A Treasured Presence

Filipino American Catholics

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

A TREASURED PRESENCE: FILIPINO AMERICAN CATHOLICS

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Washington, DC

A *Treasured Presence: Filipino American Catholics* was developed by the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Island Affairs of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). It was reviewed by the Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, and it was approved by the Administrative Committee at its March 2020 meeting. It has been directed for publication by the undersigned.

Reverend Monsignor J. Brian Bransfield
General Secretary, USCCB

Cover image: *Sagrada Familia*, (Acrylic on canvas, 2013) by Ryan Aristotle Carreon (Fillipino artist).

"Miniaturismo (miniaturism) [is] a Spanish influence on Filipino colonial art. As early as the 16th century, Filipino and Chinese artisans were being taught by the friars to paint sacred images for use in 'worship'" (Facebook Post, May 13, 2013, The Art of Ryan Carreon Aragon).

See more of this artist's work at: *https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Artist/The-Art-of-Ryan-Carreon-Aragon-182921601747799/*.

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Foreword

BACKGROUND TO PASTORAL RESPONSE

In 2011, the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Island Affairs (SCAPA) celebrated the tenth anniversary of the statement of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), *Asian and Pacific Presence: Harmony in Faith*. The Subcommittee encouraged the observance of the special anniversary and promoted the implementation of the vision of the pastoral statement in several ways, including the development of educational materials for publication about Asian and Pacific Island Catholics.

The SCAPA commissioned draft writers for a series of small books to foster knowledge of and awareness among clergy, ministers, and parishioners of the traditions and expressions of faith of Catholics of Asian and Pacific Island descent.

In 2018, the USCCB statement *Encountering Christ in Harmony: A Pastoral Response to Our Asian and Pacific Island Brothers and Sisters*, affirms the need to "provide and continue to develop resources that are prepared for—and may stem from—Asian and Pacific Island communities."

The Subcommittee is grateful to Stephen M. Cherry, PhD, and Rev. Ricky Manalo, CSP, for their work on *A Treasured Presence: Filipino American Catholics*. Stephen M. Cherry is an associate professor of sociology at the University of Houston–Clear Lake. Both are authors and among their published works are *Faith, Family, and Filipino American Community Life* (Stephen M. Cherry: Rutgers University Press, 2014) and *The Liturgy of Life* (Ricky Manalo: Liturgical Press, 2014).

This small book sets out to provide readers with a general introduction to Filipino American Catholicism from historical, cultural, worship and pastoral perspectives. Chapter One provides a brief historical overview of Filipino faith encounters with Catholics in

the Philippines and the United States. Chapter Two explores the importance of faith and family to Filipino American parish life. Chapter Three provides an overview of Filipino American Catholic liturgies, devotions, and worship practices. This concise resource is replete with useful information that may be helpful for pastors and those involved in ministry to the Filipino Americans. It provides key insights into the cultural traits and faith perspectives that animate the religious life of Filipino Americans today.

Most Rev. Oscar A. Solis, D.D.
Bishop of Salt Lake City
Chairman of the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Island Affairs,
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Introduction

Filipino American Catholics are not a monolithic singular population, but rather, are racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse.The Philippines itself consists of over 7,600 islands,[1] give or take the tide, as the saying goes, with three major geographical divisions—Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao—and more than 175 ethnolinguistic groups.[2] These ethnolinguistic groups include Bicolano, Cebuano, Gaddang, Ibang, Ilocano, Ivatan, Kapampangan, Pangasinan, Subanu, Tagalog, Visayan, and Zamboangueno, to name a few. Not only do each of these regional groups physically look different, in many cases, each has its own unique dialect/language, in addition to speaking the national language of Filipino. As a result of US colonial rule of the islands, public schools in the Philippines also predominately give instruction in Tagalog and English. Hence, any Filipino may speak upward of three languages or more—a regional dialect/language, Tagalog, and English. Beyond physical appearance and language, each of these groups follow a myriad of other cultural practices specific to their geographic area—from the heavy use of chili peppers and coconut milk in one regional cuisine, to the use of Spanish chorizo (*longganisa* in Tagalog) in another, and from wearing a Maria Clara dress (*baro't saya* in Tagalog) in one region, to wearing a *kimona* (blouse) and *patadyong* (skirt) or even *hijab* in another. Every regional celebration has its own distinctive flavor and flair.

Cultural influences on the Philippines historically range from that of nearby Austronesian nations, such as Indonesia and Malaysia, to that of China, Spain, and the United States. Spanish colonial rule of the Philippines, as we will see in coming chapters, left the deepest

1 See "More islands, more fun in PH," CNN Philippines, Feb. 20, 2016, archived weblink of the original: *https://web.archive.org/web/20180620024729/http://cnnphilippines.com/videos/2016/02/20/More-islands-more-fun-in-PH.html*.

2 *Eufronio Alip, Political and Cultural History of the Philippines, Volume I and II* (Manila, Philippines: Alip and Brion Publications, 1950).

cultural influence on Filipinos. From shaping the national language of Filipino, which inherited Spanish grammar and vocabulary, to the spread of Catholicism and the ascendancy of the Philippines as the only predominantly Catholic nation in Asia, Spain made a lasting impact. Yet while the influences from Spain's nearly 500-year rule of the Philippines remains today, so too does the imprint of nearly fifty years of US colonial rule. From the introduction of the English language and US education and technology, to the national consumption of Spam™ (canned food) and the spread of US clothing and social trends, Filipinos immigrating to the United States are diverse outsiders but also already keenly aware and full participants in many US cultural norms and practices.

In light of this culturally rich and diverse history, this small book sets out to provide readers with a general introduction to Filipino American Catholicism from a historical, cultural, worship, and pastoral perspective. Part One presents an historical overview of Filipino Catholicism, beginning with the arrival of Spanish missionaries in the Philippines in 1521 and continuing with the three waves of Filipino immigration to the United States from 1903 to the present. Part Two examines US Filipino Catholicism through the interconnecting cultural lenses of faith and family dynamics, in addition to Filipino cultural perspectives on parish life. Part Three highlights particular liturgies, devotions, and worship practices that mark the everyday lives of many Filipino Catholics. Finally, Part Four calls for more recognition and utilization of the gifts that Filipinos bring to the larger US Catholic Church and community. It also explores concerns over whether future generations of Filipinos will continue these faith practices.

I. An Historical Overview

A. CATHOLIC ROOTS IN THE PHILIPPINES[3] IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Any history of Filipinos in the United States must begin with the history of Catholicism in the Philippines. In 1494, Pope Alexander VI ratified the Treaty of Tordesillas, which essentially divided the world of European exploration into two halves—the Americas were granted to the Spanish empire and Asia to the Portuguese empire. The Portuguese explorer, Ferdinand Magellan (1480-1521), representing the Spanish empire, began his famous voyage around the world in 1519. He arrived in the Visayan region of the Philippines in 1521, which eventually led to the conversion of 2,200 natives in Cebu (see further discussion of *Santo Niño* in subsequent chapters). In 1565 a more formal Spanish expedition began under the leadership of Miguel López de Legaspi. Legaspi's expedition succeeded in establishing a foundation for a more sustained Spanish colonization in the Philippines. With the help of Augustinian friars, this mission expanded from Cebu and eventually reached Manila in 1578. In that year, Manila was constituted a bishopric under the archbishop of Mexico, who then sent the Dominican Domingo de Salazar to Manila in 1581 to become the first Catholic bishop of the Philippines. Ten years later, in 1591, Manila was made into a metropolitanate with three dioceses. By the end of the century, four missionary orders had been established, including the Augustinians (1565), the Franciscans (1577), the Jesuits (since 1581), and the Dominicans (1587). Part of the success that contributed to the spreading of the Catholic faith throughout the islands was due to the allotting of different regions in the Philippines to these specific religious communities. It was reported that by the end of the

3 The main resource for this section is taken from Samuel Hugh Moffett, "The Spaniards in the Philippines (1521-1800)" in *A History of Christianity in Asia 1500-1900*, Vol. II (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 2005), 150-174.

sixteenth century, half of the 687,000 people under Spanish colonization had been baptized Christian or had been instructed in the Christian faith.[4]

B. FILIPINO ROOTS IN THE AMERICAS (1587-1902)

The establishment of the Spanish colonies and Christianity in the Philippines in the late sixteenth century opened up a trade route between Acapulco in Spanish Mexico (New Spain), Peru (farther south), and Manila. Due to this transpacific passage, some 40,000 to 100,000 Asians, a majority of whom were native Filipinos and mestizos (people of mixed race of Filipino, Chinese, and Spanish descent), eventually made their way to New Spain as sailors, servants, and slaves.[5] During this time, the present-day US state of California was part of New Spain. The first-recorded *Luzon Indios* (the Spanish name given to Filipinos, meaning Luzon Indians) to arrive in what is presently the United States was on October 18, 1587. They were crew members of the Spanish galleon ship, *Nuestra Señora Esperanza*, that anchored on the California coast, specifically, in Morro Bay (present-day San Luis Obispo County). Eight years later, on November 6, 1595, another Spanish galleon with Filipino crew members was shipwrecked near Point Reyes[6] (north of present-day San Francisco). Yet none of these first arrivals established any known settlements. As early as the 1830s, Filipino migrant workers, in addition to workers from China, Japan, and Korea, began immigrating to Hawaii to work on sugar plantations. In the 1850s,

4 Francisco de Ortega, "Report concerning the Filipinas Islands" (1594), translated in Blair and Robinson, *The Philippine Islands*, 9:95-105. In Moffett, "The Spaniards in the Philippines," 155.

