

**Harvard University Pluralism Project**

**FILIPINO CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES IN  
PHILADELPHIA**

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## FILIPINO CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES IN PHILADELPHIA

Vivienne SM. Angeles

Religion has always been very much a part of Philippine life even before the advent of Spanish colonization. Indigenous religions of the Philippines shared an idea of an ultimate reality – *Batala*,<sup>1</sup> a lord of all, creator of all things, assisted by minor gods called *anitos*. There were *babaylanes* (priestesses) who performed elaborate rituals and served as links between humans and gods. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Islam came to the southern parts of the Philippines and by the time the Spanish colonizers came, Islam was already functioning as a form of state religion for the sultanates in the south. Islam, belief in the sacred power of *Batala*, other gods and goddesses as well as forces of nature coexisted in pre-colonial Philippines.

The religious landscape of the Philippines changed dramatically with the arrival of the Spaniards in 1521. Spain's aim of colonization and Christianization involved strict enforcement of policies and in many instances, forced conversions. Spanish conquerors and missionaries were not successful in converting Muslims in the south but in other areas of the country, Filipinos were baptized even without instruction in the faith. Filipino belief in the power of *Batala*, in spirits and gods or goddesses that could be provoked or pacified through elaborate rituals therefore merged with Spanish Christian ideas of God and salvation. The result is a Christianity that is highly ritualistic where images of saints figure prominently. Catholicism also became an important component of the identity of most Filipinos.<sup>2</sup>

When Filipinos travel or immigrate to other countries, they bring with them this religious orientation and find ways of expressing them in their new environment. They find places of worship, form prayer groups, and hold *novenas* in their homes as a way of perpetuating traditions and rituals learned as children. As they stay longer and establish themselves in the new

environment, they identify churches that they can call their own and this is what has happened in Philadelphia.

### **Filipino Catholicism in the United States as the Subject of Study**

This paper focuses on Filipino Catholic communities in Philadelphia. Studying this immigrant group is important because it will help us understand the dynamics of immigrant community religious life and at the same time, allow us to observe at close range how Filipinos reinterpret Philippine Christianity in the United States. We should note that as Filipinos try to adjust to life in the United States, they are also coping with the issue of creating and transforming their identities as Filipinos and Filipino-Americans. In so doing, they find themselves negotiating their cultural orientations, revising inherited traditions and practices in order to fit the new environment and lifestyles. This is where religion plays a crucial role. Not only does religion allow Filipinos to re-affirm and re-experience their connection with the sacred as understood in Philippine Catholicism but it also affords them the opportunity to connect with the home country and with fellow Filipinos. In more ways than one, we see the re-creation of a Filipino community – a Philippines of their time, where remembered traditions and religious rituals play crucial roles in forging a bond among the community members. In this situation, the church becomes a place where love of God, love of country and nostalgia converge. This study will find out how this convergence is demonstrated by two Filipino Catholic communities in Philadelphia – one based at St. Augustine’s Church, and the other at St. Peter’s Church. As such, the study is primarily a descriptive enterprise that hopes to accomplish the following: shed light on the historical background of the Filipino Catholic communities in Philadelphia; explain the roles of parish priests, officers of Filipino associations affiliated with the churches; explore how

sacred space is created and used; explore how Filipino Catholic rituals perform an integrative function, and determine how these communities function in relation to members' adjustment to American life.

In studying Filipino Catholic practice and the function of the church in the Filipino immigrant experience, some of the questions we will try to answer are: How were the Filipino Catholic communities formed in Philadelphia? Who are the persons who led the creation of these communities? What Catholic celebrations and rituals do Filipinos observe in Philadelphia? How do they differ from American Catholic rituals? Are they performed in the same way as they were in the Philippines? What innovations have they introduced if any, to these rituals? How is the sacred represented in visual language (art forms, use of space, sacred objects)? Why is it necessary for Filipinos to have their own church when they could be members of the many Catholic parishes in Philadelphia?

This project was carried out mainly through interviews and visits to St. Peter's, St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas churches in Philadelphia as well as participation in a number of Philippine Catholic rituals in these churches. Some of the interviews were lengthy; others were brief but nevertheless vital to the project. I also attended a charismatic meeting at Our Lady of Hope church and in Washington DC. In the attempt to increase Filipino participation in church activities, the Filipino Apostolate of Philadelphia schedules different celebrations in different churches that have sizeable Filipino members. Members of the communities as well as the priests involved were interviewed. These celebrations were documented in photographs and film.

In order to get an idea of Filipino presence in Philadelphia, it is important to have a sense of Filipino immigration to the United States. It will offer us an understanding of the waves of migration and the motivations of Filipinos for coming to this country.

### **Filipino Immigration to the United States**

Historical records indicate that there were Filipinos who settled in the United States even before the Philippines became an American colony in 1898. Some of these settlers came as crewmembers of Spanish galleons that plied the Manila-Acapulco route and settled in the place that eventually became Los Angeles. Others lived in fishing villages in Louisiana.<sup>3</sup> Filipinos were also in Hawaii, as indicated by an 1853 census of the Hawaiian kingdom, which included 5 Filipinos. Thirty five years later after this census, a group of Filipino entertainers came to Honolulu and several of them opted to stay in the islands rather than continue with the troupe to the mainland.<sup>4</sup>

It was, however, after the Philippines became an American colony<sup>5</sup> that Filipinos started coming to the United States in increasing numbers. These “waves”<sup>6</sup> of immigration started with the *pensionado* program in 1903. *Pensionados* were students chosen from all over the Philippines and sent to the United States for further training in education, science, technology, government and other fields. They received stipends (*pension*, hence, *pensionado*) from the government and were required to return to the Philippines upon completion of their studies. American administrators believed that *pensionados* would be instrumental in nation-building in their newly-acquired colony and would apply whatever they learned during their stay in the United States to the Philippine situation. By 1907, there were 180 Filipinos enrolled in 50 colleges and universities in the United States.<sup>7</sup> The *pensionado* program actually encouraged



other non-government sponsored students to come to the United States so that between 1910 and 1938, there were about 14,000 of them enrolled in various colleges and universities. Many did not finish their education but nevertheless, remained in the United States<sup>8</sup> and eventually established their families in this country.

Farm workers recruited by the Hawaii Sugar Planters Association from rural areas in the Philippines came shortly after the *pensionados*. Most of these recruits were men, except for few women who worked as laundrywomen or cooks. From sugar plantations in Hawaii, many moved on to the mainland, settling mainly in California to work in the farms of Salinas, Manteca, Stockton, Lodi, Fresno, Delano, Dinuba, San Luis Obispo, Imperial, and Sacramento.<sup>9</sup> They became migrant farmers, hiring themselves out further to the Midwest and Southwest, depending on the harvest season. Others came directly to the Northwest<sup>10</sup> and like the ones who came earlier, followed the agricultural seasons in various states. In the wintertime, many went to Alaska to work in canning factories. Other Filipinos found employment in the service profession, working as cooks, gardeners or servants in restaurants, ocean liners, or in affluent households. Since the Philippines was a colony, these workers were considered nationals of the United States, able to come to the country without needing a visa. But since they were nationals and not citizens, they could not apply for, nor secure the benefits of citizens. Most of these men came for the primary purpose of earning money and helping their families in the Philippines.

