



Pag-hinga: linking the Filipino sense of rest and the environment

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Abstract: This paper tries to find meaning on the Filipino's sense of rest and its connection to the environment. The Filipino translation *pahinga* of the word rest incorporates the concept of *hinga* or breath. Breathing, illustrates God's mighty work of giving life and it implicates the very essence of His entire creation or the environment. Rest or *Pahinga*, in Pope Francis' Encyclical letter, *Laudato Si'*, has been regarded as a way of opening our eyes to the larger picture and of giving us renewed sensitivity to the rights of others; making us motivated to greater concern for nature. However, more and more people seem to have a hard time finding a quality rest due to lifestyle concerns and also because of the peoples' misleading notion about rest. This common scenario for many Filipinos may greatly affect our consciousness of the environment and our connection to the goodness of God's creation, thus, disabling us to take good care of it or even finding rest with it. This paper would seemingly give emphasis on the related studies about rest and how it is regarded in the scriptures and in the teachings of the Church. Moreover, it gives a background of the lifestyle of most Filipinos affecting our sense of rest and finding its connection on how we regarded our environment. The purpose of this paper is to emphasize a new yet an unconsciously considered behavior in taking care of the environment; by simply putting rest or *pahinga* into its essentiality.

Key Words: rest or *pahinga*; Filipino; creation; and environment

1. INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding creation is one of the main concerns or points addressed by the social teaching ministry of the Church. To take care of the environment is anchored directly from the pronouncement in Genesis 1:27-28 stating that humans, having been created in the image and likeness of God, are charged to be the stewards of His creation. It served as the very core of human's responsibility to serve and to love the Creator and a constitutive part of his or her human identity (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 452). All human beings are indeed bound to have the ability to work together in building this so called "common home." (*Laudato Si*, 13). Therefore, there is a strong interdependence of God's creatures to one another; to complete each other, in the service of each other (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 340). Human beings have the moral obligation to maintain and preserve this interdependence through solidarity with one another and with the environment.

However, with just mere observance of the status of the environment today, one cannot deny the fact that this moral obligation of safeguarding creation is not being put into practice. One of the primary causes of this crisis on irresponsibility over the role on environmental stewardship is the pretension of exercising unconditional dominion over things or the entire creation (CSDC, 461). When God commanded human beings to subdue the earth and have dominion over the fish of the sea" and others (Genesis 1:28) humans thought that they can lord it over, dominate and do as they want with the rest of creation (Pilario, 2017). Instead of taking accountability and responsibility towards the environment through stewardship, human beings are ensnared of inapt social structures and misleading lifestyles triggered by personal gains or individualism, capitalism, extreme consumerism, corruption and the like. The principle that everything is interconnected, and that



genuine care for one's life and relationships with nature is inseparable from fraternity, justice and faithfulness to others (LS, 70), is oftentimes neglected and worst, unacquainted from one's consciousness.

What can be the root of such behaviour or attitude of human beings towards God's creation throughout the course of human existence, one may ask? Needless to say the historical and economical basis of such behaviour, the paper aims to link such outlook into the last yet fundamental action of God inscribed in the first account of His creation, when He instituted and gave high regard to rest (Genesis 2:3).

Rest in Pope Francis' Encyclical letter, *Laudato Si'*, has been regarded as a way of opening one's eyes to the larger picture and of giving renewed sensitivity to the rights of others; making us motivated to greater concern for nature (237). The current pope bluntly stated this reality. Rest should be given essentiality in the lifestyle of human beings. However, the pope exclaimed that people tend to demean this contemplative rest as something unproductive and unnecessary without realizing that it is the very meaning of work. Emphasizing such idea, he regarded rest as another way of working that forms part of the essence of humanity (LS, 237). In relation to the claims of Pope Francis, the Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes* 14, stresses that human beings are not allowed to despise his or her bodily life and most importantly, humans should regard the body as good and honourable. If human beings would put this into context, it signifies the responsibility of not abusing or exploiting one's body for it is indeed sacred and it shares in the dignity of "the image of God" (CCC, 364). Rest indeed gives men and women the possibility to remember and experience anew God's work, from creation to redemption, to recognize themselves as his work (CSDC, 258). Rest allows one's mind and body to renew itself as it is designed by the Creator since the very beginning. Also, it gives an opportunity for human beings to appreciate and contemplate on and with the environment. Moreover, to rest is a manner of respect to the environment which basically needs rest and refreshment as well (Exodus 23:12). There is indeed a strong connection between the idea of rest and human beings' response to the role of environmental stewardship.