5 See Jason Oliver Chang, "Toward a Hemispheric Asian American History," in *The Oxford Handbook of Asian American History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 35; Erika Lee, *The Making of Asian America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2015), 20; Jose Maria S. Luengo, *A Making of the Manila-Acapulco Slave Trade* (1565-1815) (Tubigon, Bohol Philippines: Mater Dei Philippines, 1996). While Filipinos were of the majority, the list includes "a sizable number of Chinese, Japanese, and South Asians as well" (Lee, *The Making of Asian America*, 21).

6 Joaquin Jay Gonzalez, III, *Filipino American Faith in Action: Immigration, Religion, and Civic Engagement* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 21.

the California Gold Rush reported the presence of "Manilamen" in Mariposa County, California. Later, Filipinos fought during the Civil War. The first sustained settlement of Filipinos in the United States was likely established sometime around 1763. Although the exact date continues to be contested among scholars,[7] Filipino crew members abandoned their ships and established the village of St. Malo, located on Lake Borgne of St. Bernard Parish in Louisiana.

C. A SUSTAINED PRESENCE: THE FIRST WAVE OF FILIPINO IMMIGRANTS (1903–1934)

A more sustained "first wave" of Filipino immigration occurred following the Spanish-American War and the contentious annexation of the Philippines by the United States in 1898. This wave began with Filipino students (*pensionados* in Tagalog) from 1903 to 1934, studying in universities such as the University of San Francisco (formerly St. Ignatius Academy), Columbia University, and New York University.[8]

The annexation of Hawaii by the United States in 1893 brought in thousands of first-generation Filipino elders (*manongs* in Tagalog) as "special noncitizen US nationals." During this time period, many of these *manongs* migrated from Hawaii and settled along the West coast to work in the fish canneries in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. Thousands also became farmworkers as the agricultural landscape in California and the Pacific Northwest expanded. Other Filipinos immigrated through Ellis Island (New York) as early as 1915.

These varied immigration paths eventually led to communal enclaves, "Little Manilas," as they were informally called in San

7 Marina E. Espina claims that the year of this first settlement is 1763, while Carmelo Astilla claims places the date a hundred years later, sometime during the 1860s. For an overview of this debate, see Floro L. Mercene, "Filipinos in Louisiana," in *Manila Men in the New World: Filipino Migration to Mexico and the Americas from the Sixteenth Century* (Diliman, Quezon City: The University of the Philippines Press, 2007), 91-117.

8 *Pensionados* were "students on all-expenses paid US government scholarships" who "were recruited to study at American universities" (Gonzales, *Filipino American Faith in Action*, 22).

Francisco and Stockton, California, and in the boroughs of New York City. As a result, a steady growth of Filipinos began to be noticed.[9] In total, close to 175,000 Filipinos were brought into the United States during the 1903–1934 time period from all places of origin, 90 percent of whom were male and 80 percent of whom were between the ages of eighteen and thirty-four.[10] Throughout this time period, Catholic dioceses and parishes pastorally responded to Filipinos' increasing presence by establishing "Catholic Filipino Clubs" and other programs in order to meet the needs of the Filipino community.

D. RACISM AND LEGISLATIVE ACTS: THE SECOND WAVE (1934–1964)

As an outcome of the 1898 annexation of the Philippines by the United States, Filipinos were granted civic status as "nationals," similar to those from other US territories, including Puerto Rico, Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands. Officially, they did not enter as "immigrants" but, similar to the Chinese and the Japanese immigrants, they could not go through the naturalization process and apply for citizenship. The Great Depression of the 1930s heightened racist and xenophobic attitudes and actions toward all minority groups as competition for labor increased. These actions included racial profiling, violence toward and shootings of Filipinos, and anti-miscegenation statutes, which forbade marriage between "white" and "Mongolian" partners.[11] This further increased other measures of segregation.

The first wave of Filipino immigration was drastically minimized through a series of US legislative acts, beginning with the

9 "Between 1920 to 1929, a total of 31,092 Filipinos entered California, 80% of whom entered through the port of San Francisco (California Department of Industrial Relations 1930)." See Gomez, 23.

10 Jeffrey M. Burns, Ellen Skerret, and Joseph M. White, eds., *Keeping Faith: European and Asian Catholic Immigrants* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 263-65.

11 Barbara M. Posadas, *The Filipinos Americans* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 22. In addition Bulosan's memoire, see also Peter Jamero, *Growing Up Brown: Memoirs of a Filipino American* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2006).

1924 Johnson-Reed Act,[12] which called for the absolute prohibition or exclusion of all Asian immigration to the United States.[13] Ten years later, on March 24, 1934, the Tydings-McDuffie Act became the first official US document specifically targeted toward Filipinos. The Act reclassified Filipinos as aliens (changed from nationals) and restricted Filipino immigration to an annual quota of fifty persons. The McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 revised the 1924 Act, allotting each Asian nation a minimum quota of one-hundred visas per year, as well as eliminating laws that prevented Asians from becoming naturalized US citizens.[14]

During this turbulent time, Filipino migrants in California began to strike against poor work conditions and pay. Led by Larry Itliong, along with Rudy Delvo, Chris Mensalvas, Philip Vera Cruz, and Ernesto Mangaoang, to name a few, Filipino Americans successfully unionized their fellow farmworkers through the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations' (AFL–CIO) Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee.[15] By the early 1960s, Mexican farmworkers, under the leadership of Cesar Chavez, began to strike side-by-side with Filipino American farmworkers in Delano, California. After a series of successful joint strikes that resulted in higher wages for farmworkers, the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (led by Itliong) and National Farm Workers Association (led by Chavez) merged to form the United Farm Workers. Itliong served as assistant director

12 The Johnson-Reed Act is also known as the Immigration Act of 1924, the National Origins Act, the Asian Exclusion Act, and the Japanese Exclusion Act.

13 "The 1924 law established a quota system based on national origins. It directed nearly 70% of the immigration slots to northern Europeans, cutting back drastically on immigration from southern and Eastern Europe. It maintained formidable barriers against immigration from Asia and Africa, while leaving immigration from the Western Hemisphere unrestricted—a gesture of hemispheric solidarity that also served the cheap-labor interests of American employers" (Jerry Krammer, "The Hart-Celler Immigration Act of 1965," Center for Immigration Studies [September 2015], *http://cis.org/Hart-Celler-Immigration-Act-1965*).

14 See "The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 (The McCarran-Walter Act)," US Department of State, Office of the Historian, *https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/immigration-act*.

15 See Craig Scharlin and Lilia Villanueva, *Philip Vera Cruz: A Personal History of Filipino Immigrants and the Farmworkers Movement* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2011).

of the United Farm Workers under Cesar Chavez. Although history has done well to commemorate the life of Cesar Chavez and the achievements of the United Farm Workers movement, it has not always accurately remembered that Filipinos migrants were a vital part of its successes.[16]

E. A NEW LIGHT: THE THIRD WAVE OF FILIPINO IMMIGRATION: 1965 TO THE PRESENT

Decades of drastic exclusion ended on October 3, 1965, when President Lyndon Johnson signed the Hart-Celler Act, which was an immigration reform bill. The Act replaced the restrictive national origins system in the 1924 Act with a system based on quotas and a preference toward family reunification, occupational preference, and political refugees. Specifically, each country in the Eastern Hemisphere was given a quota of 20,000, but family members (children under twenty-one, spouses, and parents) were not subject to this quota. These legislative changes dramatically increased the number of Filipinos immigrating to the United States.

The 1965 Immigration Act was not the only reason why Filipino migration increased during this time. As we have seen, the unique military, economic, and cultural ties between the Philippines and the United States, throughout its history as a US colony, and then as a key ally and base for US troops after World War II, shaped and strengthened these waves. The tremendous growth of US standards-based education programs in the Philippines, such as nursing, prepared Filipinos for new careers abroad. Filipino migration to the United States became increasingly more professional-based. Compared to earlier waves of farming migrants and factory laborers, Filipino immigrants after 1965 were more likely to be doctors, nurses, and engineers—and came in larger numbers than prior waves to help meet the needs of new US labor shortages. Yet, the increased migration of Filipino professionals did not and has not

16 C. Scharlin, *Philip Vera Cruz*.

slowed the degree to which many Filipino Americans experience racism, xenophobia, and/or a generally unwelcoming environment in the communities in which they make their new US homes.