Over 90 percent of Filipino migrant workers were male, of which over 80 percent were between 18 and 34 years old. Since they were young, single men and predominantly Catholic, church officials in the West Coast became concerned about the “moral rectitude” of these migrants.<sup>11</sup> The archdioceses of Seattle and San Francisco therefore, established Filipino Catholic clubs. There were about 600 members of these clubs in Seattle in the early 1920s. The

clubs also helped Filipinos in finding jobs and appropriate schools, assisted in burials of Filipinos and helped those who wanted to return to the Philippines but did not have the necessary means. Although a major function of these Filipino clubs was to encourage Filipinos in the practice of their faith,<sup>12</sup> they also provided much needed social activities for Filipinos whose means and access to entertainment were very limited. Filipino “old timers”<sup>13</sup> frequented the Filipino Catholic Club in Sutter St., San Francisco, which had facilities for tennis, volleyball and other games.<sup>14</sup>

In the early 1950s, the Maryknoll and Columban orders, which had been involved in missionary activities in the Philippines, established parishes that catered primarily to Filipino Catholics: Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Church in Seattle ran by the Maryknoll priests, and the St. Columban’s Church in Los Angeles. In general, however, the Catholic Church in the United States was not actively involved in helping Filipino immigrants in those early years. There were Catholic churches that refused marriages between Filipinos and Caucasians (California law prohibited these marriages), burials, particularly of poor Filipinos, Catholic education for the poor children of Filipino migrants and even confessions involving non-English speakers. In spite of these forms of rejection, however, Filipinos remained Catholics and identified themselves as such even if they were not actively practicing the faith. Cordova asserts that whatever religious events were celebrated like Christening, *novenas* and funeral wakes, they became not just religious but cultural and social activities as well.<sup>15</sup>

In 1934, the United States congress passed the Tydings-McDuffie Act, giving commonwealth status to the Philippines. This commonwealth period was to usher independence after ten years, although independence was postponed until 1946 because of the Second World War. This same law restricted Filipino immigration to the United States to 50 per year. Since the

Philippines had become a commonwealth of the United States, Filipinos were no longer considered nationals but rather, aliens who were ineligible for federal assistance and many jobs. The following year, the United States congress passed the Filipino Repatriation Act of 1935. The law provided for free passage to any Filipino wishing to return to the Philippines. Many Filipinos chose not to be repatriated to the Philippines simply because, should they decide to come back to the United States in the future, they would have to apply as part of the quota of 50 Filipino immigrants per year – thus narrowing their chances of returning. This was a difficult time for Filipino workers. Not only were they affected by the Depression, but also faced homesickness, anti-miscegenation laws, racial violence and discrimination. They also realized that farm work and unfair labor practices negatively affected their quest for economic advancement.<sup>16</sup>

Several developments affected the course of Philippine immigration to the United States during World War II and immediately after. Less than a month after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Filipinos were allowed to serve in the United States army even if they were not citizens. Many Filipino men responded to this call and saw action in the Pacific and Europe<sup>17</sup> in the course of the war. In 1947, the US-Philippine Military bases agreement allowed the United States navy to continue enlisting Filipinos. Filipino servicemen became eligible for citizenship and were allowed to come to the United States outside of the quota that, by then, had increased from 50 to 100. This postwar period also saw about 16,000 “war brides” of Filipino and American veterans coming to the United States.

It was, however, the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act that brought thousands of Filipinos to the United States. Two major purposes of this Act were to relieve occupational shortages in the United States and to achieve family reunification. Thousands of Filipinos lined up at the American embassy in Manila to take advantage of this new legislation. Most Filipinos

came to the United States under the third preference (as professionals) but many others came under the family reunification provision of the law. Numerous medical professionals who had come earlier under the exchange visitors program opted to stay in the United States after their training and had their exchange visitor visas converted to immigrant visas. In addition, they, like other Filipinos who immigrated, started to petition their dependents or their parents to come under the family reunification provision. Parents then petitioned other children, who in turn petitioned their spouses and families. The tradition of helping family members and relatives now transcended international boundaries and went beyond the earlier practice of sending money to the Philippines. This process of chain migration continues to the present time.

The post 1965 immigration presents a very different picture from the early 1900s. The new immigrants are better educated – teachers, doctors, nurses, engineers, lawyers, scientists and others fitting the description of “professional, technical and kindred workers” indicated in the Immigration Act. Filipino women immigrants outnumbered the men and they represented varied professions.

Since the passage of the 1965 law, various other legislations were passed that either allowed or restricted immigration. The Immigration Act of 1990 allows the naturalization of surviving Philippine-born veterans of the United States Armed Forces in the Far East, Philippine Army, Philippine Scout Rangers and recognized guerilla units who served between September 1, 1939 and December 31, 1946. Veterans groups who lobbied for this provision argued that since President Roosevelt incorporated the Philippine army into the US armed forces by Executive Order, Filipino veterans, therefore, were also entitled to citizenship and benefits. Thousands of qualified Filipino veterans started coming to the United States in the 1990s and were immediately sworn in as citizens. Their benefits are not the same as their American counterparts

but they are certainly better than their government pension in the Philippines. In addition, coming to the United States opened the possibility for veterans' children to immigrate to the United States under the family reunification category.

Despite some legislative setbacks, like restrictions to the immigration of medical and nursing professionals,<sup>18</sup> Filipinos continue to come in large numbers and settle in practically all regions of the United States. They created sizeable communities in Illinois, New York, New Jersey, Florida, Virginia and Texas. Census figures show that there were 1,406,770 Filipinos in the United States in 1990.<sup>19</sup> By the year 2000, Filipinos constituted the second largest Asian group<sup>20</sup> in the United States, numbering 1,850,314.<sup>21</sup> There continues, however, to be a concentration of Filipinos in California, with 918, 678 in the Bay area alone.

Immigration, however, is not just a matter of transporting bodies across boundaries. Immigrants bring their culture, their traditions and religion as they cross international borders. These are the things that sustain them but yet, they know, they would have to make adjustments and concessions if they have to survive the new environment.

### **Filipinos in Philadelphia**

Establishing population figures for Filipinos in the Philadelphia region is fraught with difficulties. One reason is that the 2000 Census allowed respondents to indicate more than one ethnic background. Secondly, the number 4,012 in the category of "Filipino Alone" in Philadelphia might not really be giving us a complete picture for the simple reason that there are many undocumented Filipinos who, although "invisible" officially, are nevertheless very much involved in Filipino celebrations in Philadelphia. In addition, many Filipinos of mixed parentage

identify themselves officially as Americans but consider themselves Filipinos as they demonstrate their affinity for the culture, traditions and religions.

