



The Filipino's veneration of the Child Jesus, Sto. Niño, may be seen from the joyous celebration of Sinulog, Dinagyang, Ati-atihan, and other colorful festivals. Tourists attracted to the pageantry swell the local devotees' ranks whose merriment is firmly anchored in faith. Today, let us continue to deepen our faith in the Child Jesus as we listen to the liturgy of the word.

Jesus has just answered questions on marriage and divorce. As the disciples seek further clarification, people bring their children to Jesus for his blessing.

The first lesson is contained in this statement: "People were bringing children to Jesus that he might touch them." Remember when you invited a friend to your house and introduced him or her to your parents and siblings? Or, if you are a parent, call to mind a time when a son or daughter brought home a friend. You welcomed that person knowing that he or she was dear to a member of your family. Jesus, the apostle Paul tells us in his letter to the Ephesians, exemplifies this attitude. Through him, the heavenly Father destined us for adoption to himself as his adopted children (cf Eph. 1:3-6). In these festivals, it is not enough to offer the visitors tuba or lambanog, smear black grease on them, or share

## RISING TO A DUAL CHALLENGE



by Bro. Hansel Mapayo, SSP

funny stories punctuated by peals of laughter. We are challenged to lead them to our loving Father through our devotion to the Child Jesus.

A situation illustrates the second lesson. The disciples rebuke the people for bringing the children to Jesus. But Jesus becomes indignant and tells them: "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these." He adds: "Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the Kingdom of God like

a child will not enter it." Jesus does not only tell us the place and importance of a child in our midst; he also says that to enter God's Kingdom we must emulate them.

The third lesson may be gleaned from the actions of Jesus: "Then he embraced the children and blessed them, placing his hands on them." Being embraced like a child is so comforting that it is easy to be childlike and entrust ourselves in Jesus' care. Just as a shepherd takes the lamb in his arms, Jesus holds us close and blesses us. But we are also challenged to be Christ-like. A poet-friend once told me how she felt dealing with her wayward son and how she would pray to God to lay his hand on her and her son. She shared, "Every time my son whom I carried in my womb for months comes to me and lies or makes a fool out of me, I consciously say good words, after making him see the bad things he is inflicting upon himself (which also make me suffer), hoping that someday, this 'benediction' will heal not only him but also me."

As we celebrate the Feast of the St. Niño, let us resolve to take up the dual challenge to be childlike and Christ-like, trusting in God's loving care, giving thanks for all his blessings, and sharing these—and our faith in a loving and caring God—with everyone.

### PASTORAL CATECHESIS FOR THE YEAR OF MISSION *AD GENTES*

#### *Promoting the Faith and Justice*

Fr. James H. Kroeger, MM

In the Philippine context, the Spanish system of the *Patronato Real* or royal patronage facilitated the implementation of the Church's mission program. Under this arrangement, the Spanish crown gave financial support and protection to the Church while exercising a large measure of control over its activities. Missionaries traveled to the Philippines in the king's ships. While engaged in mission work, they were entitled to a stipend from the colonial government.

The early missionaries often sought to protect the natives from the abuses of the conquistadors and *encomenderos*;

they had a vigorous leader in Fray Domingo de Salazar, OP, first bishop of the Philippines. The synod that he summoned in 1582 clarified many difficult problems regarding the conquest, settlement, and administration of the country in accordance with Christian ideals and principles of justice.

The Philippine Church of the sixteenth century certainly took sides, and it was **not** with the rich and powerful nor with their fellow Spaniards, but with those who were oppressed and victims of injustice. Philippine Church historian Schumacher notes: "Skeptics have often questioned the reality of the rapid conversion of sixteenth-century Filipinos. If one wishes the answer, it is to be found right here, that the Church as a whole took the side of the poor and the oppressed, whether the oppressors were Spaniards or Filipino *principales*."

## THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

### Entrance Antiphon

*(Recited when there is no opening song.)*

**A child is born for us, a son given to us; dominion is laid on his shoulder, and he shall be called Wonderful- Counselor.**

### Greeting

*(The sign of the cross is made here.)*

**P** — The Lord be with you.  
**All** — **And with your spirit.**

### Introduction

*(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)*

**P** — The devotion to the Holy Child is the oldest and one of the most popular in the Philippines, so popular that the Holy See granted us special permission to celebrate the Feast of the Sto. Niño every third Sunday of January. The feast brings to our attention the mystery of childhood. This means having the open and trusting disposition to accept the Lord's gifts with gratitude and without reservation, while seeing ourselves as humble stewards who serve the Lord in the least of our brothers and sisters.

