a Spirit-empowered communion is a witnessing community, bonded with the risen LORD, in mutual support and fellowship.<sup>78</sup> This view is rooted in reciprocal gift-giving from gift-receiving that is the Spirit’s.<sup>79</sup> The same direction is hoped to be taken by ALD as its Credo of Stewardship actually reframes 1 Cor 12:28’s ἀντιλήμψεις to *Pananábangan*:

I believe in stewardship. I believe in the GOD of Love, the owner of everything who possesses everyone. I believe in the GOD of mercies who has chosen me to be a steward of Mother Nature and Mother Church, in spite of the infidelities He knows I will still commit. I believe in the power of giving and in the power of loving like Jesus, because love is the only way to holiness, giving is the best proof of loving, and perfect renunciation leads to unlimited fruitfulness. I believe that in freely giving my time, in humbly sharing my talents, and in generously sacrificing my treasures, the LORD will always provide. He will take care of all my needs, and bless me with infinite reward on earth and in heaven. I will be the first to give. I will not wait for the others. I will keep on giving even if others do not give. I will not be afraid to have none. I believe that the best time to share is now, not tomorrow, for tomorrow is an excuse for the greedy. I will keep my needs and wants simple and few, for I believe that in reducing selfishness, I will grow in happiness and holiness. I am a steward of the LORD. I will return all these to Him with abundant yield! Much is asked of me because much has been given to me. I praise the LORD for His kindness to me now and forever. Amen.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Cf. USCCB. *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, 14-17.

<sup>75</sup> Villegas. *Circular Letter 2013-8*.

<sup>76</sup> See Johnson, Luke Timothy. “Paul’s Ecclesiology.” *Cambridge Companion to Paul*, ed. by J.D.G. Dunn. UK: Cambridge Univ. Press (2003): 199-211, 200-201.

<sup>77</sup> See Adams, Edward. “The Shape of the Pauline Churches.” *The Oxford Handbook on Ecclesiology*, ed. by Paul Avis. UK: Oxford Univ. Press, 2018, 141.

<sup>78</sup> See Johnson. “Paul’s Ecclesiology,” 211.

<sup>79</sup> See Johnson. “Paul’s Ecclesiology,” 203-205.

<sup>80</sup> Soriano. “The Ecclesiology of Communio of Joseph Ratzinger,” 175.

ALD's stewardship is hinged on GOD's ownership of everything and possession of everyone, from which is demanded a return of an abundant yield. From Paul's teaching on equal value of each member, *Pananábang* submits, "We are now members of GOD's household, part of His family, not by nature but by grace... His Spirit dwells in us."<sup>81</sup> Stewardship is naming gifts.<sup>82</sup> From GOD came gifts gratefully received and eagerly used for GOD's love and for others.<sup>83</sup> This is true in the term "kabaléyan" (compatriots), a bond shared by all baptized,<sup>84</sup> and "ka-aro" (friendship) on mutual love and support, as "ka-ulop" (companion).<sup>85</sup> The bond is GOD, who is "maabagey" or "manangasi" (merciful), as Himself a "manag-asikaso" (steward).<sup>86</sup> *Pananábang* admits the vision of many parts, one Body; and many gifts, same Spirit.<sup>87</sup> It must be nurtured with care so it steadily grows and bears much fruit for the Church and society in honing the different giftedness as an enabling that calls to be actively lived out.<sup>88</sup> *Pananábang* is inseparable from societal realities and political life, in seeking the common good.<sup>89</sup> In ἀντιλήψεις, gifts received are gifted back to the Church, but must avoid notions of money in divine worship. "Bayar" (payment) does not suit for what is given to the Church; but "nebebetanga'y Dios" (what belongs to GOD), "pisasalamat" (thanksgiving), or "pibibiyang" (sharing).<sup>90</sup> Time, talent, and treasure are GOD's gifts to stewards, given back to GOD without the fear of having none.<sup>91</sup>

"There is no communio without unity of word and life."<sup>92</sup> The Spirit's enabling must be translated into actions: "I will be the first to give. I will not wait for others. I will keep on giving even if others do not give."<sup>93</sup> Concrete actions are demanded in worship by prayer and communion; in teaching by common reflection and formation; and in service as inter-commission-ministry outreach.<sup>94</sup> Formation aims involvement: "We should have more lay leaders active in society than at the sanctuary... the proper sphere for the sanctification of the laity is not inside the

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<sup>81</sup> Abuan, Allan Morris, T. *Pananábang Resource Manual*. Dagupan, 2024, 1.

<sup>82</sup> See Villoria, Angelica B. *Mom's a Stewardess: Stories of Stewardship*. QC: Claretian, 2008, 111.

<sup>83</sup> See Abuan. *Pananábang Resource Manual*, 3.

<sup>84</sup> "Kabaléyan" is from báley, town or baléy, shell or amniotic sac where the unborn baby develops and grows. See Abuan, 1-2.

<sup>85</sup> See Abuan. *Pananábang Resource Manual*, 2-3.

<sup>86</sup> See Abuan. *Pananábang Resource Manual*, 3.

<sup>87</sup> See Villegas. *Circular 2023-17*.

<sup>88</sup> See Villegas. *Circular 2019-18*.

<sup>89</sup> See Villegas. *Circular 2022-37*.

<sup>90</sup> See Villegas. *Circular 2015-18*.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Villegas. *Circular 2013-28*.

<sup>92</sup> Villegas. *Circular 2017-1*.