Although we surmised that Filipino settlement in Philadelphia must have been largely a result of the 1965 Immigration law, newspaper articles tell us that there was already a Filipino Association of Philadelphia in 1917. The report did not say much about the organization, except that it was a non-sectarian, non-political organization of Filipinos in the area.<sup>22</sup> It is possible that some of its members might have been among the 200 “Philadelphians of Filipino extraction” who were serving in the armed forces in 1943.<sup>23</sup> The association must have remained active for sometime as a 1945 report mentioned that “35 natives of the Philippines” living in Philadelphia contributed \$625.00 to the war chest. The president of the association in 1945 was J. A. Edlagen.<sup>24</sup> There were also nine Filipino students in Philadelphia studying at the University of Pennsylvania, Temple, Drexel, and Hahneman Hospital in 1929-1930.<sup>25</sup> The Tomas Claudio Post 1063,<sup>26</sup> a Filipino veterans group that continues to be active in Philadelphia at present, had 60 members in 1945.<sup>27</sup> They participated in socio-civic affairs, and in activities linked to the war situation. Together with the Filipino Association of Philadelphia, they organized a mass to honor the war dead. A Filipino priest celebrated the mass at Our Lady of Mercy Church on Broad Street.<sup>28</sup>

Many Filipinos who settled in Philadelphia after 1965 came from the medical profession – doctors, nurses and medical technicians who worked at Temple University, Hahneman, Einstein and University of Pennsylvania hospitals. Recruiters who came to the Philippines in the mid -1960s or had local representatives in various medical schools introduced them to Philadelphia hospitals. There were also dependents of United States Navy personnel who lived in South Philadelphia, close to the navy base. Most Filipinos in the United States navy remained in

the country after their terms and Philadelphia, like other cities where there are navy bases, was a logical place to settle.

The Filipino Catholic communities that we are studying include those who live in the greater Philadelphia area – parts of Southern New Jersey and northern Delaware – who worship with Philadelphia Filipinos.

### **Two Filipino Churches: St. Peter's and St. Augustine's**

Considering the fact that Filipinos are, among Asians, the most exposed to American culture because of their colonial heritage, one might expect that Filipinos would easily “melt in the pot” and blend into American Catholic parishes. To a very small extent, this is true. A few had active roles in the church, serving as Eucharistic ministers, ushers, or members of organizations like Legion of Mary. Majority, however, just attended mass. When Filipinos join American Catholic parishes, it means that they will be giving up certain ways of celebrating Catholic holidays and performing rituals and this is what happened for many years in Philadelphia. However, as Filipinos became more established in the Delaware valley, they began to recognize the fact that they could organize their own “Filipino” church in Philadelphia and practice Catholicism as they had done it the home country. Hence, the Filipino communities based at St. Augustine's Church located in the Old City section of Philadelphia and St. Peter's Church (The John Neumann Shrine) on Fifth Street and Girard Avenue.

St. Peter's Church was a predominantly German parish in the 1950s. In the 1970s, as the demographics of the city changed, more Hispanics and Filipinos started moving into St. Peter's parish. Monsignor George Tomichuk, a priest of Polish background who grew up in the parish and was ordained in the Philippines became a father figure for Filipinos at St. Peter's. Fr.

Tomichek's "official" involvement with Filipinos began in the summer of 1976 when St. Peter's was designated as the church for the Philippine mass during the Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia. Cardinal Rosales, who was visiting from the Philippines together with other priests and bishops, urged Fr. Tomichek to make St. Peter's a shrine for Filipinos in Philadelphia.<sup>29</sup> Since then, Filipinos at St. Peter's, under Fr. Tomichek's guidance, have organized numerous religious activities. There is a *Tagalog* (Philippine national language) mass every first Sunday at 4:45 in the afternoon. They hold May processions (*Flores de Mayo*), Philippine Lenten ceremonies and devotions to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Filipinos share St. Peter's with the regular parishioners as well as the Hispanic community for whom Spanish language mass is celebrated at a different time on Sundays. There were Filipinos, however, who later felt that they could not use St. Peter's church as much as they needed and wanted. They began to look for a place of their own, in the hope of having some kind of a "home church" where they did not have to compete for space and time. This is what brought Filipinos to St. Augustine's Church.



St. Peter's Church



St. Augustine's Church

St. Augustine's is several blocks south of St. Peter's. It is a historic church, whose corner stone was laid in 1796 with President George Washington and Governor Thomas Mckean in attendance.<sup>30</sup> Originally built to serve German and Irish immigrants, St. Augustine's was the



largest church in Philadelphia at the time. The Augustinians also established a school in the property in 1811 – St. Augustine’s Academy, which is the forerunner of Villanova University. In 1844, arsonist burned the church in the course of the anti-Catholic riots in Philadelphia. St. Augustine’s was rebuilt soon after and completed in 1847.

A century and a half later, the effects of demographic changes in Philadelphia became more evident at St. Augustine’s. By the late 1980s, it had become a struggling parish, with only about 25 parishioners coming to each of their Sunday masses. At this same time, Filipinos were looking for a church where they could enshrine the image of the *Santo Niño* (Holy Child Jesus). They preferred a more permanent space rather than being in a church where they had to bring the image of the *Santo Niño* in and out every time there was a Filipino mass or *novena*.<sup>31</sup> They felt that the *Santo Niño* deserved a shrine of its own.<sup>32</sup>

A chance meeting between Dr. Estacio, one of the leaders of the Filipino community and Peter Zimba, a parishioner at St. Augustine’s led to discussions with Fr. Quinn, the pastor at the time. Fr. Quinn agreed to let Filipinos make St. Augustine a shrine for the *Santo Niño*. As Dr. Estacio put it, “we needed a place and we can do whatever they need to increase revenue for the church, pay the bills and restore the place. It’s a historical place and it is deteriorating. Maybe this happened (their making it a shrine and revitalizing the parish) because of *Santo Niño*.”<sup>33</sup> There is a special connection between Augustinians and *Santo Niño*, which makes this church more meaningful for the Filipinos: the Augustinians started the *novenas* to *Santo Niño* in the 16<sup>th</sup> century in the Philippines.<sup>34</sup>

In January, 1992, about 600 Filipinos brought a 12-inch image of *Santo Niño* to St. Augustine’s. Made of Philippine mahogany, the image is a replica of the *Santo Niño* image brought by Magellan to the Philippine island of Cebu in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The *Santo Niño* was

enshrined in an alcove, below an oil painting of Our Lady of Counsel to the right of St. Augustine's main altar. The fact that *Santo Niño* image was made in the Philippines and brought



Santo Niño Shrine, St. Augustine's

to the United States provides a symbolic linkage and continuity of the *Santo Niño* devotion across the seas. With the enshrinement of the *Santo Niño* in this colonial church that figured prominently in American history and which had been historically responsive to the needs of Catholic immigrants, St. Augustine's had been reconfigured to become a Philippine church in America. Today, hundreds of Filipinos come to St. Augustine's and they have transformed it from a dying parish to a vibrant church, which, like St. Peter's is also a center of

Filipino religious and community life in Philadelphia. Filipinos from the Delaware valley come to St. Augustine's for the eleven o'clock mass on Sundays. A *novena* to *Santo Niño* follows the mass and then there is a fellowship lunch catered by various Filipino organizations. St. Augustine's has become a "home church" where young Filipinos learn traditional dances; feasts of saints are celebrated and informal advice given to such questions as immigration and senior citizen benefits. For Filipino devotees, it is the *Santo Niño*, who made all this happen.

There are several other churches in Philadelphia where Filipinos observe religious rituals. We will discuss them briefly below, to give the reader some idea of the rituals in these churches.



