



PONDO NG PINOY SUNDAY

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

By: Rev. Fr. Alfred T. Viernes
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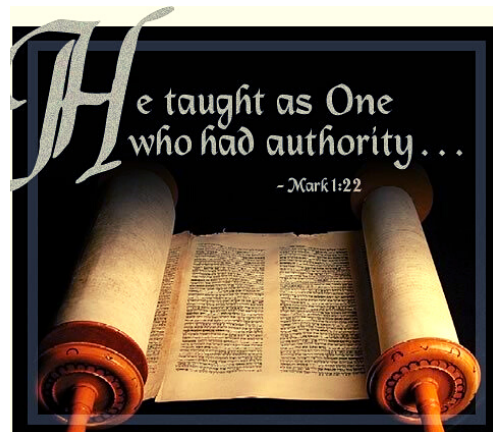
Pondo ng Pinoy Helps Rebuild the Kingdom of God

Gospel: Mark 1: 21-28

In the Gospel this Sunday, we are confronted with the fear of the devil, "what have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?" The unclean spirit in the body of the person in the Gospel was threatened by the mere presence of Jesus. Before Jesus came into the community (and the world), the devil must have already established his "kingdom" in the world: fear, poverty, ignorance, sicknesses, pestilence, etc. But with the coming of Jesus, a new kingdom is being established. Or rather, the ORIGINAL plan of God in creation, where humans and God live as one, where there is abundance and fullness of life, has returned in the coming of the Son of God. God, in Jesus, has walked again on earth as was the case since the beginning of the world.

Nowadays, the mission of Jesus in establishing the Kingdom against the many faces of the devil like sickness, poverty and ignorance is being continued by the Pondo ng Pinoy. **Pondo ng Pinoy has come, not to destroy, but to rebuild what is being continually attacked by the devil.** Like Jesus, we echo His words: "Quiet! Come out of him!" But what is more inspiring is that the army of Jesus against the devil is not coming from the big and sophisticated structures. He uses little yet consistent acts of love! Simple people, often called "powerless," become agents of change and transformation in the communities. That is the power of the "little ones!"

Let us continue the mission of Christ by our active participation in the Pondo ng Pinoy. It does not require grand acts to defeat the devil in society. It only requires small and consistent acts of love to dispel fear, poverty, ignorance and sickness.



Pondo ng Pinoy Spirituality, Spreading Through Small and Simple Loving Acts

Reflection on the Gospel

by: Ira Carlota C. Agustin

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When ECQ was declared on March 16, 2020 anxieties enveloped me – What will happen next? How will we continue to work? With the stoppage of business operations how will the poor survive? Plus many other questions.

Living out the Pondo ng Pinoy spirit of thinking daily the least of our brethren added to my anxiety. I can remember asking my husband on the second night after declaration of ECQ, “paano na sila, yung nasa labas (meaning those outside our village, the mission areas)? Most of them live on daily wages.” My husband replied, “may Diyos na tumitingin sa ating lahat.”

Soon after, our parish became one of the beneficiaries of gift checks from business groups and from the Immediate Response for the Poor from Pondo ng Pinoy. Due to mobility restrictions and questions on transmission of the virus, our parish gave Php1,000.00 cash assistance to families of children who graduated from Hapag-asa Feeding program just before ECQ. Afterwards, I received a message from the coordinator that two families shared the cash assistance they received to two other families so the latter could buy diapers for a bedridden family member. One can only praise and thank the Lord for the gift of their generous hearts that despite the unknown future at that time, they were sharing their blessings.

The simple acts of sharing done by the beneficiaries is such an inspiration and a light of hope amidst the negative or evil impacts brought by this pandemic. As what our parish Social Action coordinator said “yung ginawa nila ay isang pagpapakita ng bunga ng kanilang pagiging practitioner of Pondo ng Pinoy bottles of charity, nasa buhay nila ang Pondo ng Pinoy spirit lalo na sa panahon na ito.”

As said in the Gospel of Mark 1:21-28 “What is this? A new teaching with authority.... His fame spread everywhere....” Indeed, the spirituality of Pondo ng Pinoy is a new teaching that has spread and will continue to spread through small and simple loving acts.

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Pope Francis has declared year 2021 as the Year of St. Joseph that spans from December 8, 2020 to December 8, 2021 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of the foster father of Christ as patron of the universal Church. In a new Apostolic Letter entitled *Patris Corde* ("With a Father's Heart"), Pope Francis describes Saint Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows.

Written against the backdrop of the pandemic, Pope Francis says, we have seen more clearly the importance of "ordinary" people who, though far from the limelight, exercise patience and offer hope every day. In this, they resemble Saint Joseph, "the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence," who nonetheless played "an incomparable role in the history of salvation."

Fr. Roy Cimigala, in his article in the Philippine Star presents the seven points from *Patris Corde* on how we have to regard St. Joseph and what we can learn from him.

- **"A beloved father."** The greatness of Saint Joseph is that he was the spouse of Mary and the father of Jesus. In this way, he placed himself, "at the service of the entire plan of salvation."
- **"A tender and loving father."** He saw Jesus grow daily in wisdom, year and divine and human favor, teaching him to walk, taking him by the hand, etc.
- **"An obedient father."** He acted immediately on what was revealed to him in a dream by an angel.
- **"An accepting father."** Though he had to face situations where he could not understand many things and may even appear as unfair to him, he just accepted what was told to him without any question.
- **"A creatively courageous father."** He knew how to take advantage of difficulties to develop more virtues and to deepen and strengthen them, never saying enough.
- **"A working father."** He highlighted the true dignity of human work, any kind of work, including those that in our human estimation, we consider lowly.
- **"A father in the shadows."** He did his role as foster father of Christ without attracting unnecessary attention. He was always in the background, with mind and heart fully focused on Christ.

At the conclusion of Pope Francis' Letter, he adds another prayer to St. Joseph, which he encourages all of us to pray together.

<https://www.vaticannews.va>
<https://www.philstar.com>

Prayer to St. Joseph

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. To you God entrusted his only Son; in you Mary placed her trust; with you Christ became man. Blessed Joseph, to us too, show yourself a father and guide us in the path of life. Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage, and defend us from every evil.

Amen.

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