To continue with, human beings need a rhythm of work and rest in order to live up to their God-given potential (Balancing Rhythms of Rest and Work: Overview, 2014). Rest is a sign of holiness just as the Creator Himself values it and characterizes Himself with it. It is not just stopping from work but also a sacred act in accordance to God's design. That is why people who lack rest suffer physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually (Balancing Rhythms of Rest and Work: Overview, 2014). Primarily, to give high regard on rest constitutes the fullness of the existence of human beings interconnected to the rest of God's creation.

The idea of resting in the Filipino translation can also present a much rich understanding on its relationship to God's creation. Rest, if translated in Filipino, is *pahinga*. *Pahinga* incorporates the idea of *hinga* or breath; the very action of God when He created the entire universe. Breathing, illustrates God's mighty work of giving life and it implicates the very essence of His entire creation or the environment. When God started creating, He allowed His breath to flow freely within creation (Genesis 2:8) and thus, highly signifies the very existence of life in all-purpose.

This paper anticipates a much deeper meaning on the Filipino's sense of rest and its connection to the environment. The principle of breathing or *pahinga* may simply be natural course of one's day-to-day life and yet may also give human beings a good opportunity to highly regard his or her environment. The purpose of this paper is to emphasize a new yet an unconsciously considered behavior in taking care of the environment; by simply putting rest or *pahinga* into its essentiality.

The first part of the paper gives a background of the idea of rest in the Sacred Scriptures and in the teachings of the Church. It presents the relevance of rest as a manner of renewal of one's mind and body which furthers the growth of the Christian interior life (CCC, 2186). Furthermore, in this part of the paper, rest is also regarded as a "creation" of God and not just a mere act of stopping from His work in creation. The Sabbath is basically the basis or ground for such understanding on rest. The second part on the other hand, goes straightforward to the Filipinos' sense of rest. There is richness of the meaning of breathing or *pahinga* for Filipinos because it carries such relevance on how they regard themselves and one another. Resting or *pahinga*



for many Filipinos has been greatly affected with the day-to-day struggle in one's personal and social lifestyle. This part pre-emptly the relationship of this *pahinga* on how the Filipinos regard the environment. Thirdly, the paper then directly links the relationship of rest towards the environment. With the long term struggle and challenge of the world, or the Filipinos in particular, in terms of solidarity in taking care of the environment, resting or finding quality rest can be an essential factor in the way human beings can regard God's creation. It renews human beings consciousness of the things around and therefore finding rest with the environment as well.

Since the dire need and calling to take care of the helpless creation is already addressed by the Church and is known to already to the world, this paper would like to pursue resting as a good avenue to concretely realize this responsibility. Apart from the bigger ways in safeguarding creation that the world is trying to take part as of the moment, the paper then goes to a more personal and contemplative way on how to be a good steward of God's creation, by just acknowledging the essence of rest in one's lifestyle. As the Psalmist would say, it is in God alone that human beings can find rest and in bring His salvation (Psalm 62:2) and therefore, everyone is bound to acknowledge this gift of rest and might as well attend to this important task.

2. REST IN THE LIGHT OF THE SCRIPTURES AND CHURCH'S TEACHINGS

As written in Genesis 2:3, "God blessed the Seventh Day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work he had done in creation." To put it directly, God raised the value and dignity of rest as the last yet fundamental act of creating the universe. According to the article "Balancing Rhythms of Rest and Work: Overview" (2014), God interjects the day of rest into the time and space of creation. God Himself rested on the seventh day after six days of creation work (Talbert, 2012). Therefore, the natural act of resting from work is instituted in the very action of the Creator. This day of holiness and rest is called Sabbath, where all unnecessary servile work must then be avoided (Pirlo, 2016). It carries the very meaning of the Hebrew word, *shavath*, which means "rest." God valued rest as much as He valued the creations (Talbert, 2012).

