



PONDO NG PINOY SUNDAY

Homily Guide for August 2020

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HOMILY

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

Gospel: Matthew 16:21-27

Pondo ng Pinoy Way of Life: From Littleness, Nothingness to Greatness.

In the first reading, Jeremiah, a young prophet, belittled himself because of his defect and people would not listen to him. He was rejected and suffered physical and emotional tortures and began to question his vocation and God's fidelity. But being a humble person, he discovered the generosity of God who is so real and present in his life.

In the second reading, St. Paul exhorts the Christians of Rome, "Do not conform yourselves to this age" (Rom. 12:2). He admonished them against the trending worldly lifestyle and mindset that are opposed to God's ways and teachings.

Deny and Die to Oneself. Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." (Mt. 16:24). The cost of discipleship in its essence is the paschal mystery of Christ. There are no other options for a faithful follower of Christ but to deny and die to oneself and live for others.

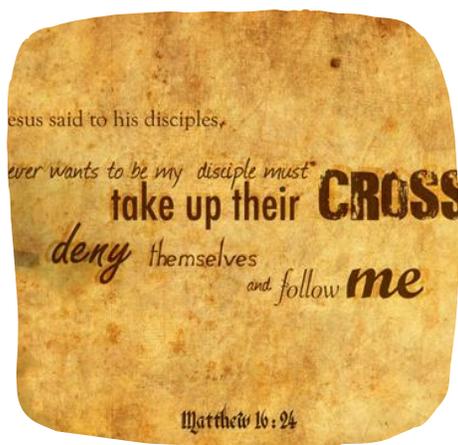
Who and what we are make us realize our vocation and mission in life. Our strengths and powers contribute to our self-worth and confidence. Weaknesses and failures discourage and disappoint us. But we must be at home with our own imperfections and mistakes for they humble us to search and depend on God alone. St. Paul said, "Therefore, I am content with my weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Cor. 12:10).

And prayer is our humble little way of seeking God's help. We express our faith and trust in God by prayerfully discerning his will and plan for us.

The hard truth about our mission is following Christ on the way of the cross and crucifixion. As followers, we walk up to our own Jerusalem, check our lives and unpack our hearts with all the unnecessary baggage that slows us down making us serve our own interests and enjoy self-satisfaction. "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." (Mt. 16:25)

But being little and humble seems contrary to the ways of this modern, materialistic and consumerist world. Everybody wants to be at the top at the expense of losing one's identity and dignity, even one's morality. God reminds us of our roles and mission, that our lives should always conform to his will, and that he is in charge. Renewal then means emptying ourselves of our selfishness, false securities, and confusing anxieties. St. Paul exhorts us, "...be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect." (Rom.12:2).

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Reflection on the Gospel

by: Alejandria Dacquel

NMO – Consultant Catechist

Jesus said to his disciples “whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.” This call of Jesus, I believe is for every Christian who: must deny the self, take up one’s cross, and follow Jesus.

For me **“denying to self”** means that I will not follow the dictates of the world. I came to practice this when I was still a full-time catechist in the Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene (Quiapo Church). After a tiring day in the public school, I opted to go home immediately and rest, rather than watch movies or go to the nearby mall. And then I go back to Quiapo Church to meet some street children and give them some catechesis before they eat the dinner which the Parish Priest provided them every night. It was not easy bonding with them but it gave me inner joy and somehow replenished my depleted energy.

Taking up one’s cross for me are the day to day experiences that I encounter: physical pain (continuous headache due to total hysterectomy), bullying from others in the workplace, being put down by supervisors/coordinators and co-employees, not receiving what is due me. But instead of ranting and complaining, I bore them silently every day and offered them to Jesus Christ as my share in His suffering.

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Sharing in the Mission of Christ. When we share God’s generosity, the ordinary little graces that we have gratuitously and gratefully received with others, we participate in fulfilling his plan for us. “I came so that the sheep might have life and have it more abundantly.” (John 10:10, Fullness of Life). We are the stewards of these gifts and we make use of them by regularly multiplying the goodness of the Lord to fulfill this vision for love of God and neighbor, no matter how weak we are. Our fidelity and commitment to our vision is our constant personal conversion and renewal. Our spirituality of littleness and nothingness will sustain us as little sharers and spare us from becoming selfish takers. The spirit of detachment, simplicity, generosity, and service – these are our road map to greatness.

“And follow me.” I remember the story of a rich young man in the Gospel of Matthew who asked Jesus what he should do to obtain eternal life. He was told to obey the Commandments which he readily said that he did, and to sell all his possessions, and give them to the poor, and to come follow him. “But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property.”