### Penitential Act

**P** — Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries. *(Pause)*

**All** — **I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, (strike your breast) through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.**

**P** — May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

**All** — **Amen.**

**P** — **Lord, have mercy.**

**All** — **Lord, have mercy.**  
**P** — **Christ, have mercy.**  
**All** — **Christ, have mercy.**  
**P** — **Lord, have mercy.**  
**All** — **Lord, have mercy.**

### Gloria

**All** — **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

### Collect

**P** — Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Almighty God, your only Son, begotten from all ages, humbled himself as a child in Nazareth and became subject to Mary and Joseph. Grant that we may learn from his example to embrace your will in all things and, holding fast to the dignity of all, serve our lowly brothers and sisters with open hands and gentle heart.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

**All** — **Amen.**

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD



### First Reading (Is 9:1–6) *(Sit)*

*Isaiah prophesies that through the child who shall be called Prince of Peace, the Lord will grant peace and rejoicing to his people.*

**A reading from the Book of Prophet Isaiah**

THE PEOPLE who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone. You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing, as they rejoice before you as at the harvest, as men make merry when dividing spoils. For the yoke that burdened them, the pole on their shoulder, and the rod of their taskmaster you have smashed, as on the day of Midian. For every boot that tramped in battle, every cloak rolled in blood, will be burned as fuel for flames.

For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace. His dominion is vast and forever peaceful, from David's throne, and over his kingdom, which he confirms and sustains by judgment and justice, both now and forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

— The word of the Lord.

**All** — **Thanks be to God.**

### Responsorial Psalm (Ps 98)

**R** — **The Lord is King; let the many isles be glad.**

Fr. Dindo Purto, SSP

The - Lord is King;  
let the ma-ny isles be glad.

**1.** Sing to the Lord a new song, /for he has done wondrous deeds;/his right hand has won victory for him,/his holy arm. **(R)**

**2.** The Lord has made his salvation known:/in the sight of the nations he has revealed his justice./He has remembered his kindness and his faithfulness/toward the house of Israel. **(R)**

**3.** All the ends of the earth have seen/ the salvation by our God./ Sing joyfully to the

Lord, all you lands;/ break into song; sing praise. (R)

4. Sing praise to the Lord with the harp,/ with the harp and melodious song./ With trumpets and the sound of the horn/ sing joyfully before the King, the Lord. (R)

### Second Reading (Eph 1:3–6, 15–18)

*God loves us and has made us his adopted children in Christ. Paul reminds us to live up to our dignity by leading a holy and blameless life.*

### A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

BLESSED BE the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens, as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before him. In love he destined us for adoption to himself through Jesus Christ, in accord with the favor of his will, for the praise of the glory of his grace that he granted us in the beloved. Therefore, I, too, hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and of your love for all the holy ones, do not cease giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a Spirit of wisdom and revelation resulting in knowledge of him. May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones.

— The word of the Lord.  
**All — Thanks be to God.**

### Alleluia (Jn 1:14,12) (Stand)

**All — Alleluia, alleluia. The word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. Alleluia, alleluia.**

### Gospel (Mk 10:13–16)

P — A reading from the holy

Gospel according to Mark  
**All — Glory to you, O Lord.**

PEOPLE were bringing children to Jesus that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he became indignant and said to them, “Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the Kingdom of God like a child will not enter it.” Then he embraced the children and blessed them, placing his hands on them.

— The Gospel of the Lord  
**All — Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### Homily (Sit)

### Profession of Faith (Stand)

**All — I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.**

**I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,**

*(At the words that follow up to and including and became man, all bow.)*

**and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and**

**glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.**

**I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

### Prayer of the Faithful

P — The Holy Child reminds us of God’s power at work in our humility and weakness. Let us pray with confidence to the Father, for we are all his children. Let us say:

**R — Listen to the prayers of your children, Lord.**

C — May the Pope, bishops, priests, and all religious always aspire for the Gospel values of love, humility, and service rather than power and influence. We pray: (R)