The Decalogue or the Ten Commandments written in the Sacred Scriptures deliberately stated the importance of attending to the needs of the Sabbath. The Third Commandment happens to appear twice in the Sacred Scriptures. Exodus 20:8 states to remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy and on the same note, Deuteronomy 5:12 claims to observe the Sabbath Day and to keep it holy. God preceded this commandment when He exclaimed, "For six days you may do your work, but on the seventh day you must rest, that your ox and your donkey may have rest, and that the son of your maidservant and the resident alien may be refreshed" (Exodus 23:12). The Sabbath, the day of rest, has been given a high priority and served as the summit of the entire week.

The Jewish community strictly abides to this law especially after their exile in Babylon. It was accentuated to a greater degree than ever and it was very definitely connected with the seventh day (Ex. 35:1-2, 31:15-17, Lev. 23:3, Ex. 16:22-26) (Meek, 1914). At the seventh day of each week, in the event of rest, all work should be stopped. It is basically patterned on God's work for six days followed by rest on the seventh. Sabbath, for the Jews, met the universal human need for regular rest and refreshment (The great festivals, 1999). And it remained a lasting tradition in the faith life experience of the Jews. It was to be a day of complete rest and cessation from all toil and business of every kind (Neh. 10:32; 3:15ff.) (Meek, 1914).

For the Jews, observing the Sabbath also includes gathering in the synagogue for worship. Prayers, scriptural readings, sermons, songs incorporate the entire service in the Sabbath. Moreover, the Jews share meals together and exchange Sabbath greetings as part of their sabbatical custom (Pirlo, 2016). Meek (1914) added that the primitive ritualistic conception on Sabbath was revived and enlarged, and the necessity of abstaining from labor was emphasized, not for man's sake, as the prophets would have put it, but as an element of worship--an end in itself.



In the New Testament, Jesus and His disciples, though found a lot of trouble over the Sabbath, added a more dynamic and lawful observance of it, a day of servitude through charitable works. In Mark 2:27, Jesus emphasized that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. Jesus took into account that resting on a Sabbath has to be coupled with good deeds for the benefit of human beings, especially for the sick, the poor and the needy. Moreover, aside from instituting the deeper essence of the Sabbath, Jesus also proclaimed resting as all the more important in one's spirituality and relationship towards Him. Jesus said, "Come to me, all your who laboured and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). He exclaimed that He is the source of rest. He provides it and grants it to those who come to Him. Jesus Himself gives justice of the need to find rest in the very presence of God.

The teachings of the Catholic Church are not far from these words of Jesus. Pope John Paul II, in his encyclical, *Laborem Exercens*, stated that rest from work is a right (19). Human beings are bound to rest from a six-day straight of work. To rest from work is to take one day of rest for recreation and refreshment. It allows the body to renew itself from the work done for the past days and to make one's being ready for the next days ahead. *Gaudium et Spes* 67, a document of the Second Vatican Council, strongly give human beings, being created in the image and likeness of God, the due right to enjoy sufficient rest and free time that allow each one to tend one's family, cultural, social and religious life. To add, rest is perceived as an opportunity to freely develop the energies and potentialities of human beings, and in particular, the workers. It is inhuman then not to let this period of rest to transpire in the course of human life throughout the entire week. For this reason, men and women are to structure their lives to assure that they attend to this social and individual obligation to enjoy sufficient rest (Greenwell, 2012).

Public authorities have the duty to ensure that, for reasons of economic productivity, citizens are not denied time for rest and divine worship (CSDC, 286). The Compendium (286) emphasized that every Christian should avoid making unnecessary demands on others that would hinder them from observing the Lord's Day. Moreover, for Christians in particular, workers take consideration on allocating this period of rest in parallel to the Lord's Day or Sunday. God prohibits any unnecessary servile work on a Sunday and Christian employees must not only sanctify the Lord's Day themselves, but also allow their employees to do the same (Pirlo, 2016). It is the duty of employers to give enough period of time for their employees to rest on a weekly basis and on the same note, allowing them to attend into their religious obligations and practices.