There are many temptations in mass media alone which are so appealing: online games, Facebook, Twitter, thousands of movies in Netflix which are all so addicting and eating up so much of my time to the point that I am tempted to skip online Masses and praying even the Holy Rosary. Then I came to realize that this is not what Jesus would want me to do for the rest of my life and I promised myself to give them all up (dying to my desires to watch). Instead, I watch and listen to inspirational speakers like Bishops Pablo David, Broderick Pabillo, Socrates Villegas, and Robert Barron, Dr Scott Hahn, and Fr Don Calloway, MIC. They are a source of spiritual enrichment for me.

One time, there was a woman who came to the house offering her services to trim our hair for only fifty pesos. Why not? What is fifty compared to the price we paid in hair salons? Later, we came to know *na iyon pala*, the woman had many grandchildren and they had no more food to eat. *Naubos na ang ayuda from Yorme* (Manila Mayor Moreno). So, we decided to give her almost all the canned goods and rice we got from the *ayuda*. And she was so ever grateful.

Such little but very helpful acts is also what Pondo ng Pinoy is advocating to be a follower of Jesus. All we need to do is to share what we have to our neighbors who are also experiencing hunger, fear, anger and depression with what is happening to us now. And as usual, *mga barya-barya na galing sa pamalengke na unti-unting iniipon sa loob ng bote, kahit ngayong may pandemic, para sa common fund ng Pondo ng Pinoy ay malaking bagay pa rin ang magagawa sa kapwa.*

“Anumang magaling, kahit maliit, basta’t malimit, pantungong langit.” Iyan ang tatak ng isang Kristiyano na sumusunod lagi kay Kristo.

I remember this verse from John, “Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.” (John 12:24). For me, this biblical verse captures the whole life and ministry of our beloved father of Pondo ng Pinoy His Eminence Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales. No one would argue with me for having experienced the humility, detachment, and simplicity of our dearest Cardinal. As we celebrate the feast of St. John Vianney, the exemplary model for priests, we also look up to the Cardinal for truly being a living example of a good shepherd. His Eminence is Pondo ng Pinoy himself – the humble servant, his way of life from littleness, nothingness to greatness. The messenger is the Message of God. Thank you, beloved Cardinal.

Pondo ng Pinoy Prayer



<https://www.stthomasmore.org/event/assumption-of-the-blessed-virgin-mary-2/>

2 AUG - PARISH PRIEST'S SUNDAY

Pope Benedict XVI inaugurated a "Year of Priests" on the 150th anniversary of birthday into heaven of St John Vianney, in order "to deepen the commitment of all priests to interior renewal for the sake of a stronger and more incisive witness to the Gospel in today's world."

Pope Pius XI in 1929, proclaimed St John Vianney, the Curé of Ars as the "heavenly patron of all parish priests throughout the world." Pope St John XXIII pointed to him as an exemplary model for priests.

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/saints/08/04/st-john-m-vianney-the-cur-of-ars-patron-of-parish-priests.html>

15 - FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary commemorates the death of Mary and her bodily assumption into Heaven. At the end of her life, the Blessed Virgin was assumed into Heaven body and soul, before her body could begin to decay—a foretaste of our own bodily resurrection at the end of time. Because it signifies the Blessed Virgin's passing into eternal life, it is the most important of all Marian feasts and a Holy Day of Obligation.

<https://www.learnreligions.com/when-is-the-feast-of-the-assumption-3573846>

Lord Jesus,
you taught us that the Kingdom of God is like the mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds. Yet when grown, it becomes the biggest of all trees where birds play and make their nests.

Lord, in this spirit, Pondo ng Pinoy lives its vision. Little acts of kindness done with constancy realize your Kingdom here and now. Through these little acts we reach out to the little ones, the least, the lost and the last in our community. We hope to uplift the lives of the poor, create opportunities that can change their lives, and free them from misery. We hope to be an instrument of your love by caring for them. Thus, Pondo ng Pinoy teaches us that charity is an act that starts small and done with consistency in order to be effective and true.

On the other hand, the same spirit of Pondo ng Pinoy teaches us that these little acts of kindness are life-changing not only to the receiver but also to the giver. The constancy of sharing molds our being into a person that you want us to be, living in charity and love. By giving with regularity the giver learns to empty himself/herself and creates a space for others in his/her heart consciously.

By sharing even just a "crumb" everyday, the giver grows healthier and stronger in charity. Thus, in Pondo ng Pinoy, we do not only share but by giving we also receive.

Lord, help us, as we try to live the spirit of Pondo ng Pinoy, to realize your Kingdom here on earth and attain fullness of life in the here and now.

Amen.

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Pondo ng Pinoy Community Foundation, Inc

@pnpcfi_nmo



www.pondongpinoy.com

Telephone no.: (02) 8527-8113 / (02) 8527-8114

Contact no.: (+63) 917-571-5988 / (+63) 928-507-8116