<sup>93</sup> From *Credo of Pananábang*.

<sup>94</sup> See Villegas. *Circular 2021-36*.

church building but in society.”<sup>95</sup> This must benefit society in truth, solidarity, justice, and freedom.<sup>96</sup> “Lay empowerment is lay formation. There is no real empowerment without formation.”<sup>97</sup> *Pananábangán*’s continuous renewal program is given by the Institute for Faith Formation (IFF) in integral and holistic formation for all ministries,<sup>98</sup> targeting families and the Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC).<sup>99</sup> ALD’s Second Synod affirm the roles of the laity and the clergy in the Church as a “*Communio in Life and Ministry*.”<sup>100</sup> The role of priests is stressed in a formation for all: “The way we manage our temporal blessings from GOD is one of the signs of our *Pananábangán* spirituality.”<sup>101</sup> Priests are not only administrators, but active givers not exempt from sharing their time, talent, and treasure for the Church. Formation leads to growth and holiness towards full, active, conscious participation in the life of the Trinity and of the Church.<sup>102</sup>

*Pananábangán*’s participation in the ecclesial and societal mission is drawn from Jesus, who, in the Eucharist, commands, “Do this in memory of Me.”<sup>103</sup> It teaches faith and morals, social, cultural, and Gospel values as a duty of all the baptized, in prophetic identity and mission.<sup>104</sup> “Life is under threat by crime, by disease, by violence, by sin. We are called upon to stand up and be good stewards of life by the power of prayer and love.”<sup>105</sup> Societal involvement is a gift and a duty that calls for an engagement rooted in Christ.<sup>106</sup> It is a call for participation principled in Gospel values and motivated by concerns for the Church and community. The demand is to make a stand for Christ as the true Church of Christ.<sup>107</sup> In *Pananábangán*, one responds to the call for *communio* through one’s vocation and gifts.<sup>108</sup> We support not from obligation but from GOD’s generous, abundant love.<sup>109</sup> Empowerment is vital for “a Church in *communio* with and for the poor that shall seek to commune with and empower them to be authentic collaborators in the promotion of integral evangelization, total human development, and social transformation.”<sup>110</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Villegas. *Circular* 2016-9.

<sup>96</sup> See Villegas. *Circular* 2020-14.

<sup>97</sup> Villegas. *Circular* 2023-11.

<sup>98</sup> See Art. 53, Decrees In ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 91.

<sup>99</sup> See Arts. 58-60. In ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 92.

<sup>100</sup> See Arts. 112-125, Decrees. In ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 101-104.

<sup>101</sup> Villegas. *Circular* 2024-13.

<sup>102</sup> See Art. 8, Decrees. In ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 82.

<sup>103</sup> See Villegas. *Love is Sacrifice*, Homily for Eucharistic Renewal. September 3, 2023.

<sup>104</sup> See Art. 10, Decrees. In ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 82.

<sup>105</sup> Villegas. *Circular* 2020-4.

<sup>106</sup> See Villegas. *Priests and Politics*, Homily during the Chrism Mass 2022.

<sup>107</sup> Ratzinger, Joseph. *Dogma and Preaching*, Applying Christian Doctrine to Daily Life. SF: Ignatius, 2005, 226-227.

<sup>108</sup> See Soriano. “The Ecclesiology of *Communio* of Joseph Ratzinger,” 130.

<sup>109</sup> See Villegas. *Circular* 2020-36.

<sup>110</sup> Art. 9, Decrees. In ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 82.

*Pananábangan* is deepened in ἀντιλήμψεις, gift of helps, the Spirit's enabling for service and ministry in the Church<sup>111</sup> as a dynamic, transforming, and sanctifying power in the believers.<sup>112</sup> Ἀντιλήμψεις provides hope to the *Pananábangan*, especially in the foundational view of the sharing of one's time, talent, and treasure, recognized as first received as GOD's gift of enabling – of helps in various capabilities. 1 Cor 12:28's diversity of gifts is *Pananábangan*'s stewardship in diversity of capacities – stressing giftedness as the starting point in sharing with the Church's life and mission. The Spirit's enabling secures that everyone contributes as enabled to be able! "GOD's gift provides wisdom, ability, and power to give the needed assistance."<sup>113</sup> Each is gifted to serve and help others,<sup>114</sup> for Church edification.<sup>115</sup> Being in the presence of the Spirit and sharing in the possession of spiritual gifts demands a communal response, an ecclesial giving and ministering – a living and serving together.<sup>116</sup> GOD's generosity<sup>117</sup> in varied gifts and empowerments<sup>118</sup> is lived in *Pananábangan* stewardship. Giving is exhausting, apart from GOD's gift of enabling. Ἀντιλήμψεις assures that one is able to share, give, and serve as enabled, the heart of sharing one's time, talent, and treasure to contribute to the life and building of the Church.

Recontextualizing 1 Cor 12:28 to *Pananábangan* further examines its connection to the themes and nuanced understanding around Paul's ἀντιλήμψεις as a spiritual gift of helps. Bridging his theological frame to *Pananábangan*, this section sets Paul's ecclesiology as not only soteriological and pneumatological but as deeply practical. The spiritual gift of helps offers to view *Pananábangan* as an active, Spirit-enabled stewardship embedded in the communal life of ALD. It is in this convergence of biblical insights and pastoral experiences that thematic discussions on helps — as assistance and support, righteousness and justice, community and mutual aid, gratitude and blessing, and enabling and empowerment—will now be explored.

