

January  
2023

# FILIPINO MINISTRY

## Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vancouver



Marie Pacheco

## New year, new season!

We kick off our monthly newsletter by introducing our newest coordinator, **Deacon Raul Abella**, who took over the leadership of our Filipino ministry after Deacon Greg and Ivy Barcelon's move to Calgary last year.

A couple of months since he started his new role on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2022, Deacon Raul is still adjusting to the many facets of the Filipino Ministry. He is familiar to many, having been a deacon since 2015 and active with the *Bukas Loob sa Diyos* and *Couples for Christ* ministries for a long time. He was also chaplain of the Surrey Memorial Hospital since 2016, something he considers as a very challenging but fulfilling ministry.

But Deacon Raul admits taking over the Filipino Ministry is very different from what he has been doing for the past six years and is an act of surrender to the Lord's will.

*"It's a totally new chapter in my vocation, an extremely different environment compared to the hospital. Peaceful sa hospital, visit the sick and comfort the afflicted and impart blessings and bring Holy Communion to patients. Dito lots of challenges that can turn into big opportunities. I offer it all to Him. Show me the way, I don't know what your plans are for me but trusting in His guidance and direction to fulfill the tasks He has for me."*

Deacon Raul says, the ministry's mandate remains the same: it's to have sensitivity to the needs of the Filipino community, spiritually.



Deacon Raul Abella



Summer Music and Arts Festival held at Coquitlam Town Centre Park (August 2022)

This includes working with Filipino pastors to better understand the need of their Filipino parishioners. It also includes having a council of Filipino Catholic Associations to improve coordination and their involvement in parish life and the evangelization efforts of the Archdiocese. There is also the creation of a missionary discipleship formation program for Filipino leaders. Plus, hosting periodic large-scale events to celebrate the Filipino community's contribution to the Archdiocese.

In 2022, the Filipino Ministry was active in launching **Synod** conversation circles (February), organizing the "Pabasa"- a continuous chanting of the History of Salvation and Seven Last Words (April) and having the **Summer Music and Arts Festival** in August. The Filipino Ministry also supported the fundraising and building of the Santo Niño shrine in Agassiz, B.C. which was a gift to the Archdiocese of Vancouver for the commemoration of 500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines. The Santo Niño shrine opened to the public in August with a festive celebration, blessing and a mass by Archbishop Michael Miller.

For 2023, Deacon Raul says, the Ministry will continue its role as an accompaniment ministry of committed volunteer disciples, reaching out to all Filipino Roman Catholics to fully integrate and support into the life of the Archdiocese of Vancouver.

Kababayans can look forward to the anniversary of the institution of the Santo Niño shrine in August with Fr. Dennis Flores. The Ministry is also looking forward to the continuation of its successful **Kasal ng Bayan** (*mass wedding*) every year happening in June.

For more information on the Filipino Ministry's events, visit <https://rcav.org/filipino-ministry>.

Support our next big event:

Archdiocese of Vancouver

MASS WEDDING

FOR CIVILLY MARRIED COUPLES

Saturday, June 24, 2023 at 1:30pm

Our Lady of Good Counsel  
10460 139<sup>th</sup> Street, Surrey, BC

For more information or to register, contact your parish office or call Deacon Raul Abella (778) 512-9163 or email [filipinoministry@rcav.org](mailto:filipinoministry@rcav.org)

Registration deadline: April 21, 2023

filipinoministry.ca

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