

Catholic Church on “EDSA”

—Ecclesial Context, National Strategy, and the Socio-Political Impact—

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This paper deals with how the leaders of the Catholic Church in the Philippines have interpreted the notion of “EDSA” and “People Power” after February 1986 event of peaceful democratization and how such mainline discourse worked in the formation of church renewal programs and political involvement in 1990s. It mainly analyses the discourses on the implication of “EDSA” in the Church official documents as well as the Church’s repeated endeavor for mass mobilization and commemoration of “EDSA Revolution”, and relates them to the ongoing Church renewal endeavor since 1980s. And through such analyses, it shows how the Church was theoretically well prepared for its active role played in the so-called “EDSA 2”, which indicates the most important background for the Church’s confident initiative shown in the process of the ouster of President Estrada. It also shows how the Church’s multi-faceted endeavor for “ecclesial-national” renewal virtually ended up in relying very much on the hierarchy’s leadership role in the blessed “people power” mass mobilization to “cast away the evil”, and how that kind of Church endeavor ended in deeper alienation of laypeople as well as the majority poor. And it also shows how it corresponded to the deep cleavage among “people”, which was drastically shown in the pro-Estrada “EDSA 3” endeavor, and how that suggests the Church’s probable negative role in promoting the confusion of democratic procedure through manipulating the notion of the “holy” authenticity of mass mobilization in favor of its demonstrating the role of “the moral leader of the Philippines”.