## Assistance and Support

Ἀντιλήμψεις, as helps also means 'works of charity' and 'gifts of support.'<sup>119</sup>

<sup>111</sup> See Pérez. "1<sup>a</sup> Corintios," 694.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Schoemaker. "The Use of עֲזָרָה in the Old Testament," 61.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Heinrici, Georg. *Das erste Sendschreiben des Apostel Paulus an die Korinther* (1880). MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2010, 409.

<sup>114</sup> Cf. Storms. *Understanding Spiritual Gifts*, 57.

<sup>115</sup> See Pérez. "1<sup>a</sup> Corintios," 647-649.

<sup>116</sup> Cf. Calvin, John. *Commentary on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, trans. by John Pringle. Indiana: Calvin Translation Society, 1848, 272; Meyer, *First Epistle*, 1:382; Lang, *Die Briefe*, 174-75.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Calvin. *Commentary on Corinthians*, 245.

<sup>118</sup> See Harrington. "Charism and Ministry," 245-57.

<sup>119</sup> See Morris, Leon. *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*. England: IVP, 1985, 175-176.

PCP II's preferential option for the poor rings in 1 Cor 12:22 as Paul recalls GOD's choice of what is weak in the world.<sup>120</sup> Church support is a GOD-given task.<sup>121</sup> He desires people's participation in supporting each other by dispensing gifts that aid and help through the Holy Spirit. Spiritual gifts are for communal good as gifts for others (vv. 8,9,11);<sup>122</sup> not signs of heightened sanctity<sup>123</sup> but are for ministry.<sup>124</sup> None is more spiritual than others.<sup>125</sup> In 1 Cor 12, Paul saw the Corinthians in a family likeness.<sup>126</sup> The vocative ἀδελφοί (adelphoi) in v. 1 shows kinship with giftedness as inseparable from others.<sup>127</sup> Helps is a gift and a ministry (v. 7), and members need each other.<sup>128</sup> No individual part may claim not to need other parts. GOD's plan for His church in vv. 12-27 sees every believer's part in Christ's body.<sup>129</sup> Support is required (v. 26), “if one member suffers, all members suffer with it,” and v. 28 declares helps as a gift, closely linked to the confession “Jesus is LORD” (v. 3). While ἀντιλήμψεις is not seen elsewhere in Paul, the idea of helps as a spiritual gift and as a ministry resounds in his other works.<sup>130</sup> Every believer is gifted for service to edify the church and its members (Rom 12:5-8) by rendering practical assistance (Rom 12:7).<sup>131</sup>

*Pananábangan*, as stewardship of gifts, is giving back to GOD in appreciation of the steward's gift in sharing one's time, talent, and treasure. GOD's ownership in everything is the stewards' non-ownership of anything. *Pananábangan* admits an enabling by GOD's gifts. The removal of arancel stresses reliance on GOD's providence and confidence in the stewards' generosity, who hold in trust another's possession: “Giving to the poor is the loving response of the Church.”<sup>132</sup> ALD asserts, “Our immersion and involvement with our less fortunate brethren is our

<sup>120</sup> See Garland. *1 Corinthians*, 596.

<sup>121</sup> Chrysostom's view is supported by Calvin, *First Epistle*, 272; Meyer, *First Epistle*, 1:382; Lang, *Die Briefe*, 174-75; and as probable by Bruce, *1 and 2 Cor*, 123. See also Moltmann's emphasis on charismata and the disabled. But, with J.N. Collins, we should not regard this as *excluding* the gift if assisting in preaching and *especially in mission*. *Mission and outreach require planning and execution*.

<sup>122</sup> See Storms. *Understanding Spiritual Gifts*, 57.

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Robertson and Plummer 1914: 259; Conzelmann 1975: 204; Grudem 1982: 157–60; R. Martin 1984: 8; Fee 1987: 576; 1994: 152–53; Carson 1987: 22; Gillespie 1994: 68–78; R. Collins 1999: 446–47; Hemphill. *You Are Gifted* 9, 95; Storms. *Understanding Spiritual Gifts*, 55.

<sup>124</sup> See Storms, Sam. *Understanding Spiritual Gifts*, 57.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. Garland. *1 Corinthians*, 795.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Thiselton, Anthony. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000, 911.

<sup>127</sup> Cf. Pérez. “1<sup>a</sup> Corintios,” 642.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. Pérez. “1<sup>a</sup> Corintios,” 679.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. Gee, Donald. *Concerning Spiritual Gifts*. MO: Gospel Pub House, 2007, 23. See Ciampa and Rosner, 840.

<sup>130</sup> See Hemphill, Ken. *You Are Gifted, Your Spiritual Gifts and the Kingdom of GOD*. TN: B&H Publishing, 2009, 223.

<sup>131</sup> Cf. Thiselton. *The First Corinthians*, 1019-1020.

<sup>132</sup> See ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 45.



best expression of *Pananábangán*.<sup>133</sup> But the poor are not only recipients, but also dispensers of gifts, sharing in the Church's life and mission as good stewards of their time, talent, and treasure. The poor are formed to see their giftedness, amidst poverty; they are also stewards who give in their own capacities for the Church.<sup>134</sup> Parishioners, for instance, are invited to share any amount they can afford on a regular basis as a sharing of treasure; days are allotted for shared service, such as cleaning the Church or community clean-up and services by parish ministers as a sharing of time; and those who have skills and expertise are made part in some projects as a sharing of talents.

