

## **Message and Homily of His Eminence Charles Maung Cardinal Bo at the Statio Orbis**

Your Eminences, brother bishops, brother priests, religious sisters, brothers, and all the sons and daughters of God, Mabuhay!

Nahihiya at natatakot ako na maging kinatawan ng Santo Padre apan karun aduna ko'y problema.

Dili na ko ganahan mubiya sa Sugbu. Nahigugma na ako sa Cebu. Nahigugma sa inyong pagkamaabi-abihon, nahigugma sa inyong pagkaon, nahigugma sa inyong mga pahiyom ilabi na gyud sa inyong nawung na pagdo. Nahigugma ako sa Cebu. I love Cebu...

Seven days, we are on the mount table, seven intense days are coming to an end dear friends from around the world, and we have explored the Eucharist in all dimensions with the theme Christ in Us, Hope of Glory: Eucharist the Source and the Goal of Mission. More than 70 countries have savored the spiritual food that nourished us through our sharing, our adoration, our beautiful liturgy, our enriching fellowship, our wonderful lectures, our grand Eucharistic procession, and a global labor was made and we broke the Word and the bread. It was almost an eschatological moment of universal brotherhood. The Eucharistic ecclesiology is seen today, a church that gets its identity through the Eucharist. Congratulations to Archbishop Palma, Bishop Dennis and to the CBCP and entire church of the Philippines.

What a great setting today as a sea of humanity with St. Paul, we praise, we are the body of the church. From here, I see a humanity that showcases its faith of Jesus in the Eucharist, each one of you is a living bread. We came from various countries, we spoke various languages, but like the day of the Pentecost, the Eucharist deepened our relationships. Today, we are returning as brothers and sisters, we are returning in haste like the disciple in Emmaus whose ignorance was dispelled by Jesus breaking the word and breaking the bread. This is a moment of grace, the Lord of the Eucharist, we praise for the showers of blessing. Amidst these waves of joy, our hearts are sad today. (Kami ay nalulungkot.) (magul-anon kami nga mu biya ninyo.)

We will take leave of our dear Filipino brothers and sisters. What a great host you are. What a great experience, for the last seven days, you made us all proud to be Catholics. You broke the bread of hospitality, warmth and your smile. You are apostles of the smiling. How can we forget your meticulous organization? How can we forget the warmth, the smile the dance, the piety and the fellowship of all of you? What a deep experience of table fellowship. Last seven days, we were on the top of the mountain, mount table of Eucharistic table of celebrations. Eucharist is a transforming encounter with the living God as the Vatican too says, Eucharist was our source and summit of faith. After the intense experience on the mount table, the disciples had to return, we need to return to our daily life. What is the fruit of the Eucharistic Congress? Renewed apostolic and missionary zeal. Eucharist is the source and goal of our mission. Today, Christ is

embedded in each one. Christ in us the hope of glory in blessing Cebu with this Eucharistic Congress, Pope Francis directed that the church to the supreme mystery of the Eucharist be renewed in the apostolic and missionary zeal. "*Et el Mesias*", we need to go, the very words mass tells us, "go and proclaim the Christian hope to every soul. The world sees hopelessness everywhere Philippines needs hope. The church needs hope. Our families need hope. The world today needs a four letter word H-O-P-E. (Nanginahanglan ang Pilipinas og paglaum, nanginanahanglan ang simbahan og pagkalaum, naginganahanglan atung kapanayam og paglaum.)

Church is not an income-generating agency. Church is a hope generating fellowship. Last one week, the Eucharist of hope was celebrated with great... that was done in an admirable way. Those of us who were fortunate enough to be in the Filipino church, we are re-energized in the Christian hope. The biggest Catholic country in Asia holds great hope. I do not deny the challenges, poverty, unsafe migration, etc. But this nation holds great promises to the Catholic World. This is the third biggest catholic nation after Brazil and Mexico, Filipinos and the Filipinas, be proud that you remain a favorite daughter in Asia. But, within Dania, you will be the eldest daughter of the Catholic Church. This praise comes with challenges and opportunity. To this first reading from the book of Jeremiah, tells you the great nation of the Philippines, before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, before you were born, I dedicated you a prophet to all nation as I appoint you I am with you. Are you Filipinos and Filipinas, willing to take up the challenge, everyone here a prophet to the nations?