The catechism even expounds this reality on rest. CCC, 2185 has the prerogative of imposing the faithful to refrain from engaging in work or activities that hinder the worship owed to God, the joy proper to the Lord's Day, the performance of the works of mercy, and the appropriate relaxation of mind and body. Indeed, the commandment about rest on the Sabbath or on Sunday is the summit, the high point of biblical teaching about work (Docat, 2016). It is to simply say that work, though indeed a good thing for humanity (*Laborem Exercens*, 9), can only find its fulfilment by an exercise of a dignified and quality rest of the entire being of a person.

Rest therefore is an essential component of the existence of human beings and parcel of what God designed humanity even from the very beginning of His creation. This part of the paper gives the general view of the biblical foundations of rest and how it is regarded in the teachings of the Church. From Sabbath in the Jewish tradition, it is to learn that rest is anchored in the very core of human nature. It is the design caused by the Creator and should be given to the rest of His creatures; not just to human beings but to the world in general. Thus, the Sabbath enacts God's desire to be in intimate relationship with his people. God offers his people weekly refreshment through communion with him and with his creation (*Balancing Rhythms of Rest and Work: Overview*, 2014). Jesus, on the other hand, made this understanding about rest as a responsibility not for oneself alone, but for those people in need by doing acts of charity towards them. It is a moral obligation to alleviate people's misery by allowing the needy to rest from their mishaps in life. Jesus gave a higher degree on the importance of rest as a way of attending to the needs of one another. Moreover, He gave a realization among people that the rest is divinely and freely given unto someone who needs and seeks for it. Rest is then not just a remedy for physical exhaustion but even for emotional and spiritual dimension of human beings.



To support the concept of rest in the Sacred Scripture, the Church brings a more complex and dynamic teaching on rest. Rest is a responsibility in solidarity with one another. It is going to the concept of work or employment. Human beings are called to “imitate God our Creator both in working and also in resting, since God Himself wished to present His own creative activity under the form of work and rest” (LE, 25). As human beings, the natural act of resting should be given dignity and quality over the presence of work. It is a period of refreshment of mind and body to reach the fulfilment of the human existence. Human beings are to elevate rest into something valuable that can help calm one’s days, organize one’s lives, give more time, and help achieve more while working less. (Kim Pang, 2017)

The next part of the paper then would be drawn to a cultural and anthropological understanding on rest; this time in the context of the lifestyle of Filipinos, who happens to address the term rest with *pahinga*.

3. PAHINGA: THE FILIPINO SENSE OF REST

Pahinga is a common term who happens to be communicated verbally in ordinary conversations and chit chats among Filipinos. There are instances that Filipinos unconsciously attribute breathing in a deeper sense. Filipinos, in order to calm down from an extreme emotion such as deep sadness, anxiety, anger or even happiness are asked to just simply breathe (*Huminga ka muna!*, You breathe it out first!) in order to get away from such extreme emotion. Breathing or *Pahinga* exhumes calmness, relaxation and composure among Filipinos. In terms of dealing with untoward health conditions such as fatigue or hyperventilation, to breathe deeply (*humingang malalim*) for Filipinos is a natural way of remedy or first aid. Dealing with stress, Filipinos unconsciously cope with it by breathing outside the place where the stress resides. To take a break from stress at work, at school or even at home is to breathe outside the workplace, the classroom or the house just to get rid of such condition for quite a time. For Filipinos, there is spirituality in breathing. It is recovering from one’s undesirable condition and allowing the breath of life, the Spirit, to transpire and bring back “life.”

Explicitly, this term *pahinga* perfectly describes the creation and the sustenance of life. As mentioned earlier in the paper, there is richness in the meaning of breathing or *pahinga* for Filipinos because it carries such relevance on how they regard themselves and one another. The term *pahinga* in Filipino carries a deeper meaning; that in breathing, there is rest (*pahinga*); that in rest, there is life.