Ongoing regular formation is a must to reawaken the awareness that they can always give to the Church; that as a member of Christ's body, they are important and are needed. The IFF is very inclusive in the formation towards active sharing in *Pananábangán* for "pasimbalo" (renewal). ALD foresees a community where GOD's compassion is felt, not only through the priests but in every member by the common sharing and living of the Gospel message and in the generous sharing rooted in the blessedness that is first received from GOD.<sup>135</sup> *Pananábangán* enables the baptized to recognize their gifts despite societal limitations. Assistance and support are received and given as gifts to edify the Church in ALD.

## Righteousness and Justice

1 Cor 12 is not a moral treatise, but elements of righteousness and justice, communally lived out, appear in Paul's teaching on the distribution and valuation of gifts as the Spirit wills (v. 11) - not all have equal or same function, but none in the body is useless.<sup>136</sup> The various gifts from the same Spirit (vv. 4-7) underlined diversity for communal benefits.<sup>137</sup> Gifted ones must use their gifts to serve GOD's purpose for the Church (vv. 4-6).<sup>138</sup> Each is essential, each has its function, and each is given its place by GOD.<sup>139</sup> Being part of the one body of Christ (vv. 12-14) calls for honor, care, equality, and respect, upholding each member's contribution in unity (vv. 15-17), as different parts of the one body (vv. 21-26).<sup>140</sup> Even the smallest limbs are

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<sup>133</sup> ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 49.

<sup>134</sup> See Soriano. "The Ecclesiology of Communio of Joseph Ratzinger," 128-129.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 76-77.

<sup>136</sup> Cf. Pérez. "1<sup>a</sup> Corintios," 653.

<sup>137</sup> Cf. Garland. *1 Corinthians*, 817.

<sup>138</sup> Cf. Soards, Marion L. "1 Corinthians." *Understanding the Bible Commentary Series*, ed. by Ward W. Gasque, Robert L. Hubbard Jr., and Robert K. Johnston. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999, 269. Digital Ed.

<sup>139</sup> Cf. Ciampa and Rosner. *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 589.

<sup>140</sup> Calvin. *Commentary on Corinthians*, 253-254.

necessary and useful to the whole.<sup>141</sup> “But GOD has united the body, giving greater honor to the lacking in order that there should not be a division in the body, but that the members should have the same concern for one another” (vv. 24-25). Paul, in vv. 27-31, also stresses that diversity must not eclipse giftedness (Eph 4:7), but must allow an active giving as the participation in the kingdom activity.<sup>142</sup>

Justice demands *communio* in giftedness and stewardship of gifts as partaking in the life of the Church and the community. *Pananábang* stands against the perils of individualism, relativism, and indifference by prayerful discernment, reconciliation, as authentic witnesses of Christ as a Church of *communio*.<sup>143</sup> With ἀντιλήψεις to *Pananábang*, giving results from receiving (cf. 2 Cor 9:8-11); sharing from possessing (cf. Acts 4:32); and stewardship from GOD’s gifts and enabling (cf. 1 Cor 12:4-7; 28). It affirms ALD’s vision of the living Body of Christ, honing each member’s gifts and capabilities for ecclesial participation.<sup>144</sup> Giftedness is for communion towards mission, and stewards of GOD’s gifts are not passive beneficiaries.<sup>145</sup> The true Church of *communio* is sustained in stewardship, looking outward, to serve the community, especially the needy.<sup>146</sup> All are gifted (Eph 4:7). The diversity of gifts invites involvement in Kingdom activities, where the help received is given as help, reflecting GOD’s justice and compassion as a response to sanctify the world through the Church in the Spirit’s gifts.<sup>147</sup>

ALD must not be a stranger to the actual needs of its members, and it is with the Holy Spirit, vivifying and animating, that communion with GOD is at the center of the Church’s life and ministry, evident in its actual involvement.<sup>148</sup> “In the Church, nobody is so poor as to have nothing to give, and nobody is so rich as to have nothing to receive.”<sup>149</sup> The Ministry with the Poor makes sure that the deprived are listened to, cared for, and are involved in ALD’s ecclesial journey, a communion in sharing GOD’s gifts.<sup>150</sup> A witnessing Church is a loving Church, and as the recipient of love, the

<sup>141</sup> See Clement of Rome. *First Epistle to the Corinthians* 37:5. In *The Apostolic Fathers*, ed. and trans. by Bart D. Ehrman. Vol. 1. MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2003.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. Hemphill. *You Are Gifted*, 116.

<sup>143</sup> See Soriano. “The Ecclesiology of *Communio* of Joseph Ratzinger,” 143.

<sup>144</sup> See ALD Official Website. <https://lingayendagupan.org/history>. Accessed: August 27, 2024.

<sup>145</sup> See ALD. *Pananábang* (“*communio*”), 103.

<sup>146</sup> See, USCCB. *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, 19.

<sup>147</sup> See Tirimanna, Vimal, ed. *Fifty Years of Asian Pastoral Guidance: Collection of the Statements of the Asian Bishops’ Meeting and the Plenary Assemblies of the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences (FABC) (1970-2020)*, Vol I, FABC, 2020, 277.

<sup>148</sup> See Soriano. “The Ecclesiology of *Communio* of Joseph Ratzinger,” 119-120.

<sup>149</sup> PCP II, 98. See CBCP, Acts & Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, Manila: PCP II Secretariat, 1992.