F. DEMOGRAPHICS TODAY

Today there are over four million Filipino Americans in the United States. Roughly 69 percent of Filipino Americans are foreign-born, the overwhelming majority of whom are Catholic. In fact, the Philippines is the second largest source of Catholic immigration to the United States.[17] According to recent reports from the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), approximately 65 percent of Filipino Americans, foreign-born or not, are Catholic. Filipino Americans represent three quarters of all Asian and Pacific Island American Catholics (APIC)—with a population that is over four times larger than any other APIC group.[18] The report also notes that "three-quarters of Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander Catholics are estimated to self-identify as Filipino." Understanding this demographic, many of the parishes serving these broader Asian

17 See "Asian Americans: A Mosaic of Faiths," Pew Research Center, July 19, 2012, *http://www.pewforum.org/2012/07/19/asian-americans-a-mosaic-of-faiths-overview/*.

18 Mark Gray, Mary Gautier, and Thomas Gaunt, *Cultural Diversity in the Catholic Church in the United States: Special Report* (Washington, DC: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University, October 2016), 21.

The report further states: "About 2.9 million U.S. residents who self-identify as Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander are estimated to be Catholic, representing about 19.1% of the 15.2 million people of this race and ethnicity in the country. This includes an estimated 2.2 million Filipino Catholics, 483,600 Vietnamese Catholics, 340,900 Chinese Catholics, 199,700 Korean Catholics, 147,400 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Catholics, 146,400 Indian Catholics, and 56,000 Japanese Catholics. Some 76% of Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander Catholics are estimated to self-identify as Filipino (alone and in combination with other identities)" (p. 5).

The report further notes: "Due to significant numbers of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Americans having multiple racial, ethnic, and ancestral identities, totals for sub-groups do not add to the total Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander group population number. For example, the Census Bureau estimated the population of those self-identifying as Filipino alone in 2010 was 2.6 million. However, once one also includes those self-identifying as Filipino in combination with some other identity this population totals 3.4 million" (p. 4).

See also Mark Gray, Mary Gautier, and Thomas Gaunt, *Cultural Diversity in the Catholic Church in the United States* (Washington, DC: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate [CARA] at Georgetown University, 2014), 7-8.

and Pacific Island communities are likely to be serving Filipino American Catholics as well.

Filipino Americans have a higher percentage of their population that is Catholic than Hispanics/Latino Americans (58.9 percent). Whereas the percentage of Hispanic Americans who remain Catholic has declined somewhat in recent years a greater proportion of Filipino Americans are remaining Catholic. Seventy-three percent of Filipino American Catholic adults, for example, state that they have remained in their childhood religion—a higher retention rate than Chinese, Korean, and Japanese American Catholics. By comparison, an estimated 32 percent of Hispanic/Latino Americans state that they no longer belong to the religion in which they were raised.[19] Hence, for the overwhelming majority of Filipino Americans, Roman Catholicism remains an essential and integral component to their overall identity and plays a defining role in their daily lives. As a result, Filipino Americans remain a treasured presence in the Church in the United States, contributing their distinctive gifts to the worship life and ministerial activities of US parishes and dioceses.[20]

II. Faith, Family, and Parish

A. FILIPINO FAMILY LIFE

Faith and family are important to Filipinos in the Philippines and Filipino Americans. Prior to Spanish colonial rule of the Philippines, *barangays* (Tagalog), a confederation of extended families beyond

19 See Mark T. Mulder, Aida I. Ramos, and Gerardo Marti, *Latino Protestants in America: Growing and Diverse* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017); "The shifting religious identity of Latinos in the United States," Pew Research Center, May 7, 2014, *http://www.pewforum.org/2014/05/07/the-shifting-religious-identity-of-latinos-in-the-united-states*; and Aida I. Ramos, R. D. Woodberry, C. G. Ellison (2017), "The contexts of conversion among U.S. Latinos," Sociology of Religion (78):119–145.

20 See Appendix One for a list of Filipino Catholics in episcopal regions throughout the United States.

the nuclear or immediate family, dominated Filipino social and political life. Everything centered in and around the family. In fact, early Spanish attempts to spread Catholicism and proselytize in the Philippines (circa 1580s) were not fully successful until local chieftains encouraged families to seek out Catholic priests because the chieftains believed that baptism could cure disease and physical ailments. Becoming Catholic was literally seen as healthy for the family.[21] Some 400 plus years later, extended families of siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins, biologically-related or not, remain the heart and institutional foundation of Filipino society, both at home and in diaspora. Families still eat together and pray together, and children are raised to respect and honor their elders (those family members who are older than them). Outward and more symbolic signs of this respect can be seen in the custom and practice of *mano po* (Tagalog)—a gesture of bowing slightly and placing gently the right hand of an elder to one's forehead. The elder then offers a blessing or kind words in return for the gesture of respect. However, beyond outward gestures, Filipino children are also taught to understand the importance of *hiya* (Tagalog), or shame, as a means to check their behavior and ensure that they are not bringing criticism and negativity to the extended family through their individual actions. All must be done for the family, not the individual.[22]

This deep love for family motivates Filipinos to make sacrifices for the greater good of the family through an understanding of *utang na loob* (Tagalog)—a debt of gratitude for everything that has been done for them. This debt is not to be taken lightly but is seen as a life-long obligation that can never be repaid. It compels Filipinos to think more about others than themselves and links them through the

21 See discussion in Stephen M. Cherry, *Faith, Family, and Filipino American Community Life* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2014), Chapter 2: "Catholic Culture and Filipino Families."

22 See Sr. Myrna Tordillo, MSCS, "What every vocation director should know about Filipino families," Horizon Newsletter, Fall 2015, *http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/asian-pacific-islander/resources/upload/What-every-Vocation-Director-should-know-about-Filipino-families-MT.pdf*.

spirit of *pakikisama* (Tagalog) and *bayanihan* (Tagalog) to promote cooperation and mutual obligation by working collectively toward a greater good and the wishes of the family. It is for this reason that so many Filipinos are willing to leave the Philippines in search of work, even if it means tremendous personal sacrifice and physical, often long-term, separation from those they love—their family.

B. FAMILIES BEYOND BORDERS

Over 5,000 Filipinos leave the Philippines every day with roughly nine million people or nearly 10 percent of the nation's population living and working overseas.[23] Filipinos are the largest diaspora population in the world, and the United States is their top destination. Filipinos are the fourth largest immigrant population in the United States (after immigrants from Mexico, India, and China), the second largest Asian population (second to Chinese residents), and they account for nearly 5 percent of the total foreign-born population.[24] Nearly 80 percent of all Filipinos admitted to the United States as Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) come through family sponsorship and immediate relatives who are US citizens—the highest rate amongst Asian American immigrants.[25] However, it is important to note that slightly less than 2 percent of the United States' undocumented population is also Filipino, the majority of whom entered legally but have overstayed their visas.[26] Although this is a small percentage comparatively, undocumented immigration is a private,

23 See "Philippine International Migration Data," *UN Regional Workshop on Strengthening the Collection and Use of International Migration Data*, Philippine Statistics Authority–Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Bangkok, Thailand (Jan. 31–Feb. 3, 2017), *https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/meetings/2017/bangkok--international-migration-data/Session%203/Session%203%20Philippines.pdf*.

24 "Philippine International Migration Data"; Cherry, *Filipino American Community Life*, 15; and "Filipino Immigrants in the United States," Luis Hassan Gallardo and Jeanne Batalova, Migration Policy Institute (MPI), *https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/filipino-immigrants-united-states*.

25 Cherry, *Filipino American Community Life*; "The Rise of Asian Americans," Pew Research Center, April 4, 2013, *https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2013/04/Asian-Americans-new-full-report-04-2013.pdf*.

26 See "Filipino Immigrants in the United States," Migration Policy Institute.

often hidden issue that shapes many Filipino American communities across the country—especially in states such as California. Add to this an increasingly hostile, if not xenophobic, fear of immigrants in general over the last decade, and it is easy to see how immigration issues are not just a Hispanic/Latino concern but something that shapes the daily experiences of Filipino Americans as they live and work in the United States while also attempting to help their families back in the Philippines.

The Philippines is the third largest recipient country of diaspora remittances in the world. Over 10 percent of the Philippines' Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is from overseas worker remittances.[27] Sending money home is not just an obligation but the only means of survival for those who are left behind. However, the money that is sent home comes at tremendous price. It is estimated that by 2030 the proportion of intact nuclear family households, those who physically live together in the Philippines, will drop nearly 83 percent from what is was in the 1970s.[28] Traditional families are physically being torn apart and transnational families are replacing them. At least nine million children in the Philippines have grown up without one or both of their parents due to forced economic migration.[29] As a result, families often turn to cellphones, email, and video chat to make their presence felt in their children's lives, but it is simply not the same as actually being there.[30] Although Filipino American families have often fared better at physically reuniting their families through family-based immigration than Filipinos in diaspora in other countries, increasing and widespread xenophobia in the

27 "Filipino Immigrants in the United States," Migration Policy Institute (MPI); "Personal remittances, received (% of GDP)," 1970-2019 Data, The World Bank: Open Data, *https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS*.