C — May our civil and political leaders may become fully convinced that true greatness is attained through service and care especially for the weak and those who have less in life. We pray: (R)

C — May the poor, the marginalized, and the victims of violence in our society derive strength from the conviction that they have a special place in Jesus’ heart. We pray: (R)

C — May our devotion to the Sto. Niño help us grow in “wisdom and grace” before God, keep the spirit of a child, and live with our brothers and sisters in openness, freedom, and friendship. We pray: (R)

C — May the Lord welcome into the Paradise our departed loved ones. We pray: (R)

C — Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (*pause*). We pray: (R)

P — Heavenly Father, listen to our prayers. Give us the courage to do your will so that we may be worthy to share the eternal happiness of your kingdom.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All — Amen.**



**Presentation of the Gifts** *(Stand)*

**P** — Pray, brethren...

**All** — May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

**Prayer over the Offerings**

**P** — God, our Creator, we offer the gifts of bread and wine to recall the childhood of your only Son. Let our offering become the sacrifice of him who brought forgiveness and peace to the world.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All** — Amen.

**Preface II: The Nativity of the Lord**

**P** — The Lord be with you.

**All** — And with your spirit.

**P** — Lift up your hearts.

**All** — We lift them up to the Lord.

**P** — Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All** — It is right and just.

**P** — It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For on the feast of this awe-filled mystery, though invisible in his own divine nature, he has appeared visibly in ours; and begotten before all ages, he has begun to exist in time; so that, raising up in himself all that was cast down, he might restore unity to all creation and call straying humanity back to the heavenly Kingdom.

And so, with all the Angels, we praise you, as in joyful celebration, we acclaim:

**All** — Holy, Holy, Holy... *(Kneel)*

**Acclamation** *(Stand)*

**All** — Save us savior of the world for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free.

**THE COMMUNION RITE**

**The Lord's Prayer**



**MAY DEPARTURES**

**Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein & Switzerland (May 12 - 24, 2022)**  
with Fr. Alex Thomas

**MARIAN JOURNEY (May 13 - Jun 1, 2022)**  
Portugal, Spain, France, Germany & Italy  
with Fr. Arvin Soriano

**CENTRAL EUROPE (May 15 - 28, 2022)**  
Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg & Germany  
with Fr. Jun Sescon

**BALKANS (May 15 - 30, 2022)**  
Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia Hercegovina  
with Fr. Jerome "Jigs" Rosalinda

**OBERAMMERGAU DEPARTURES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE IN SEPTEMBER.**

**WE ALSO OFFER HOLY LAND, MARIAN, EASTERN EUROPE, BALKANS, GREECE AND TURKEY, MEXICO TOURS & PILGRIMAGES.**

Call us at (+632) 8929-0144 or (+632) 8929-0155  
+63917-5616440 (Globe) & +63999-9935580 (Smart)  
join@journeys.com.ph | www.journeys.com.ph



**All** — Our Father...

**P** — Deliver us, Lord...

**All** — For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.

**Invitation to Peace**

**Invitation to Communion**  
*(Kneel)*

**P** — Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

**All** — Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

**Communion Antiphon (Lk 2:51)**

**Jesus went down with Mary and Joseph and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them.**

**Prayer after Communion**  
*(Stand)*

**P** — Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Loving Father, you have nourished us at the banquet in honor of the Child born of the Virgin. We pray that we may advance in wisdom and grow daily in faith and works of love, so that we may find favor in your sight.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All** — Amen.

**THE CONCLUDING RITES**

**P** — The Lord be with you.

**All** — And with your spirit.

**Solemn Blessing**

**P** — Bow down for the blessing. *(Pause)*

May the God of infinite goodness, who by the Incarnation of his Son has driven darkness from the world and by that glorious Birth has illumined this most holy day, drive far from you the darkness of vice and illumine your hearts with the light of virtue.

**All** — Amen.

**P** — May God, who willed that the great joy of his Son's saving Birth be announced to shepherds by the Angel, fill your minds with the gladness he gives and make you heralds of his Gospel.

**All** — Amen.

**P** — And may God, who by the Incarnation brought together the earthly and heavenly realm, fill you with the gift of his peace and favor and make you sharers with the Church in heaven.

**All** — Amen.

**P** — And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (+) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.

**All** — Amen.

**Dismissal**

**P** — Go forth, the Mass is ended.

**All** — Thanks be to God.