Philippines, Filipinos, Filipinas, the star from the east, rejoice! Your time with destiny has arrived, you will be the chosen one not only for Asia, but for the world in this millennium. The Philippine church then is the source of hope in a special way, precisely Christ in you the hope of glory among the people of Asia. As do the popes Paul VI in 1970 and John Paul in 1995 articulated, "Are you ready, the youth of the Philippines, are you ready to be the soul of Paul of Tarsus of the millennium to this world? (Andam na ba kamo?) Many of us come from countries where Christianity is a big challenge. Churches are empty. Vocations dying out. Christianity they say is in the twilight zone. Take heart my brothers and sisters from those countries, Filipinas can turn those twilight zones into an exciting dawn of new Christianity. Filipinas, go and multiply your missionaries, multiply your children, go and populate those countries where Christianity is becoming minorities. Go to countries that have more pets, more dogs and cats than the children, (Mga Filipino, paramihin ninyo ang inyong mga anak. Paramihin ninyo ang inyong mga misyonero. Pumunta kayu sa Europa at Amerika to all na wala silang mga bata. Marami silang aso't pusa.) Show what means to be a true Eucharist, Fellowship. Philippines, Christ in you is a reality and that is the hope of glory for the Church. We who came here from all the corners of the earth, go back in hope because you have a strong faith as a bread to be broken with the world. On this day, last day of the Statio Orbis, I do not want to give great theological great treaties on the Eucharist, those were done admirably in the last seven days by worthy speakers, today, I want to talk in simple words to the people especially to the families and the young bringing in mercy and love as the core values of the Eucharist.

Family, Christ in you is the hope of glory. The bible opens the great event of marriage. God the Father seem to get the families with great haste. The world started with families, not priests and nuns. God the Father did not create a Reverent Father Adam nor Reverent Sister Eve, he created man and woman, blessed them to be united and give one simple command, "go and multiply." It is not just the children; go and multiply like the five loaves to five thousands, go and multiply the joy to the world, your Christian theology is so engrained into the ideals of family. Families are the living bread that are offered to the altar in communion with other families in the mass. The Eucharist is sown and grown in the family. The family is the first communion, the family is the nuclear church. Table fellowship is held regularly in the family. Family breaks the bread every day, not only the Philippines, but all over the world. The family needs to be protected and promoted and nurtured. Death of the family is the death of humanity. Pope Francis has been concerned the last three years with three major dangers to the world. The environmental injustice, economic injustice, but the greatest danger to humanity today is the destruction of the family. Sadly, among the Catholic Church, understanding of the family is contested. Attempts to refine the family redefined the definition of parents have again strong appeal in rich countries. Human rights have been disposed and the international forum is getting polluted. Asia and Africa struggle with families that are poor, that are oppressed, rich countries have diverted the attention of poverty and oppression with the great discloses in the new forms of families, new forms of parenthood, more than any nuclear bomb, more than any terrorism and mortal a danger awaits humanity because some countries have chosen the path of destroying countries through laws.

After the Eucharistic Congress, what do we expect? For Africa and Asia, we are looking for the bread of economic justice, the bread of environmental justice. Poor countries are victims of an untested global order. Poverty to us is the greatest terrorism. Loss of land is our anguish. We need to deal with that. But when we are drawn into international meeting, there is a deliberate attempt to divert the attention of the survival rights of the poor or the lifestyle of rights of the rich countries. Eucharistic is the food, memory of the paschal meal, a liberating meal, a meal of salvation. Catholic Church returns to the family; when it celebrates the Eucharist, it celebrates the per capital dignity of the family, enough food, a decent income, ability to send their children to school; it is the manna in the desert, it is the food that comes from heaven. This Congress needs to end with a strong resolve to strengthen the Catholic families, uphold the priesthood of the laity. Catholic families, Christ in you, you are the hope of glory. The future of the church depends on the Catholic family. As Pope John Paul II said, "The future of humanity passes by the way of the family." Ministerial priests break the Word and bread, the bread on the altar, you laity, the people of God you are called upon there to break the Word in the marketplace, in the streets, this is not a privilege but a duty, everyone is asked to proclaim the Word and Paul whose time was spent more in preaching says, "*Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel*". The year of new evangelization reaffirmed this mission. The evangelized becoming evangelizers. In this way, our families can become part of the mission of church rather than attending mass mostly on Sundays. All Christians, all families make up three centralities in your life, centrality of Jesus, centrality of the Bible,