Marker of National Shrine of *Santo Niño* at St. Augustine's Church, Philadelphia

## St. Thomas Aquinas Church

St. Thomas Aquinas is located in Morris Street in South Philadelphia and is the base of



San Lorenzo Ruiz flanked by Sister Loretto (left) and Fr. Efren (right) and other Filipinos at St. Thomas social hall



Line dancing at St. Thomas Aquinas social hall on San Lorenzo Ruiz's feast day

the Filipino Apostolate where Sister Loretto holds office. Like St. Peter's, St. Thomas also has the Wednesday evening *novena* to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Its major Filipino activity, however, is the feast of San Lorenzo Ruiz, the first Filipino saint, on September 28. Lorenzo

Ruiz was killed for his religious beliefs in Japan in 1637 and was canonized by Pope John Paul II in 1987. For Filipino Catholics, having a Filipino saint is very meaningful for their identity as Catholics and there are devotions to San Lorenzo wherever there are

Filipinos all over the world. If the feast day falls on a weekday, they celebrate the mass on the weekend before or after and they serve lunch or dinner after mass. Like any other Filipino religious celebrations, it is also time for social activities and in 1999, after the meal, there was line dancing for everyone. This picture gives us an idea of the participation of Filipinos in church

activities. While there are many men who take on various responsibilities in different churches, majority of those involved in these activities are women. They serve in committees, run kitchens especially during the fellowship meal, lead prayers, organize processions and do just about everything they are called to do. The situation is similar to that in the Philippines although one can observe more male involvement here in the United States.

### **Our Lady of Hope Church**



Our Lady of Hope Church, in North Broad St., is another venue for Filipino Catholic rituals. Filipinos hold *novenas* and charismatic prayer meetings at Our Lady of Hope on Friday evenings at 8 o'clock. It was also the place where they had a Charismatic Rally on March 23, 1998. This rally was sponsored by the United Hearts of Jesus and Mary Prayer Group. They invited Dr. and Mrs. Irizary, a couple from the Philippines to lead this rally. Dr. Irizary is a medical doctor who suffered from a muscular disorder in 1976. At the urging of his mother, he reluctantly went to a charismatic prayer meeting in the Philippines. After attending a couple of meetings, he was moved to go to confession – something he had not done in years. He claimed that after the confession he started to feel better each day and slowly gave up all his medications. Now he feels completely cured and believes that the charismatic prayer meetings and the Holy Spirit are responsible for restoring him to good health. The following year, in 1977, he started to form prayer groups with his wife. Dr. Irizary gave up his medical practice and his wife left the university where she was a Chemistry teacher,

to engage in fulltime prayer ministry. Cardinal Vidal, of Cebu, Philippines, blessed them as they embarked on their ministry. In 1985, they started organizing prayer groups outside of the Philippines and their ministry has taken them to the United States and Europe.<sup>35</sup>

Dr. Irizary is a very lively and engaging preacher whose talks are interspersed with Philippine humor (including jokes about the President at the time, Joseph Estrada), Bible citations and phrases in Tagalog. The audience was in rapt attention, and very responsive as Irizary spoke of God's love, man's sins, human frailty and salvation. It is a folksy oratorical style that engaged the audience and brought them back to a distinct Filipino oratorical style that quickly establishes rapport with the audience. It was also a very emotional meeting. After Dr. Irizary's main talk, the lights were dimmed. Mrs. Irizary provided the music with a song remembering Jesus and thanking him. People bowed their heads and closed their eyes in deep prayer as the song reverberated in the darkened hall. After the lights were turned back on, there was jubilation and everyone was hugging everyone. Some people were in tears. It appeared as if they had emerged from a deep religious experience. This rally was well attended with members of prayer groups wearing vests or jackets with the name of their prayer groups on them.

### **Filipino Apostolate**

As coordinator of the Filipino Apostolate in the archdiocese of Philadelphia, Sister Loretto Eugenia Mapa of the sisters of the Assumption coordinates Filipino Catholic activities in the Delaware Valley. Born and educated in the Philippines, Sister Loreto came to the United States in the mid-1970s, studied Theology in Massachusetts and eventually came to Philadelphia.

We can trace the beginnings of the Filipino Apostolate to the time when Sister Loretto was helping a Cambodian prepare for baptism. When she accompanied the Cambodian to St.

Thomas Aquinas Church, she noticed that the liturgy was in the Vietnamese language, but there were also Filipinos among the worshippers. This observation made her think about the possibility of having Filipino masses in Philadelphia. After several conversations between Sister Loretto and Fr. Taraborelli, the pastor of St. Thomas, the latter asked Sister Loretto if she could help reach out to Filipinos and encourage them to be involved in the parish. Sister Loretto responded favorably to Fr. Taraborelli's request and was introduced to the community in June, 1990. Sister Mary Therese Nguyen and Fr. Tom Betz, who had been involved with migrants in Philadelphia, assisted Sister Loretto. Together with Fr. Efren Esmilla who, at the time was a seminarian at the St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, they started visiting Filipino families in south Philadelphia. Later on, they decided to expand the Filipino ministry beyond south Philadelphia and into the whole archdiocese.

In 1993, Noemi Castillo, Coordinator for Asian and Pacific Apostolates of the United States Catholic Conference, organized a Socio-Pastoral Institute in Philadelphia. The United States Catholic Conference and the Office of Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, headed by Fr. William Rickle, S.J., co-sponsored the institute, which was held at St. Joseph's University. Two theologians from the Philippines, Dr. Jose de Mesa and Fr. Chito Tagle served as lecturers for the 4-day program attended by Filipino Catholics in the area. In recognition of the growing Filipino Catholic presence in the Delaware Valley, the institute intended to provide Filipinos with necessary skills and knowledge to be effective leaders and pastoral ministers. Specifically, the institute identified three goals: First, to bring Filipinos to a deeper understanding of their culture and faith; second, to foster the faith using popular religiosity as the springboard for evangelization, and third, to motivate Filipinos to become part of mainstream American parish life. The lectures and discussions focused on



Filipino culture and Christianity, with Dr. de Mesa emphasizing the need to evangelize in context. He asserted: “if Filipinos are going to express our faith in Jesus in terms of our culture, we have to make sure that this religiosity is faithful to both our culture and our faith.” He spoke of Filipino values like “kagandahang loob” which he translates as the Christian *agape*. To several present in the institute, this reinforced a felt need to worship as they worshipped while in the Philippines.

Since Filipinos make up the largest Catholic Asian group in the archdiocese, Noemi



Sister Loretto Mapa (middle) during her Ruby Jubilee as a sister of the Assumption order

Castillo asked Fr. Rickle to help set up the Filipino Apostolate in Philadelphia. In 1994, Fr. Rickle called a meeting of Filipino Catholic leaders in Philadelphia. Among those present were Siony Tolentino, who was active in Our Lady of Hope Church, Dr. Estacio, Dr. Pura Peñaverde, Fr. Efren Esmilla (Filipinos call him Fr. Efren) and Aurora Capanos. The group discussed the creation of the Filipino Apostolate. Fr. Rickle, in his capacity as the head of the pastoral ministry for

migrants in the archdiocese of Philadelphia, appointed Sister Loretto as coordinator<sup>36</sup> and launched the office of the Filipino Apostolate the following year. Since then, Sister Loreto has been coordinating all religious activities initiated by Filipinos in the archdiocese.

