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Hospitality: God's Gift to Filipinos



Anthony G. Roman

Just how friendly Filipinos are often goes on display in long queues be it in government or business centers. By the end of the tedious wait, *Pinoys* who started off as strangers in some cases wind up as budding friends.

The dynamics of getting acquainted, accommodating strangers, and being hospitable provide some kind of ease to the often daunting if not tiring process of waiting. Filipinos are good at that. Hospitality is in fact one of the trademarks of the true Filipino. Filipino hospitality gained worldwide recognition when thousands have left family and homes in search of residence or employment overseas. Outside their motherland, *pinoys* were then able to showcase their natural ability to receive and accommodate people regardless of race, color or creed. The Pinoy brand of hospitality, indeed, goes beyond simply striking casual conversations with total strangers.

In the First Reading of the First Sunday of February, the Prophet Isaiah urges the faithful to “Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and the harbourless into thy house: when thou shalt see one naked, cover him, and despise not thy own flesh.” (Is 58:7) To “despise not thy own flesh” is in fact the same admonition of what we refer as the Golden Rule and the Lord’s invitation to “Do unto others as you would like them to do unto you.” (Lk 6:31)

Filipinos do find in their veins to enliven these values not just in being hospitable but in their centuries-old ways of *Bayanihan* or cooperative endeavor especially in times of crisis, the people’s organic *kalinga* or care for nature and fellow human being, and *pagdadamayán* or mutual dependence, to name a few. Our brand of hospitality has sustained our journey through the joys and pains, lights and shadows, of past 500 years and has moulded us into the kind

of Christians that we are in this part of the world.

Being hospitable is also part of the People of God’s common journey to a life of spirituality and holiness. In his 2020 Encyclical “*Fratelli Tutti*” (All Brothers), Pope Francis describes brotherhood as well as solidarity in ways that can be construed as integral if not akin to the value of hospitality. He talks about the Good Samaritan, who embodied the same values as acceptance, accommodation, even hospitality, as the “Icon for our Time.” The Good Samaritan’s gesture of caring and accommodation, which extended to the wounded and almost dying man who was not a Samaritan, is worthy of emulation. The Pope, thus, urges the faithful to understand the Parable of the Good Samaritan more than just a passage for reflection but as a way of life. In the parable itself, the Lord Jesus in fact tells us to do as the Good Samaritan did; indeed, to “Go and do likewise” (Lk 10:25-37).

Today’s Gospel, however, reminds us through the story of the death of St. John the Baptist (Mk 6:14-29) that our attitude of accommodation and being open to people must not compromise our fidelity and friendship with the Lord Jesus Christ. In the story, King Herod had wished to maintain his noble image among his important guests. He did not want contradict himself publicly and this led him to succumb to the fatal request of his step-daughter, Salome.

May the Lord bless our hearts so that we could remain accommodating, accepting, and hospitable in His love.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

(Ps 33 [32]:11, 19)

(Recited when there is no opening song)

The designs of his Heart are from age to age, to rescue their souls from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here)

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly)

P—There is no greater love than this: to lay down one's life for another. The martyrdom of John the Baptist in today's Gospel is a perfect realization of its full meaning. Let us pray that we may continue to love God and one another without reservation.

Penitential Act

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.
(Pause)

P—You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P—You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen.

Collect

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Clothe us, Lord God, with the virtues of the Heart of your Son and set us aflame with his love, that, conformed to his image, we may merit a share in eternal redemption.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



First Reading (Heb 13:1–8) *(Sit)*

The author speaks of love and appeals for hospitality. Ministry to the basic needs of one's neighbor is mentioned to show that persons are judged on their behavior toward their neighbor. Much stress is laid upon acts of mercy because they are within the reach of all.

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

LET brotherly love continue. Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels. Be mindful of prisoners as if sharing their imprisonment, and of the ill-treated as of yourselves, for you also are in the body. Let marriage be honored among all and the marriage bed be kept undefiled, for God will judge the immoral and adulterers. Let your life be free from love of money but be content with what you have, for he has said, *I will never forsake you or abandon you.* Thus we may say with confidence: *The Lord is my helper, and I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?* Remember your leaders who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 27)

R—The Lord is my light and my salvation.

1. The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear? The LORD is my life's refuge; of whom should I be afraid? **(R)**

2. Though an army encamp against me, my heart will not fear; Though war be waged upon me, even then will I trust. **(R)**

3. For he will hide me in his abode in the day of trouble; He will conceal me in the shelter of his tent, he will set me high upon a rock. **(R)**

4. Your presence, O LORD, I

seek. Hide not your face from me; do not in anger repel your servant. You are my helper: cast me not off. **(R)**

Alleluia (Cf. Lk 8:15) *(Stand)*

All—Alleluia, alleluia. Blessed are they who have kept the word with a generous heart, and yield a harvest through perseverance. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel (Mk 6:14–29)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

All—Glory to you, O Lord.

KING HEROD heard about Jesus, for his fame had become widespread, and people were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead; that is why mighty powers are at work in him." Others were saying, "He is Elijah"; still others, "He is a prophet like any of the prophets." But when Herod learned of it, he said, "It is John whom I beheaded. He has been raised up."