However, resting or *pahinga* for many Filipinos has been greatly affected with the day-to-day struggle in one’s personal and social lifestyle. How do Filipinos regard rest or *pahinga* in the course of their everyday life then? The Catechism for Filipino Catholics (CFC) can provide a relative answer for this. It is stated:

For today’s average Filipino Catholic, further clarification might be needed concerning the “rest” enjoined by the Third Commandment. Basically, the rest on the Lord’s Day concerns more than psycho-physical recreation. It has to do with St. Augustine’s famous words: “Our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee.” It means a rest in God’s presence. In the Letter to the Hebrews we read: “whoever enters into God’s rest, rests from his own works as God did from His. Therefore let us strive to enter into that rest” (Heb 4:10-11). As Christians we have to learn more about the deeper, properly Christian, meaning of both our work and our recreation. (CFC, 918)

What might be the reason for such claim of the catechism that there should be clarification in the understanding on rest for Filipinos? What is the ground for a Christian meaning of work and recreation that Filipinos should understand? This part of the paper focused in dealing with this in the field of work.

The article “Working Hours and Coverage in the Philippines Overview” (n.d.) covers some facts in the field of work in the context of the Philippines. In terms on regular or normal hours of work, any Filipino employee shall not exceed eight hours a day. The eight hours of work includes short duration of rest periods of the employee. To continue with, it is a due right for a Filipino employee to a weekly rest day. It shall be the duty of



every employer to provide each of the employees a rest period of not less than twenty four consecutive hours after every six consecutive normal workdays (Working Hours & Coverage in the Philippines Overview, n.d.). Apart from the rest day, the same article reveals that an employee who has rendered at least one year of service shall be entitled to a yearly service incentive leave of five days with pay. Technically, this covers quite a just share in the work and rest balance in the Philippines.

However, work for many Filipino workers throughout history is experienced as a struggle and a survival (Mañez, 2017). In the Philippine context, issues of unemployment and struggles of workers both local and abroad is indeed a reality (Mañez, 2017). One cannot simply deny the fact that regular work for common Filipinos is not just the only thing that exhausts their time and energy. The long and stressful travel time of Filipinos from their households to their workplace is another major factor affecting sense of rest for many Filipinos. An average Metro Manila resident, mostly working people travelling to and from their office spends 1,000 hours a year in traffic and wastes as much as 28,000 hours of economic life (Mamuyac, 2016). That is as much as three to four hours of time wasted every day for an average Filipino commuter. However, most, if not all, Filipinos are still known to be diligent and resilient despite of this unwanted reality. Filipinos in general are hardworking and passionate people for it brings satisfaction to themselves and most importantly, to their family and community. To add, diligence and hard work are also not limited to employees or workers alone. Housewives or *maybahay* are as much dedicated to work in one's household. It is not fair to justify diligence by just having a regular job because in the Philippines, housewives are working for seven days straight, to attend to the needs and concerns of the Filipino family members; the husband and their children.

Aside from the context of the Filipino workers, the Filipino millennials, those in their 20s to 30s, are then attributed with hard work. According to the survey conducted by FEU, 66.8% of millennial respondents said, "hard work is the most important element of success in Philippine society." It is in contrast to the common belief that millennials are lazy and entitled, they could be extremely hard working and motivated to go above and beyond to accomplish their tasks (The Pinoy Millennial, 2016). This goes to show that the majority of Filipino millennials go extra mile in doing their works and that served as the top of their personality.

The Catechism for the Filipino Catholics however notes a quite alarming reality in this. CFC 920 claims that being active and industrious is a highly praised virtue these days, yet some people can become so "task-oriented" that they lose all sense of proportion. The same article in the catechism presumed that some people's own efforts become an "idol" for them. In addition to that, they tend to judge everything, even their friends and neighbors, uniquely in terms of usefulness and productivity.

One may ask, where is the period of quality rest in that kind of lifestyle? Are the situations, experiences and perceptions by most Filipinos grounds of discriminating the very own sense of rest? Do they simply regard Sunday or rest day as a day of sleeping for getting a full blown physical rest or recreation? The common scenario mentioned above about the lifestyle and attitude for many Filipinos with regards to rest may greatly affect their consciousness of the environment and their connection to the goodness of God's creation, thus, disenabling them to take good care of it or even finding rest with it. (Sunday) Rest means a rest in God's presence, involving a freeing of the self from heightened anxiety, from hyperactivism, and from preoccupation with competition for success (CFC, 934). Indeed, more and more people seem to have a hard time finding a quality rest due to lifestyle concerns and also because of the peoples' misleading notion about rest. No one can simply disagree to that. Filipinos are losing the very essence of *paghinga*; to breathe once in a while in order for rest to interfere in an individual's persona and being.