## Filipino Catholic Celebrations

Aside from the regular Sunday and holiday masses, there are a number of Filipino celebrations throughout the year held at both St. Peter's and St. Augustine's. Filipinos try to observe these rituals in the same way that they are done in the Philippines.

### *Sinulog*

*Sinulog* is a Philippine festival in honor of *Santo Niño*. Since St. Augustine's is the National Shrine for Filipino devotion to *Santo Niño* in North America, *Sinulog* therefore, is the largest Filipino religious celebration held at this church.

The festival originated in the city of Cebu, which lies south of Manila, Philippines. According to traditions, the explorer Ferdinand Magellan brought the handcrafted image of *Santo Niño* to the Philippines in 1521 and gave it as a present to Juana, wife of Rajah Humabon of the island of Cebu, upon her baptism. Forty-four years later, a Spanish soldier, Juan Camus found the image intact in a settlement that had previously been burned. To Filipinos, it was a miracle that the *Santo Niño* image survived the fire. On April 28, 1565, Fr. Andres de Urdaneta, an Augustinian missionary in the Philippines established the convent of *Santo Niño* in Cebu.<sup>37</sup> Later on, a church was built on the site where the image was found and since then, Filipinos in Cebu have been offering prayers and *novenas* to the *Santo Niño*. Although the *Santo Niño* fiesta has been celebrated since then, it



Virgin Mary and *Santo Niño* images



was, however, only in 1981 that the government of Cebu city launched the *Sinulog* project.<sup>38</sup> The *Sinulog* dance pervaded the fiesta celebration and it has now been absorbed in mainstream Cebu culture. Filipinos all over the world celebrate the feast of the *Santo Niño* with the *Sinulog* dance incorporated into the rituals.<sup>39</sup>

Traditions also say that when Magellan (other stories say it was Pigafetta, Magellan's chronicler) handed the image to Juana, the natives started to move and shuffle their feet. Hence, dancing became part of the celebrations. *Sinulog*, the dance is named after the river current – *sulog*. The image was brought to the Philippines on a ship that sailed on the waters, so the Cebu celebrations include a fluvial procession that reenacts the coming of the Spaniards. Filipinos consider the *Sinulog* a dance of thanksgiving, intercession, petition and adoration but most of all, it is performed to honor *Santo Niño*, the child king who, they believe, has saved many lives.

Filipinos emphasize that since the image was found intact after a fire in Cebu, the *Santo Niño* has continued to work miracles on people. So they say “*Viva Pit Senor Santo Niño!*” at the top of their voices as they pay homage to Jesus as the child-king.



Filipinas dancing with images of *Santo Niño* at a *Sinulog* in Philadelphia

Filipinos in Philadelphia try to honor *Santo Niño* in a similar fashion as Filipinos do in Cebu. A fundamental difference, however, is the timing of the event. In the Philippines, *Sinulog*, is celebrated on the third Sunday of January. In Philadelphia, it is celebrated on the last Sunday of August simply because one cannot imagine celebrating outdoors and dancing with the *Santo*

*Niño* image in the midst of winter. The January celebration at St. Augustine’s is usually done with a mass, a *novena* and a Filipino fellowship luncheon. There are actually two celebrations in Philadelphia – the January *Sinulog* and the summer *Sinulog*. In addition, celebrants in the Philippines wear colorful costumes (*a la* Mardi gras) while those in Philadelphia are partial to Philippine formal attire. In recent years, however, there have been Filipinos in Philadelphia who wear colorful costumes, some representing Philippine ethnic minorities.



Dr. Estacio

St. Augustine’s summer *Sinulog* celebration starts with the 11 o’clock Filipino mass. People, however, begin to arrive at 10 o’clock to avail themselves of good seats in the church. About 95 per cent of those in attendance are Filipinos but there is a sprinkling of Caucasians – men and women who are spouses and friends of Filipinos as well as regular parishioners of St. Augustine’s. They bring their images of *Santo Niño* and hold them with care – either in their arms or in makeshift carriages. Filipino men and women wear variations of the Filipino national attire while members of the FIAT prayer group wear blue t-shirts with the word “Summer *Sinulog*” printed in front. Others wear black shirts which say “Aklan” – a province in the Philippines that also celebrates the feast of the *Santo Niño* through their *Atihan*<sup>40</sup> festival. Choir members wear Filipino shirts over red dresses and pants. Red is the color of day – because it is the color of *Santo Niño*’s garment. Dr. Estacio, who owned the image that was initially placed at St. Peter’s, wears a version of the

*Santo Niño* outfit while a number of women wear variations of the traditional Philippine formal long dress with butterfly sleeves.



Dr. and Mrs. Arevalo as *Hermano* and *Hermana*

Several front pews are reserved for the *Hermanas* and *Hermanos* – literally sisters and brothers but actually, these are the people who underwrite the celebration. Noticeable among them are Filipino medical doctors and their spouses. In the Philippine context, *hermanos* and *hermanas* are chosen because they have the resources to host banquets for the whole

community. These banquets usually follow religious rituals – like a mass of thanksgiving or a procession. In the Philadelphia situation, many Filipinos volunteer as *hermano* and *hermana* as a way of thanking God for their success or the success of their children in America.

Fr. Efren Esmilla has been officiating at the *Sinulog* mass since 1998 when we first observed the *Sinulog*. In his homily for *Sinulog* 1998, he spoke of the background of the *Santo Niño* in the Philippines. He made references to Filipino love of celebrations and eventually ushered in the theme of humility, which, he said, is often neglected by Filipinos as they try to establish themselves in the United States and as they relate to one another. He spoke of the need for Filipinos to know themselves, their weaknesses and strengths and advised the congregation to keep praying, to talk to God, listen to Him and to follow the *Santo Niño* who also wants humans to love God. Fr. Efren enjoined the community to pray for one another and ended his homily with “Viva *Santo Niño*!”

The *Santo Niño* procession follows the 11 o'clock mass. The Philadelphia police close the streets surrounding St. Augustine to vehicular traffic. In a way, this area becomes sacred space as Filipinos dance their way around the block while praying the rosary and holding their



Aklan group in their *Ati-Atihan* costume at Philadelphia Sinulog 2000

images of the *Santo Niño*. In the 1998 celebration, Filipino men holding the cross that used to be on the steeple of St. Augustine<sup>41</sup> led the procession. The Aklan group followed with their rhythmic pounding on their drums. They are all dressed in black with oyster shell decorations. The black costume is supposed to represent the practice of smearing the body with soot for the *Ati-Atihan* festival in Aklan, Philippines (this festival is also in honor of the *Santo Niño*).

Filipinos holding images of *Santo Niño*

follow the Aklan group. People dance and sway with the *Santo Niño* images that are mostly dressed in richly decorated red garments. A few of the *Santo Niño* images are dressed in green. There are also images with straw hats and coveralls. These variations in *Santo Niño* outfits are based on Filipino belief that *Santo Niño* appears in various guises. Towards the end of the procession is the image of the *Santo Niño* on a platform pulled by Filipino men. In *Sinulog* 1999, Fr. Efren was on the platform too. It is interesting to see how lovingly the people touch the *Santo Niño* image on the platform. For Filipinos, touching a religious image brings blessings so they



touch the image, kiss its feet, wipe their handkerchiefs on the face of the *Santo Niño* and those handkerchiefs become like sacred objects themselves.

