

**Thesis Title: THE VALUE OF THE BELIEF IN PHII POOTA FOR THE
ISARN CATHOLICS**

Researcher **Mr. Thaiwat Nilkhet**
ID Code **3619501**

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Thesis Advisors **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Seri Phongphit**

Thesis Co-Advisors **Asst. Prof. Artha Nantachukra**
 Prof. Kirti Bunchua

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ABSTRACT

The belief in *Phii Poota* is a cultural belief which has been contextually benevolent to the Isarn villagers for a long time. It holistically enhances the quality of the Isarn villagers to be ethical persons in their community according to ancestral authority under the influence of invisible supernatural entity. It helps villagers form their ethical attitude, their authenticity without juridicial officers. In addition it is a transcendental means which the Isarn sages use to form solidarity within their communities. It is based on the perception of ancestorship which molds the Isarn villagers to be grateful since *Phii Poota* is not meaningless but it carries the concept of the soul of a significant ancestor who has kept on taking care of villagers who are his descents to live happily since he was alive. This is the primary source of endless love which everyone requires.

But when the Isarn Catholics experience this belief they deny the essential value of the Isarn villagers because of the influence of extreme ethnocentrism and triumphalism which the Catholic Church under her concept of superiority influences her believers. This attitude does not exclude only native villagers of the Isarn region from knowing the spirituality of the Gospel but it also alienates their Catholic spirituality as well. It occurs as such because the negative attitude destructs the radical element which human being has to stand on for earning their concrete happiness in their life: the institution of the family.

Though the Second Vatican Council gives local churches the permission to apply worthy cultural factors in the form of contextual inculturation to improve their Catholic spirituality the Isarn local church has not, so far, started seriously.

This research clarifies the contextual meaning of the belief in *Phii Poota* to promote the positive value as well as indicate implicitly the misunderstanding the Isarn Catholic local church has perceived. It also guides the local church to do contextual inculturation in looking for the value of the kingdom of God in local area. The research proposes the simple thought for Catholic faithful that those who want to reach the final goal of life which Jesus Christ has prepared for them they have to start from what they are. Therefore it is impossible to achieve real holiness without being a real and full human being.