

Fr. Charles Puthota's Blog

May 16, 2021

From the Pastor's Desktop



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines, Our Parish Celebration: As you may be aware, the Church in the Philippines and the Filipino diaspora around the world are celebrating "500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines." With joy and gratitude, we observe this occasion at St. Elizabeth Church this Sunday May 16, 2021 at the 11:30 a.m. Mass presided over by our Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone.

You may recall that Pope Francis celebrated a special Mass at St. Peter's Basilica on March 14 in Rome to mark the 500th anniversary of Christianity in the Philippines and urged the Filipinos to "persevere in the work of evangelization." Joined him at the Mass were several representatives of the Filipino Church, including Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, the former Archbishop of Manila who is now prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. Pope Francis recalled that when the Christian message first arrived in the Philippines five centuries ago, "You received the joy of the Gospel: the good news that God so loved us that he gave his Son for us. And this joy is evident in your people. We see it in your eyes, on your faces, in your songs and in your prayers... I want to thank you for the joy you bring to the whole world and to our Christian communities." The Catholic Church in the Philippines inaugurated the year-long celebration on Easter Sunday April 04, 2021 to last through the end of April 2022. The theme of the jubilee celebration is "Gifted to Give."

"It was 500 years ago, in 1521, that the Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan, representing the Spanish Empire, arrived in the Visayan region of the Philippines. Thus began the process of European colonization, which eventually led to the establishment of Christianity. To this day, the Philippines remains the only major predominantly Catholic nation in Asia" says Fr. Ricky Manalo.

Congratulations to the Filipino community at St. Elizabeth Parish and in the Archdiocese who are marking this 500th anniversary with pride, joy, and gratitude! I want to thank you for all the blessings of God that you bring to our community at St. Elizabeth. Your faith, joy, kindness, generosity, and hospitality are an inspiration to the whole parish community---and to me personally as well.

Thank you, Archbishop: Our Archbishop's presence at our parish this Sunday says a lot about his regard for our parish and the Filipino faithful here and in the whole Archdiocese. His readiness to lead our prayerful, joy-filled celebration at Mass is much appreciated. On behalf of St. Elizabeth parish, I would like to thank our Archbishop.

Ascension Sunday: Having accomplished his Father's redemptive mission, Jesus now goes back to the Father. He does not leave us orphans, though. He will send us the Holy Spirit, which we will celebrate next Sunday. He has also assured us that he will be with us always, even to the end of time. During Jesus' public ministry, he could not go to every place and every nation. Now he wants us to go and share the good news with everyone in the world. We are the messengers. Not only are we messengers. We are witnesses. All of us who have experienced Jesus as our way, the truth, and the life, we are to go and witness to others. In our words and deeds, in our values and vision, we are to make Christ known to the world.

This is the meaning of the feast of Ascension. Jesus has passed on the baton to us. We have to carry it to others. The relay race is on. We are to do our part in taking Christ to our own family and friends, and beyond. We are "missionary disciples." The angels said at his Ascension: "Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven." Until Jesus comes back to fulfill the destiny of the whole universe, which we call his Second Coming, we have a mission to accomplish as Christians. We have love to share, forgiveness to offer, mercy to show, justice to establish, and dignity to uphold. We have the hungry to feed, naked to clothe, strangers to welcome, prisoners to visit, homeless to shelter. Jesus needs us. We are his eyes and heart, his hands and feet. The message of the Ascension is for us to continue and complete the mission of Christ. Are we ready and willing?

Inspirational Quotes: 1. "Try not to become a person of success. Rather become a person of value." -- Albert Einstein. 2. "It's fun to do the impossible." --- Walt Disney. 3. "To reach a port, we must sail--sail, not tie at anchor---sail, not drift." --- Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Jokes: 1. Dad writes on son's Facebook wall: "Dear Son, How are you? All are fine here. We miss you a lot. Please! Turn off the computer & come down for dinner!!!!". 2. Man to miser: Why do you always remove the batteries from the clock and keep them outside? Miser: I want to extend the battery life and hence I put them in the clock only when I want to see the time. 3. Employee: I got to have salary increment. Three other companies are after me. Boss: Really? Which are the three companies? Employee: The electric company, the telephone company and the gas company. 4. Criminal: Your money or your life ...Benny: [Pause.] Criminal: Look, bud. I said your money or your life. Benny: I'm thinking it over.

Wishing you God's abiding presence, intimate grace, and abundant love, to you and your families,

Your Friend & Pastor,

Fr. Charles Puthota