28 T. G. Medina Belen, *The Filipino Family* (2nd ed.) (Quezon City, Philippines: University of the Philippines Press, 2001); Isabel Panopio and Realidad Rolda, *Society and Culture* (Quezon City: JMC Press, Inc., 2000).

29 Stella P. Go, *The Filipino Family in the Eighties* (Manila, Philippines: De La Salle University, Social Development Research Center, 1993); Ana P. Santos, "Philippines: Missing Their Parents," Pulitzer Center, July 27, 2015, *https://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/philippines-missing-their-parents*.

30 Nilo E. Tanalega, *Families on the Move* (Manila: Ugat Foundation, Ateneo de Manila: 2002).

United States, combined with national calls to end chain migration, may change this and bring new challenges to the Filipino American family. Whether this happens or not, the one constant that continues to keep Filipino families together is Catholicism and the faith of Filipino American families. Studies show, for example, that Filipino families that pray together are able to stay together—and their children are less likely to ever smoke, drink, use drugs or have premarital sex.[31] This is also the case in the Filipino diaspora in the United States.

C. PARISH PRESENCE AND MINISTERIAL INVOLVEMENT

Numerous studies demonstrate that Filipinos are just as religious in the United States as they were/are in the Philippines.[32] Filipino Americans have the second highest rate of church attendance (37 percent) and the second highest participation in church beyond worship service (48 percent) among Asian Americans.[33] In many ways, Filipinos are *the* vital force in their parishes—actively filling pews and doing whatever their church needs or asks of them. Sixty-five percent of Filipino Americans, for example, state that they have participated in a parish potluck dinner or fellowship gathering

31 Grace T. Cruz, Elma P. Laguna, and Corazon M. Raymundo, "Family Influences on the Lifestyle of Filipino Youth," Working Paper Population Series, no. 108-8, East-West Center Working Papers, Honolulu, HI, 2001; Rhacel Parrenas, *Children of Global Migration: Transnational Families and Gender Woes* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2005); and Rachel H. Racelis and Emily Cabegin, *A Household Model for Economic and Social Studies: Updated Household and Macro/Sectoral Projections* (Pasig City, Philippines: National Economic Authority, 1998), 1990-2030.

32 See for example Cherry, *Filipino American Community Life*; Joaquin Gonzalez III, *Filipino American Faith in Action: Immigration, Religion, and Civic Engagement* (New York: New York University Press, 2009); and Steffi San Buenaventura, "Filipino Religion at Home and Abroad: Historical Roots and Immigrant Transformations," in *Religions in Asian America: Building Faith Communities*, edited by Pyong G. Min and Jung H. Kim (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2002), 143-142. These have been three of a select few to draw attention to the importance of Catholicism in Filipino American Studies.

33 Janelle Karthick Ramakrishnan Wong, Taeku Lee, and Jane Junn, *Asian American Political Participation: Emerging Constituents and their Political Identities* (New York: Russell Sage, 2011); "Asian Americans: A Mosaic of Faiths," Pew Research Center, July 19, 2012, *http://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2012/07/Asian-Americans-religion-full-report.pdf*.

in the last month—a participation rate higher than any other Asian or Pacific Island Catholic (APIC) population.[34] Seventy-four percent of Filipinos also say that devotional practices are very important to them—again, a percentage higher than other APIC populations.[35] Beyond active participation in their parishes through attending Mass or special events, Filipino Americans engage their faith by volunteering and working on community projects. Thirty-six percent of Filipino Americans, for example, state that they have participated in a non-parish prayer group in the past month.[36] Forty percent state that they have participated in some form of parish social outreach to the community, and seventy-one percent state that social justice issues are very important to them—this, again, represents parish participation percentages higher than any other API Catholic population.[37]

By some estimates, Filipino Americans are the most activist-inclined Asian American population, and it is faith and family that drives them.[38] From sponsorship and volunteering at community health fairs to marching and protesting at state capitals against abortion or in support of life issues, Filipino Americans live their faith and see issues impacting the family as a central part of their calling to do God's work.[39] This is especially true of those who frequently attend Mass and/or participate in their parish beyond regular Mass attendance. In one study, 80 percent of Filipinos who participated in parish activities and regularly attended Mass stated that they volunteered in their community at least once in the last year, compared to just 39 percent who did not have the same parish involvement.[40]

34 See Tricia C. Bruce, Jerry Z. Park, Stephen M. Cherry, "Asian and Pacific Island Catholics in the United States," Report prepared for the USCCB Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church, October 2015, *http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/asian-pacific-islander/demographics/upload/API-Catholics-in-the-US-Report-October-2015.pdf*.

35 Bruce et. al., "Asian and Pacific Island Catholics in the United States."

36 Bruce et. al., "Asian and Pacific Island Catholics in the United States."

37 Bruce et. al., "Asian and Pacific Island Catholics in the United States."

38 S. Karthick Ramakrishnan, Janelle Wong, Taeku Lee, and Jane Junn, "Race Based Considerations and the Obama Vote: Evidence from the 2008 National Asian American Survey," *Du Bois Review* 6, 1 (2009): 219-238.

39 Cherry, *Filipino American Community Life*.

40 Cherry, *Filipino American Community Life*.

Likewise, 63 percent of Filipinos who participated in their parish in addition to regularly attending Mass stated that they had worked on a community project in the last year compared to just 14 percent who did not actively participate in their parish beyond Mass. Given that the average volunteering rate in the United States is roughly 24 percent, faith and active participation in the Church clearly compels Filipinos to engage their communities more than the average American.[41] However, like any faith population in the United States, secularization and a demanding quick-paced work-first lifestyle present serious challenges to Filipino American religious and family life. This is particularly true for second-generation Filipinos who grew up in the United States and have become increasingly Americanized—and hence less religious.[42] Generational divides and a loss of religious activity among youth, as we will see in subsequent chapters, are a major source of concern for first-generation Filipinos and increasingly problematic for Filipino American parish life.

D. A COMMUNITY OF COMMUNITIES

Beyond generational challenges, Filipinos in diaspora also face internal concerns within their own ethnic and regional communities. Today, some Filipino groups and associations in communities across the United States, both secular and religious, have either split or continued to engage in very intense and public politicking. Although secular groups and associations tend to face more challenges than religious groups, splits among religious groups do occur and have, at times, been equally problematic.[43] Searching for solutions amidst this divisiveness, the Church is often drawn into the center of these communities and their disputes as a trusted or

41 "Data Show US Volunteer Rates Dipping," Non-Profit Business Advisor, no. 329 (February 2017): 5-8, *https://doi.org/10.1002/nba.30279*.

42 See "'Nones' on the Rise: One-in-Five Adults Have No Religious Affiliation," Pew Research Center, Oct. 9, 2012, *http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2012/10/none-sontherise-full.pdf*.

43 See for example Rick Bonus, *Locating Filipino Americans: Ethnicity and the Cultural Politics of Space* (Boston, MA: Temple University Press, 2000); Cherry, *Filipino American Community Life*.

respected mediator. Because of this internal division, devotional gatherings to celebrate San Lorenzo or *Simbang Gabi*, for example, discussed in subsequent chapters, are even more special because they bring together the diversity that is the Filipino American community and engage their faith collectively beyond politics. In the end, politics can be put aside, groups can and do work together, and what matters most—faith and family—are celebrated.

III. Liturgies, Devotions, and Worship Practices

Filipino Catholics regularly participate in a number of worship practices. The variety of practices include liturgical celebrations in parish settings, prayer group gatherings across a variety of locations, and individual and communal practices of popular devotions. For over three hundred years, Spanish cultural forms of Christian worship were integrated with the indigenous forms that the missionaries encountered during their efforts of colonization and evangelization. The Spanish cultural forms were Baroque in style, characterized by "external display, colorful processions of images and banners, dramatic presentations, and concerts of choir and orchestra to accompany the liturgical rites."[44] The late Filipino liturgical scholar, Anscar J. Chupungco, OSB, believed that the baroque characteristics had much in common with the worship sensibilities of the indigenous cultures. He categorized these worship expressions into the following categories: 1) popular devotions and pious exercises, 2) processions, 3) altars, and 4) religious drama and dance.[45] Filipino Catholics, in turn, brought these traditions to the United States, which provided

44 Anscar J. Chupungco, "Filipino Religious Culture and Liturgy: Status Quaestionis," in *Liturgy for the Filipino Church: A Collection of Talks of Anscar J. Chupungco, OSB* (Manila: San Beda College: 2004), 2.