<sup>150</sup> Cf. Soriano. “The Ecclesiology of *Communio* of Joseph Ratzinger,” 126.

Church's mission is love.<sup>151</sup> "The way we manage our temporal blessings from GOD is one of the signs of our *Pananáangan*."<sup>152</sup> Communio is only understood from Jesus, with the Church as a witness by being poor for the poor.<sup>153</sup> Active immersion in real-life issues and societal conditions makes *Pananáangan* relevant in the peripheries. A clear stand and mobilized advocacies must exist against corruption, abuses, killings, prostitution, moral degradations, environmental destruction, etc.<sup>154</sup> Justice demands accountability, transparency, and responsibility in handling Church properties and finances, and in living the received gifts. It must reflect divine justice from which flows the ALD's life and mission, in *Pananáangan*.

### Community and Mutual Aid

"We are engrafted by baptism into Christ's body, so that we are by a mutual link bound together as members, and live one and the same life, and all who remain in the church of Christ must necessarily cultivate this fellowship."<sup>155</sup> The Church is Christ's body, arranged as GOD pleased (v. 18) with many parts for unity and shared concern (v. 25), a unified entity in its complexity.<sup>156</sup> Diversity is non-contradictory to unity, as gifts function in the body's unity (vv. 4-6).<sup>157</sup> "There are many parts, but one body" (vv. 12-14, 20); "each one of you is a part of it" (v. 27). In the Church, "There is unity in plurality, but not uniformity. Individual integrity remains."<sup>158</sup> The Church is one because every believer is baptized (cf. 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19; Eph 2:21-22).<sup>159</sup> Every baptized must edify the body and bear fruit for GOD (Jn 15:1, 4, 5, 8; Gal 5:22-26).<sup>160</sup> The different gifts, but "the same Spirit" (v. 4), make rivalry unbearable, as He is the agent of unity (Eph 4:3).<sup>161</sup> One's gift is every member's giftedness and ἀντιλήμψεις, as helps in the community, makes giftedness more available to all baptized as the Holy Spirit's enabling lived out in sharing. Paul's vision of the Church highlights a radical interdependence: no one is self-sufficient, and no one is dispensable. Stewardship highlights an entrustment with responsibility, as a sense of dignity.<sup>162</sup>

<sup>151</sup> See Galvao, Henrique N. "The Mystery of the Church in the Theology of Joseph Ratzinger." *Communio*: 37/4 (2010): 712-713, 712.

<sup>152</sup> Socrates Villegas, ALD Circular 2024-13. Re: Fixed Rates for the Sacraments and Sacramentals (May 19, 2024).

<sup>153</sup> See Soriano. "The Ecclesiology of Communio of Joseph Ratzinger," 141.

<sup>154</sup> Cf. ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 116-117.

<sup>155</sup> Calvin. *Commentary on Corinthians*, 251-252.

<sup>156</sup> Cf. Soards. 1 Corinthians, 275-276.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. Pérez. "1<sup>a</sup> Corintios," 672.

<sup>158</sup> Garland, 1 *Corinthians*, 590.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. Pérez. "1<sup>a</sup> Corintios," 669-670.

<sup>160</sup> Cf. Pérez. "1<sup>a</sup> Corintios," 671.

<sup>161</sup> Cf. Pérez. "1<sup>a</sup> Corintios," 649.

<sup>162</sup> Cf. Gen 15:2; 43:19; Jer 22:17-19; Dan 1:11; 1 Chron 28:1; Mt 20:8; Lk 12:42; 16:1-3; Titus 1:7; 1 Cor 4:1-2; 1 Pet 4:10.

*Pananábang* is primarily a communal sharing of gifts and of faith, which does not erase diversity, but calls for unity (1 Cor 12:12-14), moved by the Spirit in love, in Trinitarian communion as the ecclesiological basis of stewardship.<sup>163</sup> *Pananábang* is ALD’s missionary response to PCP II’s vision of the Church of the Poor.<sup>164</sup> It is not just a pastoral technique but an enlivening spirituality.<sup>165</sup> Stewardship is a pattern of life for every baptized as GOD’s children.<sup>166</sup> Christian stewards view gifts in communal contexts, where gifts are received gratefully, used responsibly, shared accountably, and returned to GOD lovingly and justly.<sup>167</sup> It is a result of the professed faith.<sup>168</sup> Fulfilling Church missions can only be adequately supported if GOD’s people fully realize their privileges and obligations as stewards.<sup>169</sup> ALD organized community-building as active involvement, as the “Olupan na Laiko Ed Arkidiosis na Lingayen Dagupan” or ONLA (Communion of the Laity in the ALD) and “Olupan na Kalangueran na Arkidiosis na Lingayen Dagupan” or ONKA (Communion of the Young in the ALD), for the lay and the youth. Gatherings of different commissions and ministries are regularly done to promote unity and togetherness to strengthen the bond for participation and life-sharing in communion. Sharing one’s time, talent, and treasure is a privilege of those who recognize their giftedness in confessing GOD’s ownership.<sup>170</sup> Mutual aid is not charity from the strong to the weak, but the lifeblood of an ecclesial communion animated by the Spirit. Mutuality is in sharing gifts for the good of all, calling the Church in ALD to rediscover synodal identity in walking together in solidarity and grace, dynamically enunciating mutual sharing, a participation in material, social, or spiritual goods to build up others.<sup>171</sup>

## Gratitude and Blessing

GOD is the origin of life, the giver of freedom, the source of all gifts: “The LORD’s are the earth and its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it” (Ps 24:1). Paul, in 1 Cor 12, provided a theological framework for the reception of gifts for the ministry (vv. 1-6), affirming each role in the Spirit’s enabling in the faith community (vv. 7-13), and stressing community for the Church’s vitality (vv. 14-27). The reception of gifts invites grateful receiving with responsible living; gifted ones, i.e.,

<sup>163</sup> Cf. CBCP. *Spirituality of Stewardship in Basic Ecclesial Communities*. <http://cbcpbec.com/?p=830>. Accessed: September 14, 2024.

