



Fifth Sunday of Lent April 6, 2014

Introductory Rites

Greeting

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: *Amen*

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your spirit.*

Sunday Liturgy Guide for the Church of the Poor in the Spirit of the New Evangelization

The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, transcends the old ways of sin and death by asserting the Spirit of life, new solidarity and total change.

The Catholic Church in the Philippines, through the Second Plenary Council of 1991, PCP-II, articulated its own understanding of the context of our evangelization within the socio-cultural framework as well.

She says: **(18)** “Ours is a pluralist society and a prime factor of our pluralism is the diversity of our cultural heritage. Lowland cultures have been heavily influenced by three centuries of Spanish colonial rule, the Muslim peoples of the south by Islamic traditions, and the mountain tribes, especially on Luzon, Mindanao and Mindoro, have retained much of their pre-Spanish characteristics.

(19) The differences notwithstanding, we can speak of a generic Philippine culture. And we can do so if we focus on the structuring of our many social and ethnic groups and the basic values that go with that structuring. And we see that in all Philippine peoples – it does not matter whether they are upland or lowland, Christian or Muslim, schooled or unschooled – there is a

common structuring of social relations based on the family and its well-being which antedate contacts with Muslim and Christian traditions. Basic values (family itself, loyalty to family, concern for its security, stress on authority and respect for others, among other things) are supportive of this sociological fact. The commonalities are more striking than the differences, and we can conclude there is indeed a common culture and a common social structure that we can truthfully call Filipino?”

When you look at your Basic Ecclesial Community, can you see different influences coming from different kinds of cultures? What are these? How are they able to enrich your personal and community life? Or are they difficult for you to handle? And because you find them difficult to handle, do you consider them as obstacles and impoverishing you.

Can you still see these common structuring of social relations based on the family and its well-being in your BEC? Do they indeed antedate our contact with Muslim and Christian traditions? Or aren't they fundamentally human and animal patterns of behavior that we have translated as human behavior based on values we call Filipino? ■

Introduction and Welcome

Dear Friends: On this Fifth Sunday of Lent, we behold our brothers and sisters suffering from sickness and diseases, slowly dying and are actually dead even as they wished life could have been different! We ask ourselves: why are the poor made poorer and the rich richer, in the midst of God's gift of plenty and abundance? When we become incapable of seeing these realities and are unable to respond radically to human need, we are very dead: we are dry bones! Today, we ask God to help us prepare for the Holy Week and Easter by empowering us again with the Spirit of life and joy, of solidarity and total change.

Penitential Act

P: Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us turn to our God in heaven to look down upon us with mercy, forgiveness and compassion.

P: I confess..

C: to almighty God...to pray for me to the Lord our God.

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

C: Amen.

P: Lord, have mercy.

A: Lord, have mercy.

P: Christ, have mercy.

A: Christ, have mercy.

P: Lord, have mercy.

A: Lord, have mercy.

Collect

P: Let us pray: By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God, may we walk eagerly in that same charity with which, out of love for the world, your Son handed himself over to death. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God,

forever and ever.

C: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Ezek 37:12-14

L: A reading from the book of the Prophet Ezekiel.

Thus says the Lord GOD: O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise from them, and bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and have you rise from them, O my people! I will put my spirit in you that you may live, and I will settle you upon your land; thus you shall know that I am the LORD. I have promised, and I will do it, says the LORD.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Commentary on Ezek 37:12-14:

This is one of the most well-known visions of Ezekiel: the dry bones. This actually refers to the fate of Israel: her death started at the exile of her people and was total and complete in the destruction and collapse of her city, Jerusalem, and her temple. But Yahweh has come: into this cadaver, the dry bones of Israel, he will blow in new life. He will open her grave and get her people out: he will reconstruct the city and the temple from out of the ruins. He alone is the source of the Spirit – the breath, the wind – that started the mystery of creation: he will settle the newly reconstructed Israel again in their fertile and productive land.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

R: (7) With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

L: Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD; LORD, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to my voice in supplication.

R: *With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.*

L: If you, O LORD, mark iniquities, LORD, who can stand? But with you is forgiveness, that you may be revered.

R: *With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.*

L: I trust in the LORD; my soul trusts in his word. More than sentinels wait for the dawn, let Israel wait for the LORD.