centrality of proclamation. To take up this priesthood of the laity, breaking the bread, Christ of salvation, in the marketplace, family needs many graces, the first grace is mercy and love. This is the year of mercy, Pope Francis gave simple advice to keep the family intact, three words: “*May I*”, “*Thank You*”, and “*Sorry*”. (“*Palihug*”, “*Salamat*”, “*Sori*”) use those three words often in the families. These are words of mercy, not judgment, family life is difficult, but I see in the Philippines a valiant effort to live through the marshal storms and to stir the bonds of various temptations. Christ is in you, my dear families you are the hope of the future Love, Saint Paul says in our second reading, is never judgmental but understanding, may this love and mercy be two eyes of your blessing. Strengthen the family with your mercy and love. Youth, Christ in you is the hope of glory. I read 52% of the population is below the age of 25 in the Philippines. What a blessing; this is the future of the church. What a young nation! The FABC documents beautifully say “The youth are not only the hope of the future but they are the present precious treasures.” Christ when he broke the bread, was a young man. Peter when he preached to the young church he said, “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my spirit to all people, your sons and daughters will prophesy and your young men will seek vision.” As we end this Eucharistic Congress, and of course I am at the last part of my Homily, the church needs a deep examine of its conscience. What is the status of the youth in our churches? In many churches they are the missing generation. Are they around the Eucharistic altars? Are they the lost sheep? Are the shepherds going in search of the lost sheep? Instead of expecting the youth to return to the church, the church must return to the youth. A church that neglects the youth writes its own death sentence. I was recently in the jail of the province where the dancing inmates gave a scintillating display of dancing in the rain. Many of them were lost sheep, drugs, crimes, killings etc. but some of the authorities did not abandon them, did not condemn them, but they have found beauty in them, made them one of the best performing dancing groups. What a great witness in the year of mercy. Our youth deserve understanding, not judgment. People of the Philippines, you have two great graces, your family integrity is strong, you have the least diverse rates in the region. Many rich countries have money but no families. Second the number of young people. What a blessing. If only leaders invest in your youth, you will be the strongest and richest country. Many of the rich countries do not have children. The future does not belong to countries that have oil or weapons. The future belongs to a nation with young people. That way your future is blessed. Christ is in you, but the church has a great duty, you need a next EDSA revolution, a revolution for human development. Human development is the new evangelization and let this evangelization start today. This was clearly indicated by Pope Benedict in his encyclical, “*Caritas in Veritate*”. Priest and religious, Christ is in you the hope of glory, what a joy to see so many priests, so many religious brothers and sisters, your faces and your commitment shows the church of Christ is vibrant, you are the hope, the centrality of the Eucharist, the last seven days prove that once again, it remains the source and summit of your life, your generosity is the first bread broken and your lifelong commitment is the next bread. We are grateful to women religious, for the wonderful service. Their mission is to bring to reality the meaning and the mission of the Eucharist, women religious break the bread of healing, teaching, consoling, protecting

and other services. As we leave, we need to be energized by theology of the Eucharist. It is easy to be tempted, to be surrounded by riches and influence, the power of the Eucharist is powerlessness. When I am weak, I am strong says Saint Paul. To be a priest and a religious is a huge challenge, but always remember the first Eucharist was celebrated by a condemned man. A powerless man, a man whose heart was troubled, but the power of the Eucharist flowed from those empty hands, it continues to inspire us. The Eucharist is the true presence, Eucharist is the mission, and Eucharist is the service, the power of empty hands, Gandhi, Martin Luther King and your own EDSA movement, and our An San Su Chi from Myanmar showed the moral power is the greatest power. Let hope be your moral power, that moral power comes through joyful witness. Pope Francis says, "Church does not grow by proselyting, but by joyful witness...The hope is the answer, we believe in the God who is Emmanuel. If we believe in a Eucharistic God, be joyful, if you believe you encountered Jesus in the breaking of the bread, be joyful. Pope Francis says "How can we announce good news if our face looks like we have just returned from a funeral." Today's third reading keeps how Jesus, despite the challenges is always on cause in the mission. Cross is the part of the mission, of his mission and our mission, but everything ends in hope of resurrection. Eucharist urges us to live in joy and hope. Church is a hope-generating organization. This is the greatest message. Someone said many priests and religious day at the age of 30 and buried at the age of 70, 80 or 90. Yes, if we stop dreaming we are dead. The words "take and eat" and "take and drink" urges to dream a total salvation and liberation. Let hope be themed on as we leave. I do leave with a great hope today, hoping of seeing a vibrant church, the joy of seeing friends from every corner of the earth, in our minds, in our gatherings, hope flows like river in our hearts today. What a great experience of fellowship, a ministry thundering with awareness of God's hope. Teardrops fell in my eyes. How can we go from you Philippine church and the people? You have left us so intensely, and the thought of going shakes us. As we go I tell part of us refuse to go with us. Our hearts wish to stay with you. You have made us proud to be Catholics and you have made us to realize the intense fellowship that comes through Eucharist. Oh the great Philippine people, rejoice today for you are a nation of hope. Your date with destiny has arrived. God will give you a great future. Your sons and daughters will be blessed a hundredfold. If now is ever a hundred millions, a hundredfold will be another thousand millions. And you will be called a blessed nation. Hope in your heart, hope in your families, let hope flow like a radiant river in your mountains, let hope spread like a morning sun in your people. This nation will rise to a glory and prosperity and spirituality. It will become the lamb setting on the mountain, becoming a light not only to Asia but to the whole world.

(Bayan, Filipino, magasaya kayo sa araw na ito. Kayo ay bayan ng pag-asa, bibigyan kayo ng diyos ng isang magandang kinabukasan. Palihug i-ampo ninyo ako. Gihigugma ko kamo. I-ampo ko kamong tanan. Salamat gyud. Diyos di-a kaninyung tanan.)

Daghang Salamat!