45 Chupungco, "Filipino Religious Culture and Liturgy: Status Quaestionis," 2.

transcultural links to the Philippines and grounded Filipinos in the faith during difficult times. The rest of this chapter will present some examples of these expressions, noting that some of these practices include combinations across the four categories.

A. POPULAR DEVOTIONS AND PIOUS EXERCISES

Among the popular devotions that have gained church approval in the Philippines, we may include the following list: recitations of the Rosary and the Angelus prayer; visits to the Blessed Sacrament; novenas (nine-day prayers); and other seasonal devotions, such as *Simbang Gabi* (a nine-day sequence of novena "night Masses"; more about this will be discussed below). The list may also include: the Stations of the Cross; *Visita Iglesia* (the practice of visiting a set number of churches following the Mass of the Lord's Supper of Holy Thursday); pilgrimages; and the *pabasa*, which involves the chanting of the *Pasyon* (the Passion narrative) during Lent and at funeral wake services. Devotions to Jesus, Mary, and the saints are the most popular of these prayer forms. Although there are countless numbers of forms we might include in a full discussion of this category of prayer devotions, below we highlight only some of the most prominent and important to Filipinos.[46]

Devotions to Jesus: The Black Nazarene

There are a number of devotions dedicated to the life, Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus (see *Santo Niño* and *Santacruzan* below). One of the most popular devotions is to the Black Nazarene. In the Quiapo district of Manila is the Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene within which is a life-size statue of Jesus, kneeling on one knee while carrying the Cross on his right shoulder. Although the origin of the Black Nazarene statue is not completely clear, most

46 See Appendix Two: Filipino Saints, Blesseds, Venerables, and Servants of God.

historians suggest that an unknown Mexican artist created this statue out of dark wood sometime in the sixteenth century, and then it was brought to the Philippines by missionary priests. During the long journey from Acapulco, Mexico, to the Philippines in 1606, a fire broke out that charred the wood even darker. When the statue arrived in the Philippines, it was met with immediate veneration. The Black Nazarene statue was first enshrined in the church of San Juan Bautista of the Augustinian Recollects, but over the next several decades it was transferred to another church after the British occupation of Manila (1762-64). It was then reconstructed after being destroyed during the US liberation of Manila during World War II (1945).[47] Today, a replica of the original Black Nazarene is venerated by Filipinos in the Philippines, particularly in and around Manila, every Friday and is brought out of its shrine for procession three times a year—January, on the anniversary of the icon's translation, Good Friday, and New Year's Eve, which marks the first day of its annual novena. In the United States, the Black Nazarene plays an equally important role in Filipino Americans' weekly novena devotions.[48] Many Filipino American prayer groups in communities across the country, especially those who immigrated from Manila, also pass a smaller replica of the image from home to home each week as part of their veneration.

Devotions to Mary

The Blessed Mary is a vital part of Filipino faith and devotion. Since her historical introduction to the Philippines during the Spanish conquest and colonial rule (circa 1521), Filipinos over the centuries have readily identified with the story of a poor young woman who

47 See "Feast of the Black Nazarene draws millions to Manila's streets," Catholics & Cultures Website, Center for Religion, Ethics and Culture at the College of the Holy Cross (Worcester, MA), *https://www.catholicsandcultures.org/philippines/feast-black-nazarene*.

48 J. Gordon Melton "Religious Celebrations: An Encyclopedia of Holidays, Festivals, Solemn Observances, and Spiritual Commemorations," ABC-CLIO (2011): 118-119.

John N. Schumacher (1968), "The Depth of Christianization in Early Seventeenth-Century Philippines," in Philippine Studies 16:3 (July 1968): 535-539.

became a mother and continually made sacrifices or demonstrated acts of tremendous love and compassion for her family.[49] In many ways, the Blessed Mother's story mirrors the struggle of Filipinos sacrificing for their families in diaspora today, as we have seen. Thus, it is not all that surprising that devotion to Mary is a central part of Filipino religious life wherever they live in the world. There are countless titles by which Mary is known in the Philippines, and devotions to her are equally numerous. Among these Marian venerations and traditions including the celebrations culminating during the month of May called *Flores de Mayo* (discussed further below) are devotions to particular images of Mary and their history or the miraculous circumstances surrounding their appearance.[50] The following sections highlight a few of these Marian apparitions and their devotions:

Our Lady of the Rosary

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, also known in the Philippines under the titles *Our Lady of La Naval de Manila*, *Gran Senora*, and *Santo Rosario*, is represented by a Filipino statue of Mary commissioned by Don Luis Perez Dasmarinas, the Spanish governor-general of the Philippines (1593), for public veneration in memory of his late father.[51] The image is known as *Our Lady of La Naval de Manila* because Filipinos claim that the Virgin Mary, who appeared bearing this image, interceded on their behalf and helped them, along with the Spanish, to repel the assault of Manila by the Dutch navy in 1646 while they prayed the Rosary.[52] She is also known as the native Virgin, or Queen of Manila, because of her Asian features.

49 See Naomi Castillo, Introduction to *Filipino Ministry* (Washington DC: Archdiocese of San Francisco in cooperation with the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees–United States Catholic Council, 1986); Naomi Castillo, *Filipino Devotionals and Religiocultural Celebrations* (San Francisco, CA: Archdiocese of San Francisco, 1997); and Cherry, *Filipino American Community Life*.

50 Deirdre De La Cruz, *Mother Figured: Marian Apparitions and the Making of a Filipino Universal* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

51 See *http://lanavaldemanila.com*.

52 See *http://lanavaldemanila.com*.

This statue of Mary is said to be the only true Filipina or indigenous image of Mary in the Philippines. Historians believe that the Asian features of this image are a result of the Chinese mestizo or immigrant sculptor who was commissioned by the then governor-general and incorporated his own features or ideals of beauty into the image.[53] The statue has merited several pontifical approbations, including an exhortation from Pope Leo XII in 1903, just a year after the United States annexed the Philippines at the end of the bloody Spanish-American War (1902). The image was also granted a canonical crown in 1906 by Pope Pius X, which, for people seeking pilgrimage, further commemorated the image's historical importance and celebrated her miraculous deeds. In the United States, many Filipino American prayer groups in communities across the country pray the Rosary in her honor and include the Queen of Manila, among the numerous apparitions of Mary celebrated during processions in their local parishes during the month of May.

Our Lady of Antipolo (Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage)

Our Lady of Antipolo, also known as Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage, like Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary of La Naval de Manila, is venerated in the Philippines as a result of circumstances that arose during Spanish colonial rule in Manila. Around 1626, the newly appointed governor-general of Manila, Don Juan Nino de Tabora, arrived at the city aboard a Spanish galleon with a statue of the Blessed Virgin, later known as the Virgin of Antipolo.[54] It was carved out of dark hardwood in Mexico, similar to the image of Jesus known as the Black Nazarene. Unlike more traditional Spanish Marian art, Antipolo physically looked more like the

53 Peter Gowing, *Islands under the Cross: The Story of the Church in the Philippines* (Manila, Philippines: National Council of Churches in the Philippines, 1967).

54 Cherry, *Filipino American Community Life*; Castillo, *Filipino Devotionals*.

average Filipina in terms of skin color and tone.[55] The sacred image of a more indigenous Holy Mother, like Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary of La Naval de Manila, eventually became an iconic Virgin of the Philippines. Through a series of historical events that are hard to retrace, the image was lost, sent back to Mexico, and nearly destroyed several times over a hundred-year period. When it eventually returned permanently to the Philippines, the statue was celebrated and enshrined as Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage.[56]

In many ways, Our Lady of Antipolo's journey is the embodiment of the faith and hopes of the Filipino diaspora—always faithful, no matter where the seas take them but always longing to return home to the Philippines. It is for this reason that many Filipinos venerate her. It is also for this reason that a 125-year-old image of Antipolo, an exact replica of the original in the Basilica of Antipolo in the Philippines, was enshrined and dedicated on June 7, 1997, by Cardinal James Hickey of the Archdiocese of Washington, DC, and Bishop Protacio Gungon of Antipolo in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in the United States. Since her enshrinement, the Oratory Chapel has been the site of pilgrimage for thousands of Filipino Americans. Many Filipino Americans also pray the Rosary in honor of Our Lady of Antipolo and include her among the numerous apparitions of Mary celebrated during processions in their local parishes during the month of May.

Our Lady of Peñafrancia

The veneration of Our Lady of Peñafrancia, unlike the previous two Filipino venerations discussed in the preceding pages, starts outside of Manila, specifically, south in the Bicol region. According to local history, in what is today Naga City, a Spanish officer and his family

55 See also Peter Braunlein, "Image Transmission as Image Acts: Christian Images, Emotions and Religious Conversion in the Philippines" in B. Mersmann and A. Schneider (eds.), *Image Transmission: Christian Images, Emotions and Religious Conversion in the Philippines* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2009) 11-37.