R: *With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.*

L: For with the LORD is kindness and with him is plenteous redemption; And he will redeem Israel from all their iniquities.

R: *With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.*

Commentary on Ps 130:

This is a profoundly beautiful psalm. It has three characters: the Lord, the psalmist and Israel. The psalmist makes the first move: he prays to the Lord, to hear his voice. The second move is God's: he is a God of forgiveness, mercy and redemption, not of vindictiveness and punishment. Then the move goes to the third character: Israel's waiting is its own redemption. The psalmist and Israel are linked together by a common attitude: trust in Yahweh. Yahweh redeems both the psalmist and Israel from their iniquities.

Second Reading: Rom 8:8-11

L: A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans.

Brothers and sisters: Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does

not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is alive because of righteousness. If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit dwelling in you.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

Commentary on Rom 8:8-11:

This is a development of Paul's reflection on a central question (Rom 7,24): Who will rescue me from this mortal condition? This mortal condition is ruled by the "law of sin" and the "law of death". The human being cannot extricate himself/herself from these laws. Only Jesus Christ can! This time, Paul elaborates on the role of Christ in redemption by putting into view the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ that will set us free. The Spirit made Jesus rise from the dead; it is the same Spirit living in us that will set us truly free. The Laws of Sin and Death are overcome by the Laws of Justice and Righteousness, in the Spirit!

Gospel: John 11:1-45

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your spirit.*

P: A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

C: *Glory to you, Lord.*

Now a man was ill, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who had anointed the Lord with perfumed oil and dried his feet with her hair; it was her brother Lazarus who was ill. So the sisters sent word to him saying,

“Master, the one you love is ill.” When Jesus heard this he said, “This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that he was ill, he remained for two days in the place where he was. Then after this he said to his disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.” The disciples said to him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone you, and you want to go back there?” Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in a day? If one walks during the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” He said this, and then told them, “Our friend Lazarus is asleep, but I am going to awaken him.” So the disciples said to him, “Master, if he is asleep, he will be saved.”

But Jesus was talking about his death, while they thought that he meant ordinary sleep. So then Jesus said to them clearly, “Lazarus has died. And I am glad for you that I was not there, that you may believe. Let us go to him.” So Thomas, called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go to die with him.” When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, only about two miles away. And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you.”

Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise.” Martha said to him, “I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world.”

When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary secretly, saying, “The teacher is here and is asking for you.” As soon as she heard this, she rose quickly and went to him. For Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still where Martha had met him. So when the Jews who were with her in the house comforting her saw Mary get up quickly and go out, they followed her, presuming that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come with her weeping, he became perturbed and deeply troubled, and said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Sir, come and see.”

And Jesus wept. So the Jews said, “See how he loved him.” But some of them said, “Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have done something so that this man would not have died?” So Jesus, perturbed again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay across it. Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the dead man’s sister, said to him, “Lord, by now there will be a stench; he has been dead for four days.” Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believe

you will see the glory of God?” So they took away the stone. And Jesus raised his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me; but because of the crowd here I have said this, that they may believe that you sent me.” And when he had said this, He cried out in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth. So Jesus said to them, “Untie him and let him go.” Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary and seen what he had done began to believe in him.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

Commentary on John 11:1-45:

To the question, what happens to the dead before the “*parousia*” and the second coming of the Jesus, John has an answer: to a friend of Jesus, death is not a problem (Alonso-Schoekel).

The death of Lazarus, a close friend of Jesus, demonstrates what Jesus can do. Every infirmity and every experience of death points to the future: the fullness of the glory of God, and in the present age, that Jesus is truly the fountain of life, eternal life. This Jesus proves by contradicting the Jewish belief that after 4 days in the grave, the possibility of the resurrection is doomed. Jesus stayed in his tomb for two nights and on the third day he rose. But he is going to call Lazarus out of his grave four days after his death.

For a Christian, death is just a sleep in the eternity of God. Mary and Martha pose the same sentiment: if you were here, our brother would not have died. Jesus places himself in the company of the grieving sisters and shares with them their grief. To Martha who

makes an expression of trust and a confession of faith, Jesus responds with an assurance: I am the resurrection and the life. With Mary who weeps, Jesus shares his agony and grief with his own tears.

