

Balitang Nagbibigay Buhay

filipinoministry.ca



Archdiocese of Vancouver



SALAMAT ONE SOARS

The first quarterly virtual event still trending among Filipinos

by: Marie Pacheco

It was a virtual celebration of gifts during the Filipino Ministry's "Salamat" event last April 16, the first of four events for the Archdiocese of Vancouver commemorating 500 Years of Christianity (YOC) in the Philippines.

OPM singer Joey Albert hosted the event. She shared how she has been gifted to give as she looked back at significant moments of her life as a successful singer in the Philippines, a wife and mother, a three-time cancer survivor, missionary, fundraiser and daycare teacher.

The World Proclaimed Voices Singers and PraiseTEAM

also shared their gifts through song and dance performances. Youthful hosts shared trivia about the Philippines and our culture. Church volunteers also shared insights on why they serve and how they find joy in being active in their parish communities.

For those unable to share their time, talent and energy to the celebration, there was also an invitation to donate funds to Caritas Philippines, the advocacy arm of the church that helps the poor.

In a message, Cardinal Luis "Chito" Tagle said that while the 500 YOC celebration is a time to contemplate

God's words and how He has done great things for us because of love, it is also a time to re-commit ourselves to the gift of faith.

"We need to re-commit ourselves to the faith, to act on it and to be sorry for our failures in living out the faith in a consistent manner. This is also the time to share the gift of faith to the rest of the world."

On his part, as Chief Shepherd of the Archdiocese of Vancouver, Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, acknowledged how Filipinos were witnesses to the Lord not only in their homeland, but also around the world. *"The Archdiocese of Vancouver is very blessed with your faithful and vibrant presence,"* said His Excellency, in a message to the community.

But instead of just focusing on the gifts, the first *Salamat* event reminded us of the Giver. Fr. Francis Galvan, OSA, Parish Priest of Sacred Heart in Delta, shared his reflection on God as the giver of gifts. He brought us back to March 31, 1521, when God's gift to Filipinos was first revealed through the First Eucharistic celebration in the Philippines. The gift was Jesus Christ.

"The Father's gift in taking a Filipino face is expressed through the Eucharist. Jesus became visible, real, actual for Filipinos. It was the first revelation of God's gift for the Filipinos."

Then came more gifts: Baptism, the Cross and the Sto. Nino, all signs of God's generosity. Fr. Galvan made a beautiful point when he stressed how Baptism made us all equal in the sight of God. He talked about how the gift of faith gave Filipinos hope; how it gave Filipinos intimate protection and provision through the Sto. Niño. He further emphasized how Filipinos have created unique celebrations of their faith from these gifts, the famous Sinulog being one of them.



Typical Sinulog Festival street dancing (photo from Adventure Travel Expo)

A bit overwhelming, there was definitely too much to digest for an almost two-hour long celebration. But Albert reminded us towards the end, that it was meant to be so.

"The faithfulness of the Lord is beyond compare. The Giver cannot be outdone with His generosity." Truly she said, the best way to use our gifts is to get to know the giver of the gifts. In closing, she rendered the *Gifted to Give Theme Song - Vancouver*, composed by Vicky Benjamin of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish.



 <https://tinyurl.com/zz4xcjsz>
 <https://youtu.be/QbLzkfBlmlw>

Matthew 7.7 Prayer Brigade

**Monthly Intensive Prayer Session
 of the Filipino Ministry**
Sunday, 25th April, 2:00-5:00 pm

*Ask and it shall be given.
 Seek and ye shall find.
 Knock and it shall be opened.*
Matthew 7:7



APRIL 25TH

Join our 3-hour prayer session

Via Zoom:

<https://tinyurl.com/zz4xcjsz>

YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/QbLzkfBlmlw>



**THE NOVENA TO
OUR LADY OF FATIMA**

<https://tinyurl.com/ydw97j2r>

Come and See

Filipino Ministry Youth Accompaniment Program

Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vancouver, Canada

Inviting youth ages 15-18 to join us.
Email: filipinoministry@rcav.org.