

HOLY MASS FOR THE PHILIPPINE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS
Vatican Basilica
Sunday, 15 December 2019

[Link](#)

(...) In the Philippines, for centuries, there has been a novena in preparation for Holy Christmas called Simbang-Gabi (Mass of the night). During nine days, the Filipino faithful met at dawn in their parishes for a special Eucharistic celebration. In recent decades, thanks to Filipino migrants, this devotion has crossed national borders and has landed in many other countries. For years, Simbang-Gabi has also been celebrated in the diocese of Rome, and today we celebrate it together here, in St. Peter's Basilica.

Through this celebration we want to prepare for Christmas according to the spirit of the Word of God that we have listened to, remaining constant until the definitive coming of the Lord, as the apostle James recommends (cf. Jas 5: 7). We want to commit ourselves to manifesting the love and tenderness of God towards everyone, especially towards the least. We are called to be ferment in a society that often can no longer taste the beauty of God and experience the grace of his presence.

And you, dear brothers and sisters, who have left your land in search of a better future, have a special mission. May your faith be "leaven" in the parish communities to which you belong today. I encourage you to multiply your meeting opportunities to share your cultural and spiritual richness, while leaving you enriched by the experiences of others. We are all invited to build together that communion in diversity which constitutes a distinctive feature of the Kingdom of God, inaugurated by Jesus Christ, Son of God made man. We are all called to practice charity together with the inhabitants of the existential peripheries, putting our different gifts at the service, so as to renew the signs of the presence of the Kingdom. We are all called to announce the Gospel together, the Good News of salvation, in all languages, so as to reach as many people as possible. (...)