<sup>164</sup> See PCP II, 122-136.

<sup>165</sup> See Villegas. *On the Five Pillars of Stewardship*, 2.

<sup>166</sup> See Glodava, Mila G. *Joy to Give: Buhay Katiwala at ang Simbahan ng mga Dukha (Stewardship as a Way of Life and the Church of the Poor)*. QC: Claretians Communications, Inc., 2024, 27-30.

<sup>167</sup> Cf. USCCB. *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, 48.

<sup>168</sup> Cf. USCCB. *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, 14-17.

<sup>169</sup> See Cook. *Stewardship and Missions*, 7.

<sup>170</sup> Cf. Gen 1:1, Prov 22:2, Ps 24:1, 89:11, Jn 1:1-3, Eph 3:9, Col 1:15-17, Rev 10:6.

<sup>171</sup> See ALD. *Pasimbalo Seminar Module*. Dagupan, 2020, 31.

enabled to certain services or ministries, must share their gifts (Rom 12:6-8; Eph 4:11; 1 Pet 4:10) to edify the Church. Gratitude from giftedness is not merely an emotion, but an action, a necessary response to the Spirit's generous endowments for the common good (vv. 1-3). Helps as a spiritual gift in v. 28 points that it is received and responded to in the Church. "The Spirit chooses what gift shall be given to each Christian so that none has occasion for boasting or for a sense of inferiority."<sup>172</sup> Spiritual gifts are not for boasting, but for service. The diversity of gifts points to gift-giving and community serving.<sup>173</sup> The inclusion of more 'common' gifts topples any borders of elite and lowly gifts – all are the Spirit's endowments for the Church.<sup>174</sup> It takes away occasions of bragging, envy, haughtiness, contempt, malignity, ambition, and everything of that nature.<sup>175</sup> Spiritual gifts only find meaning when at the service of the Church and of the brethren, where there is authentic joy in sharing, and where giving truly becomes the best proof of loving!

*Pananábang* frames gratitude in its stewardship: we give because we have received, a confession of ALD's blessedness and giftedness, with gratitude as a stewardship response. Christian stewards must mirror, however poorly, Christ's stewardship with gratitude, accountability, and seriousness in mission.<sup>176</sup> The "tawir" (legacy) received as a gift from those who first sowed the seeds of Faith in ALD is handed on as stewardship in sharing this very gift.<sup>177</sup> *Pananábang* calls for a deepened faith lived in people's daily lives.<sup>178</sup> The faith received as a gift is given as "panangibiyang" (offering), a sharing of faith.<sup>179</sup> Pangasinan, as named after 'asin' (salt) – 'panag-asinan' – envisions ALD to be the salt for society, in a mission for social transformation and ecclesial renewal.<sup>180</sup> Both the laity and clergy are recipients of gifts and respond to the call for stewardship in *communio* with gratitude. Parishes in ALD are asked to organize programs that give back GOD's blessings to GOD's People, e.g., preparing hot soups for Sunday Massgoers; Youth Ministers go around for catechesis, team-building, feeding programs, and gift-giving; deserving students are supported by scholarships partnered with Catholic schools and colleges in ALD. Seminarians go to regular community apostolates not only to reach out but to be in touch with the lives of ALD's faithful in stewardship and gratitude. November, as *Pananábang* Month, also reminds not only of the appreciation but of ALD's obligation to be thankful, celebrated in reflections, prayers, updating, formation,

<sup>172</sup> Barrett, Christopher Keith. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. London: Black, 1968, 286.

<sup>173</sup> Cf. Ciampa and Rosner. *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 847.

<sup>174</sup> Cf. Pérez. "1<sup>a</sup> Corintios," 689.

<sup>175</sup> Cf. Calvin. *Commentary on Corinthians*, 259.

<sup>176</sup> Cf. USCCB. *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, 42-43.

<sup>177</sup> See ALD. *Pananisia*, vii.

<sup>178</sup> See ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 16.

<sup>179</sup> ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 32.

<sup>180</sup> See Villegas in a homily on his installation as Archbishop of Lingayen-Dagupan at the St. John Cathedral, Dagupan. November 4, 2009.



training, and community enrichment in the spirit of journeying together as a Church. The Laudato Si' Farm in the compounds of the Santuario de Santa Barbara Holy Family Parish is envisioned to be the practical living out not only of Pope Francis' documents but as a concretization of gratitude and blessing by giving back to nature and by taking care of our common home. Naming blessings is part of the monthly clergy meetings in fraternal bond, and praying together with their shepherds. Formation plans for ministers are opportunities for the appreciation of GOD's grace at work in everyone.<sup>181</sup>

