

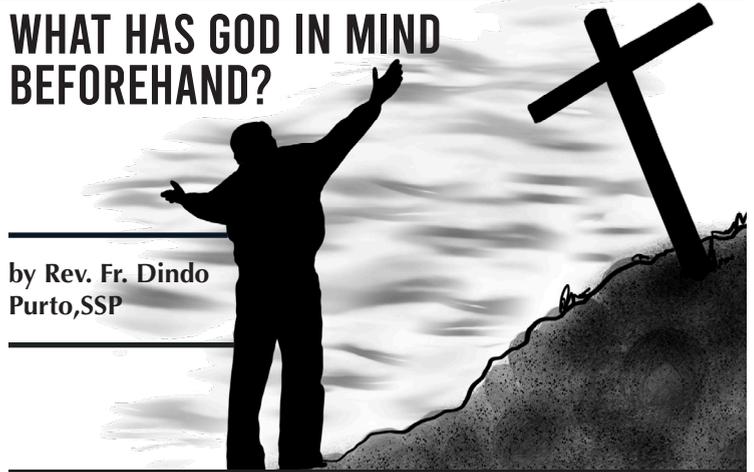


When God entered into a covenant relationship with his people Israel, he had a plan. If the chosen people only obeyed and were faithful, the storyline might have been different. But every time they took matters into their own hands and put God aside, everything seemed to collapse, and they suffered irreversible consequences. Nevertheless, God, true to himself, stuck to his part of the covenant despite the prevailing stubbornness of his people.

This is what Ezekiel portrays in the First Reading. He concludes the allegory directed at the king of Judah whom he censured for his infidelity that consequently led to the eventual deportation of the chosen people to Babylon. The story might have ended that way. However, God had something different in mind. He would replant the crest of the cedar (the king together with the chosen people) on a high and lofty mountain (Israel), assuring their return from exile. Indeed, worldly powers do not have the last word for as long as God is still speaking to and through his people. St. Augustine once said in his *City of God* (Book XXII): "It is true that wicked men do many things contrary to God's will; but so great is his wisdom and power, that all things which

## WHAT HAS GOD IN MIND BEFOREHAND?

by Rev. Fr. Dindo Purto, SSP



seem adverse to his purpose do still tend towards those just and good ends and issues which he himself has foreknown."

In the Gospel, Jesus describes the reign of God using two interrelated parables. The first shows God's active agency in the prolongation and development of the kingdom, while the second talks about its universality. Truly God continues to act and speak to and through his people. Pope Francis elucidates it this way: "An important lesson comes to us from these two parables: God's Kingdom requires our cooperation, but it is above all the initiative and gift of the Lord. Our weak effort, seemingly small before the complexity of the problems of the world, when integrated with God's effort, fears no difficulty. The victory of the

Lord is certain: his love will make every seed of goodness present on the ground sprout and grow. This opens us up to trust and hope, despite the tragedies, the injustices, the sufferings that we encounter. The seed of goodness and peace sprouts and develops, because the merciful love of God makes it ripen" (Angelus, St Peter's Square, 14 June 2015).

In the Second Reading, St. Paul mentions twice the word "courage" which actually comes from our faith in Christ Jesus. We need to do our part of the deal for we know that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense, according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil." And we hope to fulfill what God has in mind for us beforehand.

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

#### *Mission Originates in Deep Faith*

Fr. James H. Kroeger, MM

In the CBCP pastoral exhortation, *Live Christ, Share Christ*, it is noted: "How providential indeed that on October 21 this year [2012] the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI will add another Filipino to the canon of Saints of the Church, our very own Visayan proto-martyr Pedro Calungsod, who gave his life for the faith on the morning of April 2, 1672 in Guam."

"The canonization of Pedro Calungsod will take place under the brilliant light of the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council on October 11, 1962. This same day also marks the twentieth anniversary of the *Catechism*

*of the Catholic Church*.... These events will take place during the celebration of the XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops ... on the theme, "The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith."

Note well: "All these events are bound together by the themes of 'faith' and 'evangelization.' Evangelization is the proclamation, witness and transmission of the Gospel given to humanity by our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the opening up of people's lives, society, culture and history to the Person of Jesus Christ and to his living community, the Church." Undoubtedly, missionary evangelization always requires firm faith convictions; we frequently pray with Jesus' own disciples: "Lord, increase our faith" (Luke 17:5).

## THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

### Entrance Antiphon

(Ps 27 [26]:7, 9)

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

**O Lord, hear my voice, for I have called to you; be my help. Do not abandon or forsake me, O God, my Savior!**

### 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** — We know that if we plant a seed, in time it will grow to be a big tree that bears abundant fruit and serves as a leafy home to birds. In today's Gospel, Jesus tells us that this is how the reign of God works in our lives and in the world. Its beginning is rather small, but given time, it grows into something big.

### Penitential Act

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

**P** — You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.

**All** — Lord, have mercy.

**P** — You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

**All** — Christ, have mercy.

**P** — You are seated at the right hand of the Father: Lord, have mercy.

**All** — Lord, have mercy.

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

**All** — Amen.

### Gloria

**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)*

O God, strength of those who hope in you, graciously hear our pleas, and, since without you mortal frailty can do nothing, grant us always the help of your grace, that in following your commands we may please you by our resolve and our deeds.

