

# Balitang Nagbibigay Buhay

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Archdiocese of Vancouver



*Gian Bautista (inset) speaking to the representatives of the various Filipino Catholic Associations*

## ARCHBISHOP INSTALLS COUNCIL MEMBERS

***Young Pinoy underscores greater need for Filipino Catholic Associations today***

by: Marie Pacheco

*"As a young person in church, sometimes I feel like God does not hear me - like maybe I am not speaking loud enough?"*

Eleven year-old Gian Bautista touched the hearts of many who were present at the JP2 Centre on Friday evening, April 22nd, for the installation of the new Council of Filipino Catholic Associations made up of: BCBP - Rico Pria and Marciano Magbitang, Jr., BLD - Edwin Mendiola and Rorauro Mina, MFC - Benny Luarca and Bong

Buiza, CFC - Fred and Malou Tejada, El Shaddai - Mae Soriano and Florita Pihoc, FFCC - Ian Choa and Apot Lee, LOJ - Iven Yap and Eric Boongaling.

Bautista's words were simple, but they hit home for many Pinoy Catholic leaders in the lower mainland who grapple with the different problems confronting our church today.

Archbishop Michael Miller has talked about the problem of young people leaving the church in



*Archbishop Miller emphasizing a point*

other occasions. At the **Salamat 4** event last December 10th, the Archbishop also spoke about how radically secular Canada's society is, where 4 out of 10 people in the Greater Vancouver Area, admit to having no faith whatsoever.

With this reality, Bautista brings us to the everyday struggles young people face - unsettling home situations, the need to belong, searching for one's gender and identity, a sense of insecurity and fear of being judged, are just some of them.

But it also shows how great their need is to know more about Jesus.

*"Even if we have dysfunctional lives and families, if we know and believe we have Jesus loves us, I think there would be no need for young people to hide behind drugs, alcohol, or abuse. Then young people would not feel abandoned or unwanted."*

*"As young people, we need more opportunities to understand the teachings of Jesus in ways that could connect with our lives right now,"* said Bautista.

She called on Filipino Catholic Associations to make it a priority to journey with the youth, both those who are still coming to church and those who are not.

Following their recent installation, representatives to the Council from different associations looked ahead on a particular priority they will be working on in the immediate future.

Ian Choa from Families for Christ believes there truly is a need to pass on Christ's teachings to this generation and the next,

especially at a time when truth is watered down or even simply disregarded for the sake of convenience or an agenda.

*"There truly is a need for the Filipino Ministry to draw more people to Jesus Christ. I feel that our various communities are meant to be a light to others, especially to our youth. As it is written in Mt. 5:16, "... let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."*

Edwin Mendiola from BLD adds he was deeply moved by the homily and blessing of Archbishop Miller during the installation. He says the exhortation inspired him to continue the Catholic faith not just within families and groups, but to enjoin the whole Filipino Community within the Archdiocese to keep the faith alive.

*"He motivates us to be a leader that unites and not to divide,"* said Mendiola.

He was also touched by the testimony of Bautista, adding they are motivated to focus on helping young children, especially the new immigrants facing challenges of adapting to a new culture, social media, racial oppression and the lack of attention from their hard-working parents.

The event also gave a welcome opportunity for fellowship and interactions among members of different associations given the restrictions brought by the pandemic in the past two years.



*Council Members being installed*