Herod was the one who had John arrested and bound in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, whom he had married. John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." Herodias harbored a grudge against him and wanted to kill him but was unable to do so. Herod feared John, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man, and kept him in custody. When he heard him speak he was very much perplexed, yet he liked to listen to him. Herodias had an opportunity one day when Herod, on his birthday, gave a banquet for his courtiers, his military officers, and the leading men of Galilee. His own daughter came in and performed a dance that delighted Herod and his guests. The king said to the girl, "Ask of me whatever you wish and I will grant it to you." He even swore many things to her, "I will grant you whatever you ask of me, even to half of my kingdom." She went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask for?" Her mother replied, "The head of John the Baptist." The girl hurried back to the king's presence and made her

request, "I want you to give me at once on a platter the head of John the Baptist." The king was deeply distressed, but because of his oaths and the guests he did not wish to break his word to her. So he promptly dispatched an executioner with orders to bring back his head. He went off and beheaded him in the prison. He brought in the head on a platter and gave it to the girl. The girl in turn gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

—The Gospel of the Lord.
All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (*Sit*)

Prayer of the Faithful

P—John the Baptist gave testimony to Christ by his preaching, up to the shedding of his blood. We pray to the Father for those who are persecuted on account of their faithfulness to their mission.

R—Lord, hear our prayer.

C—May the Church be endowed by the Holy Spirit with apostles and prophets who denounce evil and sin in all their forms. We pray: (**R**)

C—May we be inspired to act by the example of those who devote themselves to the proclamation of the Gospel and serving others, often at the cost of their lives or of their comfort. We pray: (**R**)

C—May rulers and political leaders not run after people who trouble their conscience by speaking the truth and asking for justice. We pray: (**R**)

C—May we fight against concupiscence, the temptation of the flesh, and the snare of the devil through prayer, meditation on the Word of God, and through the sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance. We pray: (**R**)

C—May we be grains of wheat and instruments for the salvation of all humanity, following the example of John the Baptist and of other martyrs. We pray: (**R**)

C—Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (*pause*). We pray: (**R**)

P—Almighty Father, you chose the weak to confound the mighty and the proud. Be our refuge and strength in time of trouble. Give us the courage to stand by our faith. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

**LITURGY OF
THE EUCHARIST**

Presentation of the Gifts
(*Stand*)

P—Pray, brethren...

All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P—O God, Father of mercies, who, because of the great love with which you loved us, with untold goodness gave us your Only Begotten Son, grant, we pray, that, being perfectly united with him, we may offer you worthy homage.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

Preface: The boundless charity of Christ

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

P—Lift up your hearts.

All—We lift them up to the Lord.

P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For raised up high on the Cross, he gave himself up for us with a wonderful love and poured out Blood and water from his pierced side, the wellspring of the Church's Sacraments, so that, won over to the open Heart of the Savior, all might draw water joyfully from the springs of salvation.

And so, with all the Angels and Saints, we praise you, as without end we acclaim:

All—Holy, Holy, Holy... (Kneel)

Acclamation (*Stand*)

All—We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All — Our Father...

P — Deliver us, Lord...

All — For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion
(*Kneel*)

P—Behold the Lamb of God...

All—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon
(Jn 19:34)

One of the soldiers opened his side with a lance, and at once there came forth blood and water.

Prayer after Communion
(*Stand*)

P—Let us pray. (*Pause*)

Made partakers in your Sacrament of charity, we humbly implore your mercy, Lord, that we may be conformed to Christ on earth and merit to be coheirs of his glory in heaven.

Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Prayer over the people

P—Bow down for the blessing.
(*Pause*)

Be gracious to your people, O Lord, and do not withhold consolation on earth from those you call to strive for heaven.

Through Christ our Lord

All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.

All—Amen.

Dismissal

P—Go forth the Mass is ended.

All—Thanks be to God.



PRAYER TO THE **SACRED HEART** *of Jesus*

Divine Jesus, you have said, "Ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Behold me kneeling at your feet, filled with a lively faith and confidence in the promises dictated by your Sacred Heart and pronounced by Your adorable lips. I come to ask: *(Here silently mention your petitions).*

To whom can I turn to if not to you whose Heart is the source of all graces and merits? Where should I seek if not in the treasure which contains all the riches of your kindness and mercy? Where should I knock if not at the door through which God gives himself to us and through which we go to God? I have recourse to You, Heart of Jesus. In you I find consolation when afflicted, protection when persecuted, strength

when burdened with trials, and light in doubt and darkness.

Dear Jesus, I firmly believe that you can grant me the grace I implore, even though it should require a miracle. You have only to will it, and my prayer will be granted. I admit that I am most unworthy of your favors, but this is not a reason for me to be discouraged. You are the God of Mercy and you will not refuse a contrite heart. Cast upon me a look of mercy, I beg of you, and your kind Heart will find in my miseries and weaknesses a reason for granting my prayers.

O Sacred Heart, whatever may be your decision with regard to my request, I will never stop adoring, loving, praising and serving you. My Lord Jesus, be pleased to accept this my act of perfect resignation to the decrees of your adorable Heart which I sincerely desire may be fulfilled by me and all your creatures forever.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I know that there is but one thing impossible to you: to be without pity to those who are suffering or in distress. Look upon me, I beg of you, dear Jesus, and grant me the grace for which I humbly implore you through the Immaculate Heart of your most sorrowful Mother. You have entrusted me to her as her child, and her prayers are all-powerful with you. Amen.

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For inquiries and orders:

FACEBOOK: Sambuhay Misalette

GMAIL: Sambuhay@stpauls.ph

TEL: (02) 8895-9701