56 Braunlein, "Image Transmission as Image Acts" (2009).

from Peña de Francia, Spain, settled in Cavite, south of Manila, in 1712.[57] When Miguel Robles de Covarrubias, the son of this officer, fell ill, he and his family prayed to Our Lady of Peñafrancia for help. Miguel vowed that, if he was cured, he would have a statue of her made that looked like the picture he carried, and he would then build a shrine for her devotion. Miguel was cured, did as he promised, and went on to become a priest—the first diocesan priest ordained in the region. Since that time, Bicol and Cebu to its south have been some of the greatest source of priests internationally.[58] Many Filipino American prayer groups, especially those who immigrated from Bicol and Cebu, pray the Rosary in her honor—often led by a priest from their region. Filipino Americans also pass a smaller replica of the original Peñafrancia statue from home to home each week, frequently culminating in a procession in their local parishes during the month of May that includes other statues of Mary. In some parishes, the image of Our Lady of Peñafrancia is enshrined in either her own or a shared chapel.

St. Lorenzo Ruiz

Canonized by Pope John Paul II in 1987, St. Lorenzo Ruiz was a layperson from Manila whose mother was Filipino and father was Chinese. St. Lorenzo was also a husband, father of three children, and member of the Dominican Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary. In 1626, after being accused of an alleged murder, he found refuge in a ship bound for Okinawa, Japan. During this time, Japanese officials were persecuting Christians. After refusing to denounce his faith, Lorenzo was imprisoned for two years, and was later taken to Nagasaki (Japan). Throughout this time of great suffering, he refused to recant his faith, even when tortured. He was eventually killed, along with other martyr companions, including

57 Gowing, *Islands under the Cross*.

58 See Inés San Martín, "Pope Francis comes to call on the 'New Irish' in the Philippines," Crux Now, Jan. 16, 2015, *https://cruxnow.com/church/2015/01/pope-francis-comes-to-call-on-the-new-irish-in-the-philippines/*.

priests and other lay Dominicans who served in the Philippines, such as Anthony Gonzalez, OP; Dominic Ibáñez de Erquicia, OP; Lucas Alonso of the Holy Spirit, OP; Thomas Hioji Nishi of St. Hyacinth, OP; Vincent Schiwozuka of the Cross, OP; and Thomas of St. Dominic, OP. St. Lorenzo's feast day is on September 28 and is widely celebrated across the Filipino American community.

St. Pedro Calungsod

Canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012, St. Pedro Calungsod was born in the Visayan region, educated by the Jesuits, and served as a sacristan and catechist. At the age of fourteen, he joined the Jesuit Spanish missionaries, including Fr. Diego Luis de San Vitores, SJ, founder of the first Catholic church on the present-day island of Guam, who later baptized the daughter of a Catholic mother and non-Catholic chief in the village of Tumon. Upon hearing rumors that Christian baptismal waters were poisonous, due to the deaths of some infants who had been baptized, the chief and another villager killed both Calungsod and San Vitores. His feast day is on October 6.

Other Saints and Blesseds Associated with the Philippines

In addition to Ruiz and Calungsod, there were others who were not of Filipino ethnicity but served in the Philippines. These include the Augustinians Bl. Martin of St. Nicholas and Bl. Melchior of St. Augustine (feast day on December 11). Among the two-hundred and five Martyrs in Nagasaki, Japan (feast day on September 10), are Bl. Alfonso Navarrete Benito, OP, Joachim Diaz Hirayama, and Franciscan Bl. Pedro of Avila. Among the twenty-six martyrs who accompanied Paul Miki and died in 1597 (feast day on February 6), are the Franciscan saints Francisco Blanco, Francis of St. Michael, Martin de Aguirre, and Pedro Bautista.[59]

59 See Appendix Two for a more complete list of saints, blesseds, venerables, and servants of God.

Simbang Gabi

Simbang Gabi ("night Mass" in Tagalog) is a sequence of novena Masses that have become popular throughout the United States. These novena Masses were first celebrated in the Philippines sometime after 1565 when Miguel Lopez de Legaspi, a Spanish navigator and the first governor of the Philippines under Spanish colonial rule, introduced the first Christmas novena Mass to the Islands.[60] During this colonial period this Mass was called *Misa de Aguinaldo* ("gift Mass"). Later, other terms became associated with these Masses, such as *Misa de Gallo* ("Mass of the rooster") because they were held around four or five o'clock in the morning with the waking of the cock's crow. However, the novena Mass tradition at Christmas eventually changed names from *Misa de Gallo* to *Simbang Gabi* over time as longer work days and the complications of metropolitan life led many parishes in the Philippines to celebrate the Masses at night.[61] Today the celebration thrives in diaspora and has become one of the major cornerstones of community building for first-generation Filipino Americans.[62]

In the Philippines, over the course of nine days, December 16 through 24, Filipinos gather each night in their local parish churches. However, in the United States there is a more collaborative effort to bring together the Filipino communities from the various islands and ethno-cultural groups that make up the Philippines. Because of the dispersion of the Fillipino community in the United States, each parish may not have their own *Simbang Gabi* celebration; rather several parishes will work together to plan the celebration of these novena Masses for the community. One practical outcome of this collaboration between parishes with Fillipino communities is the shifting of the timeframe of the novena one day earlier, from December 15

60 Castillo, *Intro. to Filipino Ministry*; John Leddy Phelan, *The Hispanization of the Philippines: Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses 1565-1700* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, [1959] 1967).

61 Castillo, *Intro. to Filipino Ministry*.

62 Castillo, *Intro. to Filipino Ministry*; Castillo, *Filipino Devotionals*; Cherry, *Filipino American Community Life*; and Barbara Posadas, *The Filipino Americans* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999).

through 23, as this allows for the various communities and participants to celebrate the Christmas Midnight Mass in their home parishes.

Retracing the revelation of Jesus' birth from the Annunciation of the Angel Gabriel to Mary through the visitation and gifts of the Magi at the manger, each novena Mass prepares the way for Christmas. These Masses are often marked with festive decorations, including Christmas lanterns shaped like stars (*parols* in Tagalog) that are meant to symbolize the Star of Bethlehem. On most nights, Filipino choir members sing carols in both Tagalog and English at various points during the Mass. At the end of each Mass, a communal meal, often sponsored by various Filipino families and community associations/groups, is shared by all who gather. With everything from *pancit* noodles to *lumpia* eggrolls and fried chicken or pizza, the nightly feast is a reminder of the importance of food at any Filipino gathering. It is also an important reminder of the place of the Church in the Filipino community. *Simbang Gabi*, even more so than St. Lorenzo's feast day, is one of the only times when the entire Filipino community with all its diversity is gathered.

B. PROCESSIONS

Flores de Mayo and *Santacruzan*

Processions in the context of popular religious practices involve communal ritual movements with a focus on devotional objects connected to Jesus or a particular saint. These ritual actions allow worshippers to express themselves physically, often with accompanying prayers, chants, and songs. One example is the procession that takes place during the celebrations of *Flores de Mayo* (Flowers of May) and the *Santacruzan* (the Holy Cross). *Flores de Mayo* is a Marian devotional practice. In a *Flores de Mayo* procession celebrated in the month of May, girls known as the Daughters of Mary (*Hijas de Maria*) carry flowers that they then present before a statue or statues of Mary. While the ritual format of the *Flores de Mayo* devotion varies from

place to place, the *Santacruzan* religious drama often occurs at the end of *Flores de Mayo*. The *Santacruzan* drama reenacts St. Helena's finding of the Holy Cross in the fourth century, the discovery of which became a feast on the Tridentine liturgical calendar, celebrated May 3. Some communities start the celebration of *Flores de Mayo* with a novena and end with a pageant and procession in which a *Reyna de las Flores* (Queen of the Flowers) is selected.

C. ALTARS

If you enter the home of a traditional Filipino family who regularly engages in popular religious practices, chances are you will see one or more home altars displayed in specific locations. These altars can be filled with a variety of devotional objects, including pictures and statues of saints, prayer cards, holy water from pilgrimages to Fatima or Lourdes, rosaries, scapulars, and candles. During specific times of the year, they may also include objects that correspond with the liturgical seasons, such as palm branches from the Palm Sunday liturgies that have been configured into crosses or small Advent wreaths that express the anticipation of the Christmas celebrations. These altars not only demarcate sacred sites within domestic spaces but they also remind and invite family members and visiting guests to pray daily.