In the 1998 *Sinulog*, there were about a thousand Filipinos and some Caucasians participating. In 2000, the number was even higher and people from New York, New Jersey, Delaware and other cities in Pennsylvania joined the Philadelphia Filipinos.



Fr. Efen on the platform with *Santo Niño* during the 1999 *Sinulog*



The procession ended at the parking lot with Fr. Efen blessing hundreds of images of the *Santo Niño* held aloft by devotees. In 1998, lunch was served at the Social Hall of St. Augustine cafeteria style but by 2000, box lunches were

distributed and the crowd spilled over to the parking lot and open space beside St. Augustine.

## Lenten Rituals

Filipino Lenten rituals in Philadelphia include the traditional singing and dramatization of the passion story of Jesus, blessing of the palms on Palm Sunday, the Holy Thursday ritual of washing the feet, the Good Friday vigil and Easter celebrations.

## The *Pasion*

One of the continuing Filipino rituals during the Lenten season is the singing of the *Kasaysayan ng Pasiong Mahal ni Hesukristong Panginoon Nation* (Account of the Sacred Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ). The common version of the passion story sung by Filipinos is the *Pasiong Henesis* – so called because it begins with the Book of Genesis. From the story of Noah, the story moves on to the birth of Mary. The verses, however, include references to Old Testament figures – Abraham, Moses, David among others, throughout the book. Aside from the narration of Jesus' life, the *pasion* also includes commentaries and moral lessons, the beginnings of the early church as well as St. Helen's legendary search for the true cross. It ends with verses encouraging the believer to follow the teachings of Jesus and to model one's life after him. It speaks of sin and the punishment of hell. The last stanzas say:

Ang puso mo't iyong loob  
Iyong ialay sa Diyos  
Magsisi ka na't matakot  
Ng marating mong tibobos  
And bayan ng Santa't Santos

You offer your heart  
and self to God  
Repent and be afraid  
So that you can reach  
the land of Saints.

At kung marating na naman  
And Langit na kapisanan  
Ay doon na makakamtan  
Ang yama't kaginhawahan  
Ng Diyos Poong Maykapal<sup>42</sup>

And when you reach  
heaven  
There you will attain  
the wealth and comfort  
of God the creator.

The *pasion* book is 213 pages long. It is in verse form, in two columns per page, and takes about 18-20 hours of continuous singing from start to finish. Although there are traditional tunes in different towns in the Philippines, what we hear in Philadelphia is a mixture of tunes that depend to a great extent on the lead singer. At times, they adopt the melodies of contemporary American songs. According to Rodna Luna, who is a regular *pasion* singer at St. Augustine's, they improvise often and at times, sing at a faster tempo so that they could finish the whole book



*Pasion* Books

within a certain time.<sup>43</sup>

The ritual of singing the *pasion* is called a *pabasa* (a reading)<sup>44</sup>. For Filipinos, participating in *pasion* singing is an act of worship and a fulfillment of a *panata* (a vow, a promise). At times this *panata* is made to supplement a petition to God or as a form of thanksgiving. For example, a person may make a vow that he or she will participate in the singing of the *pasion* if something good had happened to them. Mrs. Cargado hosts a *pabasa* in her home every year as a way of thanking God for all the good things that have happened to their family since they immigrated to the United

States. It is also a continuation of a tradition that her family had observed in the Philippines where she learned to sing the *pasion* as a child. Mrs. Cargado, a nurse, considers it a blessing from God that they were able to find jobs, have a home and send all their children to school. Two of their children had already finished college – one is a doctor, another an engineer and the third one was still in college at the time. It was especially meaningful for Mrs. Cargado that they were able to raise their children

without experiencing the usual problems that others have with Filipino-American teenagers growing up in America. For Mrs. Cargado, God has a hand in all these things and the least that she could do, to thank God, is to host a *pabasa*.<sup>45</sup>



Pasion Singing at St. Augustine's

Mrs. Largoza, one of the hosts of the *pasion* at St. Augustine's church, said that hosting the *pasion* is part of her family tradition that goes back to her childhood in the Philippines. She grew up listening to the *pasion* in her home every year during Lent and when she came to the United States, she decided to keep the tradition. For 24 years, she and her

sister jointly hosted a *pasion* in their homes, alternating the venue every year. In 1997, she asked the pastor and other Filipinos if they could hold it at St. Augustine's so that more people could participate.<sup>46</sup> The Ochabillo family and two other families joined them in hosting the *pasion* at St. Augustine's. Like the others, Mrs. Ochabillo said that she also made a *panata* to host a reading every year.<sup>47</sup> With the *pasion* reading now at St. Augustine, Mrs. Ochabillo and the other hosts are pleased that it has become a community affair and more Filipinos are involved. So every year since then, on Good Friday, Filipinos come to St. Augustine for *pasion* reading. St. Peter's also hosts a *pabasa* every year in the home of Fr. Tomichek. Although many Filipinos hold the *pabasa* in their homes, attending *pabasa* hosted by others is also part of their Lenten traditions.

The *pabasa* starts between 5 and 6 o'clock in the morning. The *pasion* has to be sung continuously, without disruption. Occasionally, singers would insert an "Our Father" and "three



Hail Marys.” Singers take turns taking breaks and the hosts make sure that there is a continuous supply of food on the table for singers and guests. Guests either sing or help in the preparations and they also bring food. There are a variety of Filipino non-meat dishes and desserts spread out on the table. As Mrs. Largoza said, singing the *pasion* is a form of continuous praying so singers are exempted from the Lenten requirement of fasting. She recalled a story she heard from her grandmother in the Philippines that either the Pope or the Bishop gave a dispensation to *pasion* singers in the Philippines because the non-stop nature of the task requires tremendous efforts on the part of the singer and they deserve to eat well.<sup>48</sup>

At the Cargado home, there were four women and a man singing when we arrived at 8:45 in the morning. The basement, which was actually a recreation room, had been converted into a sacred space. Chairs were arranged against the wall and at the north end of the room was an altar with the image of the Blessed



*Pasion* reading at the Cargado home

Virgin. Vases of flowers and lighted candles were placed on the altar. The washer and dryer were appropriately covered and on one chair was a stack of *pasion* books. As the *pasion* singing was going on in the basement, the Cargado family was busy preparing food. A mix of American and Filipino breakfast food was already set on the table but they were preparing food for the rest of the day and for the late dinner after the *pasion*.

By 8 o'clock in the evening, there were 36 persons involved in the singing and more people kept coming. By this time, a Filipino male was providing guitar accompaniment – something that I did not witness while growing up in the Philippines since *pabasa* was basically a women's affair. It is still a predominantly women's affair in Philadelphia but there are men who join in the singing, like Archie Cruz who came with his wife. Most of the participants are in their 40s and above. A few are in their 30s but the younger Filipinos, the second generation, were upstairs, socializing. Towards the end of the reading the tune was changed to a patriotic Philippine song, "Bayan Ko" (my country) and then to the tune of "I Love my Own my Native land." These innovations to the tune of the *pasion* may not be welcomed by purists but for Filipinos in Philadelphia, this is not an issue. As the last line of the *pasion* was sung, the crowd cheered and clapped. It was past 11 in the evening. They have been singing for over 18 hours.