## Enabling and Empowerment

It pleased GOD that the body consists of members endowed with various offices and gifts (v. 18). The Holy Spirit confers and distributes GOD's gifts to all so that no believer is without a gift (1 Cor 12:4).<sup>182</sup> He gives based on His knowledge and sovereignty (v. 11).<sup>183</sup> “Let us, therefore, be subject to the arrangement which GOD has appointed, that we may not, to no purpose, resist his will.”<sup>184</sup> Gifts are special services to the body of Christ;<sup>185</sup> divine communications from the Trinity through the Holy Spirit to the Church.<sup>186</sup> Paul used ἐνεργημάτων (energēmatōn) in v. 6 for GOD's empowerment as GOD's strengthening presence.<sup>187</sup> Gifts are empowerment (vv. 7,11) for service as enabled in capacities. The body metaphor shows diversity as Church empowerment (vv. 12-20), where the different gifts are intentional. The body structuring as GOD intends (v. 25) demands harmony, that no division exists.<sup>188</sup> Paul urges the Corinthians to earnestly seek the greater gifts that build up and strengthen the body (1 Cor 14:12).<sup>189</sup> “Since you are eager for gifts of the Spirit, try to excel in those that build up the Church.”<sup>190</sup> Giving is a steward's duty, and true stewardship in receiving results in true stewardship in giving. “Much will be required of the person entrusted with much” (Lk 12:48).

Empowerment as Spirit-sourced deepens *Pananábang* as a recognition that the lay and clergy are formed, equipped, and sent to serve. Stewardship is possible in the Spirit's enabling gift, and giving is a privilege and duty of Christian stewards.<sup>191</sup> When stewardship is a divine enabling, it becomes sustainable and life-giving.

<sup>181</sup> See ALD. *Pananábang* (communio), 103.

<sup>182</sup> See Calvin. *Commentary on Corinthians*, 247.

<sup>183</sup> Cf. Pérez. “1<sup>a</sup> Corintios,” 647-649.

<sup>184</sup> Calvin. *Commentary on Corinthians*, 254.

<sup>185</sup> See Sumrall. *The Gifts and Ministries of the Holy Spirit*, 26.

<sup>186</sup> Cf. Sumrall. *The Gifts and Ministries of the Holy Spirit*, 44.

<sup>187</sup> Cf. Storms. *Understanding Spiritual Gifts*, 52-54.

<sup>188</sup> Cf. Pérez. “1<sup>a</sup> Corintios,” 684.

<sup>189</sup> Cf. Witherington III, Ben. *Conflict and Community in Corinth, A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 261.

<sup>190</sup> Ciampa and Rosner. *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 855.

<sup>191</sup> See Cook. *Stewardship and Missions*, 7-8.

*Pananábang* calls for “pasimbalo” (renewal) for the Church to be what Christ intended it to be: one, holy, and entirely dedicated to the pursuit of perfection.<sup>192</sup> Stewardship is rooted in giftedness that builds, sustains, and enlivens the Church. Regular and ongoing formation programs for ALD ministers empower them for greater service. *Pananábang* is involved in many national events on stewardship to deepen shared experiences. ALD priests are sent for further studies here and abroad to be more equipped for the formation of future priests, as themselves trained and formed stewards. The Institute of Faith Formation (IFF) and the Mary Help of Christians Seminary System (MHCSS) provide academic formation for both the laity and future priests. ALD also participates in a number of Vatican-hosted activities for enrichment – four ALD priests were among the Missionaries of Mercy, one is a delegate-officer of the Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) Philippines to Germany, and another is a member of the iMission International Digital Catholic Network, a delegate to the World Meeting on Human Fraternity of the Fondazione Fratelli Tutti, a member of the Digital Synod, and a collaborator of the Dicastery for Communication and its representative to the Asian Continental Assembly on Synodality. One ALD priest is a staff member of the Galilee Center by the CBCP Commission on the Clergy. Since *Pananábang*’s launch in 2015, ALD has produced three Pangasinan bishops: Most Rev. (+) Enrique Macaraeg, D.D., bishop of Tarlac (April 1, 2016), Most Rev. Fidelis Layog, D.D., auxiliary bishop of ALD (March 18, 2019), and Most Rev. Rafael Cruz, D.D., bishop of Baguio (June 20, 2024). In ἀντιλήψεις, ALD’s stewardship is a consequence of GOD’s ownership.<sup>193</sup> GOD supplies strength for those who serve others in the Christian community, and the service of a ‘manangasikaso’ (steward) must always be centered on a life of communio.<sup>194</sup>

## Conclusion

Ἀντιλήψεις, as revealed in Paul’s first letter to Corinth and received in the present Church, offers a powerful basis for stewardship not only as a duty but as a Spirit-enabled vocation rooted in grace and what the baptized first received from GOD’s own initiatives. This study presented that “helps” is essential to the Church’s life, inviting believers to participate in the upbuilding of the Body of Christ. Recontextualized in ALD’s *Pananábang*, ἀντιλήψεις takes flesh in a lived spirituality of communion and shared responsibility. It is a communal journey where stewardship flows from an enabling giftedness, leading to active participation in the Church’s mission. The sharing of one’s time, talent, and treasure is not driven by duty but by gratitude and love, an offering in faith, freedom, and joy. In a synodal Church, no gift is too ordinary, and no member is without a role, affirming that the Holy Spirit

<sup>192</sup> See ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 23.

<sup>193</sup> Cf. Exod 19:5, Deut 14:2, Eph 1:14, Titus 2:14, Rom 6:22.