D. RELIGIOUS DRAMA AND DANCE

Salubong (Encounter)

In general, religious dramas are meant to reenact historical events through which participants connect to deeper spiritual meanings and the significance of specific biblical or extra-canonical stories and metaphors. The *Santacruzan*, discussed above, is a key example of a religious drama. Another, perhaps more popular devotional practice in this category is the *Salubong* ("encounter") celebrated on Easter Sunday morning, which reenacts the dramatic meeting of Mary

and her Son, the Risen Christ. While this meeting with the Blessed Mother is not found in Scripture, many Filipinos are able to relate to this narrative of a mother meeting her son on a personal level. The first part of this devotion begins at two separate locations: One location involves a procession of men carrying a statue of the Risen Christ, while the other location involves a procession of women carrying a statue of Mary, whose face is veiled to symbolize mourning. Both processions eventually meet in a common area, usually in front of a local church. At that moment, a child dressed as an angel is lowered down or brought to the front of Mary's statue (again, there are many variations), and the child in turn lifts Mary's veil. The worship participants see Mary's face of jubilation as she gazes at the sight of her risen Son. Beyond the *Simbang Gabi* novena Masses before Christmas and events associated with Mother Mary such as *Santacruzan* religious drama in the month of May, the *Salubong* reenactment of Mary meeting her Son on the morning of the Resurrection is perhaps the next most collectively celebrated time in Filipino American parishes across the United States. Like the aforementioned *Simbang Gabi* and *Santacruzan*, the *Salubong* religious drama gathers together the immense diversity of the Filipino American community and unites the community in prayerful devotion.

Santo Niño de Cebu

The veneration of the *Santo Niño de Cebu* image of Jesus as the Christ Child has nearly 200 different regional devotions in the Philippines.[63] Although the image itself was originally produced by a Flemish artist,[64] the origin of devotion to it in the Philippines can be traced to a singular set of events. In 1521, the Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan, sailing in service of the Spanish crown, landed in what would later become the province of Cebu. Upon arrival, Magellan baptized the ruler of the island, Raja Humabon, along with

63 Cherry, *Filipino American Community Life*.

64 Braunlein, "Image Transmission as Image Acts," (2009).

five hundred of his subjects, but failed to persuade Queen Juana to do the same.[65] Later, missionaries who had accompanied Magellan presented the Queen with a gift statue of the Christ Child—a gesture that had significant cultural resonance.[66] The Queen was allegedly moved to tears by the gift and became Catholic, along with many women in her court.[67] However, the royal court's conversion did not immediately lead to Catholicism spreading to other islands. On the contrary, when the natives of the neighboring island of Mactan challenged Magellan, eventually killing him, they destroyed all cultural remnants of Spanish conquest in Cebu, including Christian symbols.[68] Those in Cebu, disappointed in Magellan, turned on the Queen and attempted to burn the statue. When it would not burn, they tried to chop it with an axe.[69] According to local history, now taken as a miracle of faith, the statue simply disappeared after it could not be cut.

Forty-four years later, another Spanish expedition arrived in Cebu lead by Miguel Lopez de Legaspi, who later established the city of Manila. After fighting between the expedition and local natives, the very same people who turned on Queen Juana and Magellan, a fire broke out in the town, burning everything but a statue of the Christ Child dressed in velvet with a red cap on his head. Cebuanos believed that this was the exact same statue that had disappeared forty-four years ago and took it as a sign, a miracle. As a result, Catholicism quickly spread in the region and devotion to *Santo Niño* flourished. Today *Santo Niño* is the oldest surviving Catholic relic in the Philippines, outside of the original Magellan cross.[70] In the United States, the image of *Santo Niño* plays an equally

65 Gowing, *Islands under the Cross*.
66 Castillo, *Filipino Devotionals*.
67 Castillo, *Filipino Devotionals*.
68 Castillo, *Filipino Devotionals*; Gowing, *Islands under the Cross*.
69 Castillo, *Filipino Devotionals*; Gowing, *Islands under the Cross*.
70 Sally Ann Ness, *Body, Movement, and Culture: Kinesthetic and Visual Symbolism in a Philippine Community* (Philadelphia, PA, University of Pennsylvania Press: 1992).

important role in Filipino Americans' weekly novena devotions.[71] Many Filipino American prayer groups, especially among those Filipinos who immigrated from Cebu, for example, pass a smaller replica of the original *Santo Niño* image from home to home each week as part of their adoration for the baby Jesus and the miracles he has worked in their lives.

IV. The Present Looking Toward the Future

A. RECOGNIZING THE PRESENCE AND GIFTS OF FILIPINO CATHOLICS

Filipino Americans are an important part of the new US Catholic story. By 2050 the United States is expected to become a majority minority nation, with no one racial or ethnic group expected to be the clear majority. Filipino Americans, as the fourth largest immigrant population in the United States (after Mexico, China, and India) and the second largest Asian population (second to Chinese)[72] are a growing part of this demographic transformation. However, Filipino Americans are not a monolithic population but present immense diversity amongst themselves. The Filipino American community is not one community or a singular population. It is a community of communities that stretches, as we have seen, across representatives of over 7,000 islands and a wealth of cultural and ethnic diversity.

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71 J. Gordon Melton, *Religious Celebrations: An Encyclopedia of Holidays, Festivals, Solemn Observances, and Spiritual Commemorations* (2011): ABC-CLIO. pp. 118–119; John N. Schumacher, "The Depth of Christianization in Early Seventeenth-Century Philippines," in *Philippine Studies*, 16:3 (July 1968): 535-539.

72 Melton, *Religious Celebrations* (2011); Schumacher, "The Depth of Christianization" (1968); Cherry, *Filipino American Community Life*; See also "Filipino Immigrants in the United States," Migration Policy Institute.

Despite the continued growth of the Filipino American population and the geographic spread of Filipinos across the country, Filipinos largely remain the forgotten Asian American community. Yet, as the second largest source of Catholic immigration to the United States and one of the largest sources of newly ordained priests, religious women and men, and lay leaders, Filipinos are vital to the future of the Church. Not only do Filipinos attend Mass at high rates—most attend weekly or more—they are active participants in all aspects of parish life. In 1995 it was estimated there were roughly 300 Filipino priests in the United States. As of 2017, there were an estimated 900 Filipino priests and over 200 nuns serving in various official capacities across the United States—and this does not include several hundred additional Filipino priests and nuns who are visiting the country and giving pastoral care while they are here.[73] Although their numbers are larger in states like California, Filipino church leaders, by and large, are not only serving the needs of Filipino parishioners but the wider Church in the United States. Given their vibrant presence and participation in parish life, both from behind the pulpit and in pews, Filipinos increasingly desire to be better recognized and empowered as an important part of the Church's future. Associations such as the National Association of Filipino Priests demonstrate this desire and exemplify renewed efforts on the heels of the USCCB's *Encountering Christ in Harmony: A Pastoral Response to Our Asian and Pacific Island Brothers and Sisters* to engage community leaders and to ensure that Filipinos participate as equals in the Church's decision-making processes.

73 Ibid.; See also David Gibson, *The Coming Catholic Church: How the Faithful Are Shaping a New American Catholicism* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2003), ch. 10; Dean R. Hoge and Aniedi Okure, *International Priests in America: Challenges and Opportunities* (Collegeville, MN; Liturgical Press, 2006); and Stephen G. Vegh, "Foreign Priests Fill Persistent Vacancies in U.S. Dioceses," *Virginian-Pilot, Worldwide Religious News*, January 4, 2004, *http://wwrn.org/articles/2621/?&place=united-states*.

B. CONTINUING THE FAITH THROUGH FUTURE GENERATIONS

What is the future of Filipino American Catholicism? Quite often, members of the older generation voice concern over a perceived view that younger generations are no longer practicing their faith. These concerns are not unfounded, given the decline of Sunday Mass attendance, especially among young adults, in addition to the rise of those who choose either to leave the Catholic faith altogether or, at best, continue to consider themselves Catholic while also exploring other forms of spirituality and religious affiliations. Younger generations often express a variety of reasons why they may not practice their Catholic faith at the same level of commitment as their parents and grandparents. Many in the younger generation, for example, have been socialized differently than their parents and often feel more at home within US mainstream culture than traditional Filipino culture. As a result, and over time, depending on how long they have lived in the United States or whether they were born here, younger Filipino Catholics incorporate or adopt more of these US mainstream practices and norms into their own lives and hence are often less traditionally Catholic. Added to this is the growing complexity of transient and mobile lifestyles, aided by new media tools and technologies, which may contribute to the weakening of religious identity and practice becauses of the influence of different voices and role models.

In response to these intergenerational concerns, dioceses, parishes, and small ecclesial communities, such as Couples for Christ, can and do draw from pastoral advice, such as that given in *Encountering Christ in Harmony*, which encourages pastoral events that intentionally highlight intergenerational dialogue between family members. During such community gatherings, discussion topics can and do include:

- What does it mean to be Filipino and American from different generational perspectives?
- What are generational expectations when approaching family matters and concerns?
- How could worship communities become more sensitive to the liturgical needs of the youth?
- In short, how can we accompany the next generation as they navigate through the complexities of life?