Supporting the ideas mentioned above is written in a journal of Reyes (2014) entitled, Environmental Attitudes and Behaviors in the Philippines. Reyes (2014) claims that environmental movement was supported by the church and community action. In his journal, however, he gave emphasis that there is no significant increases found in environmental behaviors among Filipinos over the past two decades based on the data from the environment modules of the International Social Survey Programme in 1993, 2000, and 2010. For years now, it is saddening that Filipinos tend not to attend to the major responsibility of taking care of the



environment and take charge in its preservation and protection. Though it is true that ecological awareness is being promulgated and well-known to the general Filipino community and that Filipino millennials also tend to be concerned with the environment citing (Arcinue and Grata, 2016), the country is still at the brick of losing its rich ecological status if this awareness and concern for the environment would not be put into action by the majority.

Environmental attitudes in the Philippines were found to be comprised of negative statements that express both anthropocentric and ecocentric perspectives, this can be interpreted as a reflection of Philippine environmentalism at the individual level (Reyes, 2014). It is alarming indeed since the reflection goes straightforward to the Filipino self. To continue presenting the article of Reyes (2014), he mentioned some recommendations for future research such as considering and exploring other forms of environmental behavior that specifically relate to conservation, biodiversity, and other ecological concerns.

The Church in the Philippines is very much active to address the environmental concerns in the country. In fact, the first apostolic letter in the world about the topic on environment entitled, "What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land?" in the year 1988 by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) called everyone for a commitment, respect and a defence to life and the environment. The bishops claimed that human beings cannot continue to ignore and disregard the earth. The Philippines, as what was described in the apostolic letter, fashion by the Creator with life, color, mutual support and fruitfulness should be maintained, preserved and taken care of. Fifteen years after, Bishop Quevedo (2003) preceded the apostolic letter with another one entitled, "Celebrating Creation Day and Creation Time." He stated that indeed, the Church calls the Filipino people to conversion regarding ecological concerns. To continue with, the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines strongly supports this respect for material creation in its appeal for "a passionate care of our earth and our environment" to preserve the "integrity of God's creation" (PCP II 79, 321-24).

What must Filipinos do with that problem in environment in a society that has no time, nor consciousness of taking rest? How can people give the environment a chance to rest at some point in its existence?

This paper, as explored previously, is pointing out to this behavior, the very action of resting or *pahinga*. It is about time to live in solidarity with creation and acknowledge that humans are deeply connected with it (Simeon, 2017) and this paper offers to put into attention the value of rest. As mentioned earlier in the paper, breathing, illustrates God's mighty work of giving life and it implicates the very essence of His entire creation or the environment. Therefore, one may not do away with the strong relationship of resting in order to take the full responsibility in stewarding God's wonderful creation. The Filipino term *pahinga* states this directly. And it is given a discussion on the latter of the paper.

4. REST AND THE ENVIRONMENT

According to Talbert (2012), rest is something one must discipline oneself to do just like all those other tasks. Rest is as necessary as ever. It remains the pattern God lays out for people made in his image (Balancing Rhythms of Rest and Work: Overview, 2014). Aside from the mental and physical health benefits of adequate rest, (Glass, et al, 1999), rest is undeniably a key to a better life (Kim Pang, 2017).

However, human beings tend to neglect the nature of rest as God's wonderful design. For most people, to rest is to be idle. Human beings demean contemplative rest as something unproductive and unnecessary (CCC, 2175). It has lost its sacredness through the misleading notion of people about it that is far from the principle that it is the very model in creation and God's model in redemption (Balancing Rhythms of Rest and Work: Overview, 2014). The same article claims that when people partner with God in his work of restoring the world to his original intention, the Holy Spirit empowers them to deepen their relationships with others. The negligence to rest on a deeper sense is not solely affecting the personal and social being of the human beings, but it greatly affects the environment who has not given by human beings the opportunity to rest per se. In



relation to this, Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle on his homily last September 1, 2015 exclaimed that as human beings rest, it does not only allow the body to recuperate; but it also allows the earth to rest as well (Esmequel II, 2015).