Before the doubting Martha and the unbelieving crowd, Jesus prays aloud for what is going to take place: the revelation of the glory of God in him. He shows them how we ought to pray. To the resurrection of Lazarus from the tomb, the authorities respond by plotting the death of Jesus. The author of eternal life will soon be killed by the forces of death!

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Homily: The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, transcends the old ways of sin and death by asserting the Spirit of life, new solidarity and total change.

Summary of the Sunday Reading Message	Concrete description of the poor people and their situation	Reflection/ Points for reflection/ Call/ Challenge
The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, transcends the old ways of sin and death by asserting the Spirit of life, new solidarity and total change.	What would be the old ways in your practice as BEC that has kept the poor poorer and the rich richer? What new ways must you practice to live the Spirit of Life, Solidarity and Total Change?	Our friendship with Jesus will allow us to overcome sin and death. Our friendship with him will lead us to a more inspired practice of solidarity in the struggle for a new life.

Profession of Faith

A: I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose

again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the Faithful:

P: Dear sisters and brothers, our heavenly Father is always open to our prayers, even though He knows our every human need. Let us now bring to him the hopes and aspirations of our hearts. Let our response be: Renew us with the Spirit of Life, Solidarity and Change, O Lord.

R: *Renew us with the Spirit of Life, Solidarity and Change, O Lord.*

L: Let us pray for the Church: that being a Church of the Poor spread all over the world, she may continue to remind us that our friendship with God is our only redemption from sin and destruction, and not our social relations based on power, fear and greed. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: *Renew us with the Spirit of Life, Solidarity and Change, O Lord.*

L: For our Holy Father, Pope Francis I, for the bishops, priests, deacons, for those in consecrated life and for all those who are entrusted with the care and administration of the church as People of God: that they may continue to give deeper examples of solidarity

with the poor, humility of service together with the firm rejection of careerism and bureaucratic power in the Church. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Renew us with the Spirit of Life, Solidarity and Change, O Lord.

L: For world leaders and all those entrusted with governance and administration of the goods of the earth: that they may truly be the new “politicians who are genuinely disturbed by the state of society, the people, the lives of the poor.” Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Renew us with the Spirit of Life, Solidarity and Change, O Lord.

L: For all of us: that we may “prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security”. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Renew us with the Spirit of Life, Solidarity and Change, O Lord.

L: For our beloved dead: that in the forgiveness of their sins, they may find eternal rest in the heart of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Renew us with the Spirit of Life, Solidarity and Change, O Lord.

L: For our special intentions, in the silence of our hearts. *(pause)*... Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Renew us with the Spirit of Life, Solidarity and Change, O Lord.

P: Lord, in friendship you have given us new life. Help us to be friends with one another by promoting economic equality, defending human rights and rejecting the tyranny of the market, the idolatry of money and the economy of exclusion and inequality. We ask this through

Christ our Lord.

R: *Amen.*

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST Preparation of the Altar and the Gifts

P: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, ...

C: *Blessed be God forever.*

P: Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

C: *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: Hear us, almighty God, and, having instilled in your servants the teachings of the Christian faith, graciously purify them by the working of this sacrifice. Through Christ our Lord.

C: *Amen.*

Prayer of the Eucharist

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your spirit.*

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: *We lift them up to the Lord.*

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

C: *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 as true man he wept for Lazarus his friend and as eternal God raised him from the tomb, just as, taking pity on the human race, he leads us by sacred mysteries to new life.

Through him the host of Angels adores your majesty and rejoices in

your presence for ever. May our voices, we pray, join with theirs in one chorus of exultant praise, as we acclaim:

A: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Acclamation

P: The mystery of faith.
We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

(Concluding the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest says:)

Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

Communion Rite

The Lord's Prayer

Doxology

C: For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever.

Sign of Peace

P: Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles; Peace ... Who live and reign for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Breaking of the Bread

A: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world ... grant us peace.

Communion

P: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

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

Prayer after Communion

P: Let us pray. We pray, almighty God, that we may always be counted among the members of Christ, in whose Body and Blood we have communion. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

Final Blessing

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Bow down your heads and pray for God's blessing: Bless, O Lord, your people, who long for the gift of your mercy, and grant that what, at your prompting, they desire they may receive by your generous gift. Through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

P: And may the blessings of almighty God, + the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down upon you and remain with you forever.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

P: Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God. ■

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