Fr. Efren Esmilla then prepared to say mass for the group. The liturgy was in English and Tagalog. In his homily, Fr. Efren recalled the life of Jesus and the miracles he performed like the



raising of Lazarus. He encouraged those who had strayed away from the church to come back and enjoy the benefits of church membership. Aware of the problems encountered by parents in raising their children as Filipinos in an American environment, Fr. Esmilla spoke of forgiveness, and underscored the need to surrender and always open up one's heart to God's love. He emphasized love as the key to family relationships. Right after the homily, he called for the

Holy Spirit. He said: "Come Holy Spirit we need you, come Holy Spirit we pray. *Espiritu santo, tinatawagan kita. Bigyan ninyo ng lakas ang mahina* (Holy Spirit, we are calling you. Give

strength to the weak). Come, alleluia. Jesus is paving the way. Alleluia. Jesus is paving the way. Santo Niño, *kaawaan mo kami* (have mercy on us). This is our *Santo Niño*.” Although this invocation of the Holy Spirit is not usually done in American masses, this has become a standard feature of Fr. Efren’s eucharistic celebration. For the Filipino community, many of whom are members of charismatic prayer groups, this particular invocation of the Holy Spirit has become part of the mass.

After the mass, there were prayers to the Lady of Fatima, whose image was the focal point of the altar. This ritual at the Cargado home combined Marian and *Santo Niño* devotions. Dinner followed and everyone shared the traditional Filipino foods. For Filipinos, religious rituals provide occasions for social interaction with fellow countrymen in an environment where work and geographic distance from each other preclude them from frequent interaction. It was way past midnight when people started going home.

### Passion Play



Filipinos in Philadelphia not only sing the passion story but act it out as well. The group at St. Peter’s presents the Passion play on Palm Sunday. Participants come from the St. Peter’s Filipino community and occasionally, from the Philippines. At one time, the theatre group from Villanova University staged a passion play at St. Augustine’s. The Passion play, or *senakulo* as it is called in the Philippines, is based on the *pasion*, although oftentimes it is revised and edited.<sup>49</sup> In the

Philippines, the *senakulo* is staged in the *plaza* (public square) or in the church yard. In other towns like Malolos, Bulacan, participants use the whole town as its stage with designated places for specific scenes. Participants sing their lines in Tagalog. It is always a lengthy presentation that takes two evenings, at least, in the town of Morong, Rizal, to finish. Unlike the Philippine *senakulo* which includes stories from the Old Testament, the passion play at St. Peter's focused on the passion narrative of the gospels and lasted for less than two hours.

Holy Thursday and Good Friday are legal holidays in the Philippines. Traditionally, Filipinos would spend time in church or visit neighboring churches to offer prayers in each one. In Philadelphia, these days are workdays so Filipinos go to church in the evening. At both St.



Seder at St. Augustine's 1999

Augustine's and St. Peter's, Filipinos participate in the ritual washing of the feet on Holy Thursday. Aside from the fact that the "apostles" whose feet are washed are all Filipinos, they follow the same ritual as other Catholic churches on this

Maundy Thursday. In 1999, Fr. O'Rourke, the pastor of St. Augustine's hosted a Seder dinner for the parishioners. The meal included lamb as the main course and the traditional foods served at Seder. Fr. O'Rourke spoke about the Jewish heritage of Jesus and the symbolisms of the traditional Seder foods. For Filipinos, this is something new. In several Philippine towns<sup>50</sup>, the last supper is reenacted on Thursday noon, in a ritual called *cordero*. The priest and 12 males representing the apostles eat together in the home of the *hermano* and *hermana*. On the table is a

concoction of bread, mashed sweet potatoes and spices, decorated and shaped as a lamb, representing Jesus as the Lamb of God. The whole community is served at this noontime banquet and there is no mention of the Jewish heritage of Jesus. At St. Augustine's, the Filipino community participated in the ritual as planned and led by Fr. O'Rourke.

On Good Friday, the *pasion* is sung at St. Augustine's and at the home of Fr. Tomichek near St. Peter's.

### ***Salubong***

On Easter Sunday, Filipinos at St. Augustine's re-enact the *salubong*. The word means "meeting" but in this religious context, it means the meeting of the Virgin Mary and the risen Jesus. The *salubong* begins shortly before daybreak in the Philippines. Two processions of men and women, going to different directions and each group bearing an image – one of the risen Jesus and the other, of Mary – meet at a specified place in town. Here, the images are lowered to convey the idea that mother and son acknowledged each other. A child dressed as an angel removes the Virgin Mary's black veil of mourning and a white veil is revealed, a symbol of resurrection and life. In several Philippine towns, the angel is suspended from the beams of the stage erected for the purpose by cables and is lowered to lift the black mourning veil of Mary. At



St. Augustine's, all these take place before the 11 o'clock mass, inside the church. Two processions come from the back of the church, by the outer aisles, and meet right in front of the altar. At the altar, a child dressed as an

angel removes the black veil of Mary, while two young men hold the images. The rest of the Philippine “script” is followed. After the meeting of the images, the Easter mass takes place.

Fr. O’Rourke, the pastor of St. Augustine’s, celebrated the Easter Sunday mass on April 3, 1999. His homily focused on resurrection as a historical fact and its meaning for Christians. He spoke of a life with God as desirable, and of the spiritual and psychological values of the resurrection. He cautioned, however, that it is not possible for Christians to feel the risen Christ unless they themselves choose to feel it. The renewal of baptismal promise followed the homily.

As is usually done at St. Augustine’s, the communion songs are sung in Tagalog, the Philippine national language. This is the result of a compromise worked out between Fr. Quinn, the previous pastor and the Filipino community. Since there are non-Filipino parishioners at St. Augustine’s Fr. Quinn suggested that the homily should be in English but the “Our Father” and some other communion songs could be rendered in Tagalog.<sup>51</sup> When I asked a Caucasian American who has been worshipping at St. Peter’s even before it became the *Santo Niño* shrine how she learned the Tagalog Our Father, she said that she somehow “absorbed it” over time after hearing Filipinos sing it every Sunday.

After the Easter mass, Filipino lunch was served at the social hall of St. Augustine’s. As always, this is a social time. Members of the Mutya Dance Company rehearsed their numbers after the luncheon while their parents socialized. The involvement of second generation Filipinos, however, tend to be focused on the Mutya Dance Company. A few play instruments in the choir (violin and a flute) but Filipino adults are the usual participants in all rituals. I tried to interview a group of Filipino teenagers during lunch but they just limited their responses to “yes” and “no.” I could not pursue the interview as they seemed reluctant to get involved with my research.



## Marian Devotions



Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help  
at St. Peter's

Devotion to the Virgin Mary in her various apparitions is a salient feature of Philippine Christianity. For Filipinos, Mary is “Mama Mary” – a designation that personalizes their relationship with the mother of Jesus. Young children are taught to pray to her and it is not unusual for a mother to tell an erring child that “Mama Mary will be upset with what you did.” Mary is the mother in heaven, the intercessor and the benefactor. Images of Mary as Lady of Fatima, Lady of Lourdes, Lady of Peace and Good Voyage, Lady of Mamarog (a town in northern Philippines), Lady of Perpetual Help or

Lady of EDSA (Epifanio Delos Santos highway, where a

big demonstration led to the downfall of President Marcos) share space in Filipino home altars with the *Santo Niño* and the first Filipino saint – Lorenzo Ruiz. Organized devotions to Mary are held throughout the year. St. Peter's and St. Thomas Aquinas hold Wednesday *novenas* for Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Several Filipinos that we interviewed said that the *novena* to our Lady of Perpetual Help was a major reason why they started going to St. Peter's. In the Philippines, this *novena* is held on Wednesdays in a church in Baclaran, near Manila where about 200,000 devotees come throughout the day to pray and petition Mary for various favors. At St. Peter's this *novena* is held at 7 in the evening every Wednesday.

