

Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
Hosea 11:1, 3-4, 8-9; Ps 12:2-6; Eph 3:8-12, 14-19
Jn 13:31-37

Today, we are celebrating the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. *Ang Dakilang Kapistahan ng Kabanal-banalang Puso ni Hesus. At kung iisipin natin, para sa mga Kristiyano, ito ang tunay na Araw ng mga Puso. Hindi ang ika-14 ng Pebrero, sapagkat tinanggal na nga si Valentino sa tala ng mga santo't banal ng Simbahan. Kaya, ngayon, Happy Valentine's Day sa lahat!*

Sa ating kamalayan, ang rebulto ng Sacred Heart ay nagsasalarawan kay Hesus na ang puso'y nasa labas ng kanyang dibdib. Kakaiba ito at para sa ilan, kahindik-hindik. Sino ba ang Diyos na ito, at nakalabas ang kanyang puso?!

But why is it so? Of course, we know that the heart is but a representation of love. Love is the greatest of the virtues, as St. Paul wrote. God is Love, as the letter of John said. And the Church's teachings have been very consistent and insistent about the primacy of Love as command, as testimony, as action, as means to salvation.

So, to depict Jesus with His Sacred Heart displayed outside His chest represents lessons for us, as reflected in the biblical readings of the liturgy for today.

The Letter to the Ephesians speaks of "the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ." *Ang lawak at haba at tayog at lalim ng pag-ibig ni Kristo. Paano natin masusukat yon? Paano natin mauunawaan at mararanasan nang lubos? Kaya nga marahil, pumutok ang dibdib, dahil hindi na kasya sa loob, ang puso ni Hesus na puno ng pagmamahal.*

We all know that love needs expression. It is akin to OBE, to outcomes-based education, when internalized knowledge requires externalized output. The feeling of love ought to be performed not just as pretentious show, but as an authentic manifestation, a witnessing to love by being witnessed as love. *Ang pag-ibig na tinatago sa loob, kailangan ilabas, ipamalas, magpatotoo magpatunay, sa pamamagitan ng pagsaksi sa pagmamahal na nasasaksihan.*

In the gospel, our faith firmly teaches that the reason for Jesus' death on the cross is supremely about Love; God's Love required His Son to offer His life, symbolized by blood and water pouring forth from His pierced side. It is about Jesus' love being wounded; about His heart pouring forth blood and water, love and life, despite the wounds, despite sin, despite death.

It is about God's love. It is about God's life - creating us, saving us and sanctifying us. This is the story of God's love life: He loves us and thus gives up His life, gives us His life. *Ang pag-ibig ng Diyos ay ang nagbibigay-buhay sa atin.*

So, to celebrate the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is not just a safe and sentimental devotion. *Matapos natin kilalanin at ipagdiwang ang Kabanal-banalang Puso ni Hesus, ANO NA?!*

In our catechesis, our profession of faith as performed in the liturgy is propagated through our morals. *Sa isip, sa salita, sa gawa.* It is radically about keeping alive the memory and the meaning of God's saving love. Beyond that, it carries a categorical moral imperative, an internal command issued by our conscience - it is about doing likewise, loving as Jesus did, offering our life, saving lives, doing good, always and only.

Our life as Christians, then, is but a continuation of God's love-story. All of us are now the major characters in the unfolding epic of God loving us. We play our part by putting that love in the front and center of our being and our doing. *Ang pag-ibig ng Diyos ay marapat na pinaka-una at pinaka-ubob ng ating buhay.*

Our motto, Deus-Patria-Letran, can be read theologically as our concrete response: We love God above all; we love His people, especially here in our *patria*; and by these, our acts of loving, we return love to Letran, our alma mater.

Today, as we offer this Baccalaureate Mass for our Senior High School students as Commencement – not just the beginning of a new chapter in their life, but about joining at table, “*con mensa*,” sharing a meal, breaking bread, an act of communion. *Pagtanggap sa Tinapay ng Buhay, Pakikinabang sa Katawan ni Kristo, Pagsasabuhay ng Pag-ibig ng Diyos.*

Sa pagtatapos ng mga mag-aaral ng Senior High School, aming habilin, Ibigin ang Diyos nang higit sa lahat. Ibigin ang kapwa. Dalhin at Tularan ang Banal na Puso ni Hesus. Kayo nawa'y maging ang puso ng Diyos sa mundo ngayon.

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