<sup>194</sup> See ALD. *Communio as Gift and Mission*, 54.

equips every baptized with what is needed to serve the Church and society, where stewardship is a gift from GOD and a mission to the Church.

*Pananábangán*, as stewardship in communio through the sharing of one’s time, talent, and treasure, demands a deeper appreciation of each member’s giftedness. Communio asserts to enliven the values of a Christian steward, who, with other members of the Church, holds everything in common (Acts 2:44) as many parts of the one body.<sup>195</sup> It must be clarified that the time, talent, and treasure shared are the gifts of time, talent, and treasure first received. GOD is the source of gifts; GOD takes care of the gifted: “He will take care of all my needs and bless me with infinite reward on earth and in heaven.”<sup>196</sup> The giving of an ALD steward does not come from the pocket, but from GOD Himself. “As stewards of what does not belong to us, we need to take care of them and nourish them. Every talent, every resource that GOD has given us must be taken care of and put to good use.”<sup>197</sup> Giving will never be exhausting if believers see their gifts as a divine enabling from the Holy Spirit. Through the five key notions associated with ἀντιλήμψεις —assistance and support, righteousness and justice, community and mutual aid, gratitude and blessing, and enabling and empowerment—*Pananábangán* emerges not merely as a local church initiative, but as a Spirit-led response to the call for deeper communion and stewardship in the lived realities of the Church.

“Stewardship is essential in the life of Christ’s disciples; to be a Christian is to be a true and committed steward.”<sup>198</sup> Ἀντιλήμψεις stresses that stewardship in *Pananábangán* is not only an obligation but a response to the Spirit’s gift of helps. “The stewardship of disciples is not reducible only to one task or another. It involves embracing, cultivating, enjoying, sharing – and sometimes, also giving up – the goods of human life.”<sup>199</sup> Communio is an invitation to live out the Trinitarian relationship in the actual affairs and issues faced by the Church. In a synodal journey of communion and participation, ἀντιλήμψεις emphasizes that none is without a role, no gift is too ordinary, and no one is not enabled by the Spirit, so all can build up the Church. The Spirit equips not only with gifts, but with the strength and joy to share them with the community for service.

### **Moving Forward...**

The issue raised by Most Rev. Socrates B. Villegas, D.D., in his circular letter on the imposed “payment” for church services is one of the many concerns confronting *Pananábangán*. It is urgent to re-educate ALD of its true meaning and

<sup>195</sup> See Soriano. “The Ecclesiology of Communio of Joseph Ratzinger,” 150.

<sup>196</sup> From *Credo of Pananábangán*.

<sup>197</sup> ALD. *Pasimbalo*, 39.

<sup>198</sup> See ALD. *Pasimbalo*, 37.

<sup>199</sup> ALD. *Pananábangán (communio)*, 73.

practice. Many mistook *Pananábang* as a license to not support the Church, assuming everything to be free. Some parishioners expect services without giving, or only minimally. There is a mismatch between what is expected from the Church and what is contributed. *Pananábang* is still often reduced to “payment” rather than as communal stewardship. The sharing is still fixated on treasure, i.e., money, contributions, donations, fund raisings, etc., with no actual provisions for the use of time and talent in the Church. *Pananábang* is stewardship of GOD’s gifts, in communio, for the good of the Church.

The strong reliance of *Pananábang* on stewardship necessitates an admission that the members of the Church in ALD must learn to see and appreciate their own giftedness from GOD first! Stewardship is not ownership – one can only give because of what was first received from GOD. Giving comes from GOD’s enabling – gifted to give and enabled to be able to serve the Church. Giving in *Pananábang* is giving to GOD for the good of the Church; it is a ministry that must be inculcated and appreciated by all the faithful – how can one be not generous to the generous GOD? Giftedness varies, but all in the Church are gifted. ALD must equally provide or intensify avenues and actual programs for the practice of stewardship of time, talent, and treasure.

The Church in ALD has been blessed with much progress, yet the call to continue walking together in faith remains ever urgent. The backsliding in *Pananábang* calls for it to become more than just a conceptual framework, and must be actualized in the local realities of ALD, beginning with a clear grasp of its definition and meaning in the lives of the faithful. A sincere revisiting and re-evaluation of how *Pananábang* is truly envisioned for ALD is necessary to clarify and renew its practice, so as to deepen it for more lasting effects. The Pauline notion of ἀντιλήμψεις, the spiritual gift of helps, offers a hopeful path forward for ALD’s *Pananábang*, inviting both clergy and laity to recognize the giftedness already present among them and to embrace the purpose of these gifts: to give them back, as stewards of GOD’s gifts, as a ministry for upbuilding of the Church and for the good of the community. Giftedness in the Church is giftedness for the Church. *Pananábang* must begin with the members’ recognition of GOD’s generosity and ownership in everything, responding with a loving and participative concern for the Church. Unless every baptized in ALD realizes that they are vital to the Church’s life and mission – gifted, and enabled – *Pananábang* cannot attain its full potential. Stewardship is inseparable from GOD’s generous bestowal of gifts to all; stewardship is a responsibility to use one’s gifts for the Church and to contribute to its building, enlivening, and maintaining. *Pananábang* is the ALD way, and in ALD, *Pananábang* is the way! In ALD’s *Pananábang*, one declares: “I am a steward of the LORD. I will return all these to Him with abundant yield! Much is asked of me because much has been given to me. I praise the LORD for His kindness to me now and forever. Amen.”<sup>15</sup>

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