Human beings and the rest of the creatures live because the environment does live. According to the scientist and environmentalist James Lovestock, as cited in the work of Pilario (2017), it is not the creatures such as humans, animals and plants that sustain life on Earth. Rather, these creatures, including people, live because the Earth does. If human beings acknowledge that the environment is a living creature, it strongly connotes that indeed, it has the right to rest as well. The environment is exploited and abused by interest groups who have no respect for the environment as a common good (Tabora, 2014). And it is to be strongly affirmed that the exploitation and abused done to the environment is primarily done when human beings does not give importance to rest. Pope Francis in his Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* (82) exclaimed this when he addressed that if nature is viewed solely as a source of profit and gain, this has serious consequences for society. Through the course of human existence, the environment has been in service to the rest of the creatures by providing everything to them. But as human beings continue to get unjust and corruptible gains from the environment unceasingly, it could definitely give a great and destructible impact into the society and into the world, in general.

The attitude that must characterize the way man acts in relation to creation is essentially on of the gratitude and appreciation; the world, in fact, reveals the mystery of God who created and sustains it (CSDC, 487). This sense of gratitude towards God for His creation can only happen with a sense of rest or a period of contemplation. It is but true that human beings can effectively value and appreciate God's mighty work in creation through a quality time with the environment and on the same note, finding rest with it.

In *Gaudium et Spes* 35, every human activity is to correspond, according to the design and will of God, to humanity's true good; and so as rest. This human activity gives the people an avenue to contemplate on the works one has done in imitation to what the Creator did. It goes to show the words of Pope Francis that everything is connected and concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society (LS, 91).

Pahinga or rest is a critical movement in the way human beings treat the environment. Rest might be a small step towards environmental stewardship but human beings must not think that these efforts are not going to change the world (LS, 212). Other active behaviors of taking care of the environment are indeed essential, yet without a sense of renewal of one's body and spirit, this call for stewardship will not reach its fullness and perfection. It is putting humanity and nature a relationship by allowing the environment rest through the interconnectedness and presence of human beings. Serious ecological problems call for an effective change of mentality leading to the adoption of new lifestyles (Centesimus Annus, 36). It is also a call inspired by Pope Francis that humanity should recognize a change of lifestyle (LS, 23) and that is to alleviate the value of rest.

5. CONCLUSION

When God created man and woman, He breathes into them His own breath signifying their very nature of giving life (Genesis 2:7). It is *paghinga*; it is in rest that we can get and renew life from God. But the problem nowadays, rest is considered a waste of time rather than an essential requirement for the human mind, body and spirit (Talbert, 2012). Saint Bonaventure, as cited in *Laudato Si'* (233) teaches us that "contemplation deepens the more we feel the working of God's grace within our hearts, and the better we learn to encounter God in creatures outside ourselves." It is in resting that human beings can take part into the creative and wondrous work of the Creator.

Moreover, rest is not just an act of human being; it is also the environment who serves as the main



beneficiary if human acknowledged rest religiously. For billions of years, the environment has been in service to the rest of the creatures. And to give an avenue for this gift to rest is what the environment truly deserves in return.

This paper proposes that indeed, safeguarding creation is part and parcel of being a total human being. As what the Catholic Social Teachings of the Church has been advocating, humans are bound to work not only for his own dignity but for his environment. Responsibility for the environment, the common heritage of mankind, extends not only to present needs but also to those of the future (CSDC, 467). The paper then offers a way of attending into this responsibility by acknowledging the sense of rest.

For the Filipinos, the very essence of this rest is to breathe. It carries richness in meaning and profoundness in action in terms on the Filipinos' possible response to environmental stewardship. The author of this paper believes that with the capacity of the Filipinos to be hard working by all means comes that also possibility of taking this personal and contemplative step towards environmental stewardship, the very action of rest.

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to extend his appreciation to the people who have been very supportive to him throughout the completion of his paper. Special thanks are given to his family, especially to *Mr. and Mrs. Jerry and Virginia Fernando*, *Ms. Faye Regine Sedo*, friends from College of San Benildo – Rizal, DLSU Community, *Dr. Dorothy Javier – Martinez* and *Sr. Auria Arabit, SdP*. And most especially to the Almighty God who is the source of his inspiration, knowledge and wisdom and for the gift of His *pahinga*.

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