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.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD



**First Reading** (Ez 17:22–24)  
*(Sit)*

*The prophet Ezekiel compares the restoration of the exiled Israelites to the growth of a tender shoot into a mighty cedar. This symbol will be used by Jesus to express the growth of the kingdom in our midst.*

### A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel

THUS SAYS the Lord GOD: I, too, will take from the crest of the cedar, from its topmost branches tear off a tender shoot, and plant it on a high and lofty mountain; on the mountain heights of Israel I will plant it. It shall put forth branches and bear fruit, and become a majestic cedar. Birds of every

kind shall dwell beneath it, every winged thing in the shade of its boughs. And all the trees of the field shall know that I, the LORD, bring low the high tree, lift high the lowly tree, wither up the green tree, and make the withered tree bloom. As I, the LORD, have spoken, so will I do.

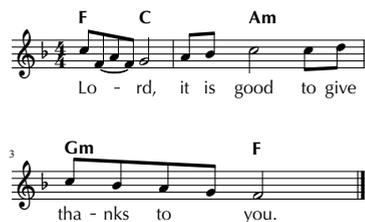
— The word of the Lord.

**All** — Thanks be to God.

### Responsorial Psalm (Ps 92)

**R** — Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

D. Purto



1. It is good to give thanks to the LORD,/ to sing praise to your name, Most High,/ to proclaim your kindness at dawn/ and your faithfulness throughout the night. **(R)**

2. The just one shall flourish like the palm tree,/ like a cedar of Lebanon shall he grow./ They that are planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. **(R)**

3. They shall bear fruit even in old age;/ vigorous and sturdy shall they be,/ declaring how just is the LORD,/ my rock, in whom there is no wrong. **(R)**

### Second Reading (2 Cor 5:6–10)

*Paul encourages the Christians in Corinth to continue to be confident. Amid all sorts of troubles, he himself is full of confidence because he relies on Christ.*

### A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

BROTHERS and sisters: We are always courageous, although

we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yet we are courageous, and we would rather leave the body and go home to the Lord. Therefore, we aspire to please him, whether we are at home or away. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense, according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil.

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

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### Alleluia (Stand)

**All — Alleluia, alleluia. The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower; all who come to him will live for ever. Alleluia, alleluia.**

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### Gospel (Mk 4:26–34)

**P** — A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark  
**All — Glory to you, O Lord.**

JESUS said to the crowds: “This is how it is with the kingdom of God; it is as if a man were to scatter seed on the land and would sleep and rise night and day and through it all the seed would sprout and grow, he knows not how. Of its own accord the land yields fruit, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the grain is ripe, he wields the sickle at once, for the harvest has come.”

He said, “To what shall we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use for it? It is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade.” With many such parables he

spoke the word to them as they were able to understand it. Without parables he did not speak to them, but to his own disciples he explained everything in private.

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

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### Homily (Sit)

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#### 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.**

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### Prayer of the Faithful

**P** — Let us pray to the heavenly Father that his Kingdom may grow abundantly here on earth—a kingdom of love, peace, and joy. Let our response be:

**R — Lord, listen to our prayer.**

**C** — That the Church, the People of God, may be a leaven for the whole world through its proclamation of and witness to the love of God for all men and women, we pray: **(R)**

**C** — That Church leaders and all those who work for the building of God’s kingdom may not be discouraged by the seeming lack of success of their efforts but continue to rely on God who alone gives growth, we pray: **(R)**

**C** — That political and civil leaders may desist from going after instant popularity and political windfalls but pursue what is truly beneficial for the people, we pray: **(R)**

**C** — That the Lord may provide those who labor in the land with food for body and spirit, make their work fruitful, and give them a rich harvest, we pray: **(R)**

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

**P** — Father, in your great love you cause the seed to grow even while the farmer is asleep. Look on our petitions for a peaceful and loving community.

Through Christ our Lord.

**All — Amen.**



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### 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** — O God, who in the offerings presented here provide for the twofold needs of human nature, nourishing us with food and renewing us with your Sacrament, grant, we pray, that the sustenance they provide may not fail us in body or in spirit.

Through Christ our Lord.  
**All** — Amen.

### Preface IV of the Sundays in Ordinary Time

**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 by his birth he brought renewal to humanity's fallen state, and by his suffering, canceled out our sins; by his rising from the dead he has opened the way to eternal life, and by ascending to you, O Father, he has unlocked the gates of heaven.

And so, with the company of Angels and Saints, we sing the hymn of your praise, as without end we acclaim:

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

### Acclamation (*Stand*)

**All** — We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

### THE COMMUNION RITE

#### The Lord's Prayer

**All** — Our Father...  
**P** — Deliver us, Lord...  
**All** — For the kingdom, the



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### 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

(Ps 27 [26]:4)

**There is one thing I ask of the Lord, only this do I seek: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.**

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

**P** — Let us pray. (*Pause*)

As this reception of your Holy Communion, O Lord, foreshadows the union of the faithful in you, so may it bring about unity in your Church.

Through 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*)

Lord God, from the abundance of your mercies provide for your servants and ensure their safety, so that, strengthened by your blessings, they may at all times abound in thanksgiving and bless you with unending exultation.

Through Christ our Lord.

**All** — Amen.

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

**All** — Amen.

### Dismissal

**P** — Our celebration is ended. Go in the peace of the Lord.  
**All** — Thanks be to God.

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