These conversations look to bridge generational divides and seek new dialogues to retain youth as life-long Catholics. The success of this dialogue between family members varies by individual case and circumstance, but some studies suggest that families who make these efforts and actively find creative ways to engage their children in church groups, such as Youth for Christ, have had greater success in passing their faith on than those families who only occasionally bring their children to Mass.[74]

C. CONCLUSION

Filipino American Catholics are not only a diverse and vibrant part of the US Catholic Church today but an important part of its future. At a time when secularization is increasingly impacting church involvement, Filipino Americans remain faithfully Catholic and actively involved in parish life—filling the pews and committing themselves to numerous parish projects and providing leadership from the pews and the pulpit in our communities, schools, and homes. They also remain key evangelizers of the Catholic faith through their continuous engagement in the civic and political landscape of the United States. Although their presence has long been ignored or even, at times, forgotten, they have always been an important part of the American Catholic story. In short,

74 See Bruce, "Asian and Pacific Island Catholics in the United States"; Cherry, *Filipino American Community Life*.

they remain faithfully Filipino, faithfully American, and faithfully Catholic. As such, Filipino American Catholics will continue to be a treasured presence among us and a symbol of hope as we look toward the future.

Appendix One

Filipino Catholic Population in USCCB Episcopal Regions

Of the fourteen USCCB episcopal regions, the top regions with the highest population of Filipino Catholics are:

- Region XI (Provinces of Los Angeles and San Francisco; States of California, Hawaii, and Nevada): 1,257,569
- Region XII (Provinces of Anchorage, Portland, and Seattle; States of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington): 130,020
- Region VII (Provinces of Chicago, Indianapolis, and Milwaukee; States of Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin): 109,665
- Region III (Provinces of Newark and Philadelphia; States of New Jersey and Pennsylvania): 103,559
- Region IV (Provinces of Baltimore and Washington, DC, States of Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, and Virginia, as well as the District of Columbia): 102,882
- Region X (Provinces of Galveston-Houston, Oklahoma City, and San Antonio; States of Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas): 98,367
- Region II (Province of New York; State of New York): 81,732

Aside from this survey "three-quarters of Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander Catholics are estimated to self-identify as Filipino." Thus, as noted previously, many of the parishes serving this broader community are likely to be serving Filipino Catholics.

Appendix Two:

Filipino Saints, Blesseds, Venerables, and Servants of God

Saints

- St. Lorenzo Ruiz (ca. 1600-1637): Feast Day: September 28
- St. Pedro Calungsod (1654-1672):Feast Day: October 6

Blesseds

- Blessed Diego Luis de San Vitores (1627-1672)
- Blessed Eugenio Sanz-Orozco Mortera (Jose Maria of Manila) (1800-1936)
- Blessed Iustus Takayama Ukon [Hikogorō Shigetomo] (ca. 1552-1615)

Venerables

- Venerable Isabel Larrañaga Ramirez (Isabel of the Heart of Jesus) (1836-1899)
- Venerable Ignacia del Espiritu Santo Juco (1663-1748)
- Venerable Joaquina Maria Mercedes Barcelo Pages (Consuelo) (1857-1940)
- Venerable Aloysius Schwartz (1930-1992)
- Venerable Alfredo María Obviar (1889-1978)

Servants of God

- Servant of God Jerónima Yañez de la Fuente (Jerónima of the Assumption) (1555-1630)
- Servant of God Francesco Palliola (1612-1648)

- Servant of God Francisca Fuentes (Francisca of the Holy Spirit) (ca. 1647-1711)
- Servant of God Cecilia Rosa de Jesús Talangpaz (1693-1731)
- Servant of God Dionisia de Santa Maria Mitas Talangpaz (1691-1732)
- Servant of God Ines Joaquina Vicenta Barcelo Pages (Rita) (1843-1904)
- Servant of God Wilhelm Finnemann (1882-1942)
- Servant of God Joseph Verbis Lafleur (1912-1944)
- Servant of God Alfredo Verzosa (1877-1954)
- Servant of God Maria Beatriz Del Rosario Arroyo (Maria Rosario of the Visitation) (1884-1957)
- Servant of God Florencia Cuesta Valluerca (Trinidad of the Sacred Heart of Jesus) (1904-1967)
- Servant of God Carlo Braga (1889-1971)
- Servant of God Dalisay Lazaga (1940-1971)
- Servant of God Amador Tajanlangit Sr. (1911-1977)
- Servant of God George Willmann (1897-1977)
- Servant of God Teofilo Camomot (1914-1988)
- Servant of God Richard Michael Fernando (1970-1996)
- Servant of God Rhoel Gallardo (1965-2000)
- Servant of God Darwin Ramos (1994-2012)

Appendix Three:

Glossary[75]

abuloy	alms collected by family and friends given to family who recently lost a loved one
adobo	popular dish consisting of pork, chicken, and/or seafood that is stewed in vinegar, soy sauce, garlic, and peppercorn
amor propio	self-respect
ampalaya	bitter melon
ate	older/big sister
baboy	pork
bagoong	fermented shrimp paste
baka	beef
balikbayan	returning home for a visit
barangay	family units during pre-Spanish colonization
baro	blouse
barong	men's traditional embroidered shirt

75 Many, but not all, of the following terms in this section were taken and/or adapted from Barbara M. Posadas, *The Filipino Americans* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 161-166. Other terms and definitions are from the authors.

bayanihan	collectivist term signifying belonging to a community and working towards unity
bibingka	sticky rice cake topped with coconut and brown sugar
compadrazgo	sponsorship and co-parenting
compadrinazgo	sponsorship for sacramental events: e.g., Baptism, Confirmation, and Matrimony
dinuguan	stew made from pork meat and blood and hot peppers
Flores de Mayo	"Flowers of May"; a Marian devotion (see p. 28)
gitara	Spanish guitar
halo-halo	shaved ice sundae, topped with variety of fruits, beans, ice cream, and evaporated milk
hopia	mung bean paste filled sweet pastry
hindi	no
hiya	shame
isda	fish
kababayan	fellow Filipino, countryman or town-mate
kare-kare	stew made from oxtail and peanuts
kumusta	greeting, literally, *how are you?*

kuya	big/older brother
leche flan	egg custard dessert topped with caramel
lechon	whole roasted pig
lola	grandmother
lolo	grandfather
longganisa	Filipino sweet sausage
loob	inner self
lumpia	Filipino eggroll
mabuhay	expression that is an imperative form of life meaning *live!* or to *life!*
mabuti	good
macapuno	sweet coconut strips
mahal	love
manok	chicken
mano po	a gesture of bowing slightly and placing gently the right hand of an elder to one's forehead as a sign of respect and for receiving a blessing
manong	elders, often refers to older generations of Filipinos who arrived in the United States before 1935; also used to describe first-born or elder brother

masama	bad
mestizo/a	person of mixed racial ancestry
Misa de Aguinaldo	*gift Mass*; also known as *Simbang Gabi* and *Misa de Gallo*; a novena of Masses celebrated during the season of Advent in anticipation of Christmas
Misa de Gallo	*Mass of the rooster*; also known as *Simbang Gabi* and *Misa de Aguinaldo*; a novena of Masses celebrated during the season of Advent in anticipation of Christmas
ninang	godmother
nanay	mother; also *inay*
ninong	godfather
Noche Buena	meal served after the Christmas Eve Midnight Mass
oo	yes
Pabasa	chanting of the *Pasyon* (Passion narrative)
pakikisama	getting along with one another
pancit	noodle dish, usually, but not necessarily, using bean noodles
parol	paper lanterns that symbolize the Star of Bethlehem
pasalubong	gifts that travelers bring to relatives and friends

patis	shrimp or fish sauce
pensionado	Filipino students sent abroad to study in the United States in the early twentieth century
Pilipino	term for "Filipino," replacing "F" with "P," since "P" does not exist in Tagalog; this term emerged in the United States in the late 1960s as a nationalistic rejection of US colonization
piña	cloth and textile made of pineapple leaf fibers
pinakbet	stew consisting of vegetables, pork, and shrimp paste
Pinay	slang term for a Filipino female
Pinoy	slang term for a Filipino male
po	an interjection, usually at the end of a sentence or phrase, used to denote respect
rondalla	a style of Filipino music usually played on stringed instruments
salamat	thank you
Salubong	"Encounter"; a religious reenactment of Bl. Mary's meeting the Risen Christ on Easter Sunday morning
Santacruzan	"The Holy Cross"; devotion that celebrates St. Helen's discovery of the Holy Cross in the fourth century

Santo Niño de Cebu	"The Holy Child of Cebu"
sarap (ma-)	delicious, tasty
Simbang Gabi	"night Masses"; also known as *Misa de Aguinaldo or Misa de Gallo* a novena of Masses celebrated during the season of Advent in anticipation of Christmas
tago-nang-tago (TNT)	literally "hiding and hiding" a reference to undocumented immigrants
tatay	father; also *itay*
tinikling	a bamboo or bird traditional dance, popular during fiestas
tita	aunt
tito	uncle
tocino	cured pork
tubig	water
ube	purple yam
utang na loob	debt of gratitude
Visita Iglesia	a worship practice of visiting a number of churches after the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday
walang hiya	slang for "without shame"
yaya	nanny

Appendix Four

Resources for Further Reading

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