Filipinos also organize “visits” of Mary to their homes. An image of Mary (as Our Lady of Fatima or Lourdes or as the Lady of Peace and Good Voyage, also known as the Virgin of

Antipolo) is brought to different homes where it stays for a week. When the image is brought to a house, Filipinos gather to pray the rosary every night and make their petitions to Mary. Sometimes the priest joins in these visits and says a mass in the home. The idea here is that while the image is in a particular home, the family and other friends in the neighborhood will pray the rosary together, thus promoting the idea that a family that prays together stays together. The hosts provide food and refreshments after the prayers.



*Flores de Mayo and Santa Cruzan at St. Peter's*

During the month of May, Filipino Catholics celebrate the *Santacruzán*. As practiced in Philadelphia, it is a combination of a May procession *Flores de Mayo* (Flowers of May) in honor of Mary and *Santa Cruzán*. *Santa Cruzán* (Holy Cross) is a commemoration of the story of Empress Helen's (mother of Constantine the Great)

search for the cross. The *Flores de Mayo* as celebrated in the Philippines involves nine days of flower offerings and prayers to Mary. Members of social and civic organizations in the Philippines participate in the floral offerings, with various individuals designated as *Hermanas* and *Hermanos*. Their main function is to organize the offerings and prayers and to underwrite the expenses for food, music, flowers, candles and whatever may be needed for the celebration. The *hermano* and *hermana mayor* host the lunch and dinner in their homes after the processions. Young Filipinos participate in the *Santacruzán* as *sagalas* (I cannot find an appropriate translation in English) – dressed in Philippine finery, carrying various symbols from the litany of the Virgin Mary like the Tower of David, Mystical Rose and Queen of Flowers. There is the



*Reyna Elena*, representing Empress Helen and carrying a crucifix. Young men serve as escorts for the *sagalas* and there is always a little boy dressed as Constantine walking beside the *Reyna Elena*. Parishioners walk on both sides of the *Reyna Elena* and *sagalas* as they recite the rosary or sing the Hail Mary in Spanish.

Among the guests for the St. Peter's *Santacruzán* were the Mexican Consul and family, and Fr. O'Rourke of St. Augustine. At the mass, Fr. Tomichek's homily covered a variety of topics including the *Santacruzán* tradition in the Philippines, the centennial of Philippine independence, Filipino Marian devotions and the *novena* in honor of the Mother of Perpetual Help in Baclaran church in the Philippines. He took the opportunity to invite the community to the *novena*, while enjoining them to "make a sacrifice," take time and come to Mary. He also recalled the *Flores de Mayo* in the barrios where children bring flowers to Mary, and added that this is a ritual that Filipinos share with people of Mexico and Spain. He reminded the congregation that "we also honor the various images of Mary: Guadalupe, Czechostokowa, Antipolo and Perpetual help." Like his other homilies, Fr. Tomichek made other references to the Philippines and expressed hope that God will bless the Philippines with showers of rain (there was a drought at the time). He concluded his homily with "Mabuhay, Pilipinas!" (Long live, Philippines). The mass ended with the singing of the Philippine National Anthem.

The *Santacruzán* began right after the mass. Filipinos came in their Sunday best or in Philippine traditional clothes. The Knights of Columbus, with its Filipino commander, was in full regalia. Filipino children were dressed either in the traditional Philippine clothes or in their Sunday best. There was a group of Filipino Veterans, led by Mr. Manozca who always participated in church activities. These veterans, who fought in World War II in the Philippines are now American citizens. At the procession, they held up both Philippine and American flags.

In the Philadelphia context, the *Santacruzán* is celebrated after mass on a Sunday in May. There are *Reyna Elena* and *sagalas*, although not all of them are carry symbols for Mary. This celebration is probably the one Philippine ritual in Philadelphia where a great number of young Filipinos participate – most of whom were volunteered by their parents.



Mr. Manozca (beside American flag) leading Filipino veterans at the *Santa Cruzán*

There were various images of Mary in the procession: Lady of Manaoag, Lady of Antipolo, Perpetual Help, Lady of Fatima, Lady of Youth, Mother of Eucharist and Grace. As the images were being brought in, people waved their handkerchiefs.

Both St. Augustine's and St. Peter's have their own *Santacruzán*, held within a week of each other. It is not unusual for area Filipinos to attend both. The *Santacruzán* processions cover several blocks around each church and end up in the churchyard. At St. Peter's, they had a program featuring Philippine dances after the 1999 *Santacruzán*. It is also a time when vendors set up tables to sell religious articles that always include various reproductions of the *Santo Niño* image that could be worn or hung on the rear view mirror of the cars. There are various images of Mary as well as of the Filipino saint, San Lorenzo Ruiz. After the procession, there was free lunch but there was also food for sale – Philippine snacks and delicacies. There was also a raffle for \$1,000.00 and various Philippine games.



Members of Mutya Dance Company performing the *Tinikling* after the Flores de Mayo/Santa Cruzan procession

Fr. Tomichek of St. Peter's leads and organizes, together with Santos Travel, several pilgrimages to Marian shrines every year. Hundreds of Filipinos have gone with the group to Fatima, Lourdes, Guadalupe and Medjugorge. There are also packaged tours to Rome (they include an audience with the Pope), Santiago de Compostela in Spain and other shrines in Europe. Locally, prayer groups organize pilgrimages to the Shrine of Lady of Antipolo (also known as Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage) at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Washington DC, Blue Army Shrine in Washington, New Jersey and the Shrine of the Lady of Czestokowa, in Doylestown, Pennsylvania.

### **Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Divine Mercy**

Various Philadelphia area prayer groups organized the pilgrimage to the Shrine of Divine Mercy on April 30, 2000. The pilgrims filled two buses that started from Northeast Philadelphia at 4 o'clock in the morning and arrived in Stockbridge, Massachusetts about 6 hours later. As the bus pulled out of the parking lot of the shopping area on Roosevelt Boulevard and Cottman

Avenue, Tessie, the bus leader, stated clearly the purpose of the trip: “We are going there not because we want to but because the Lord made us.” She then led the group in prayer: “O heavenly Father, put us in your care. Thank you for this day and this safe trip.” She distributed song sheets to the group made up mostly of women. Someone suggested that we pray now so that we could get some sleep. We took turns leading the rosary and finished the prayer as the bus entered the Pennsylvania turnpike. Then Tessie read a “letter from Jesus” – “I have been with you since you woke up this morning by the light of my sunshine but you did not remember me all through the day...” as the bus moved on to 287 north. The next prayer was the prayer of a



Filipinos at the Shrine of Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Massachusetts

pilgrim: “Lord, make me remember that I am a pilgrim and not a tourist...” By 7 o’clock, the song “Come Holy Spirit” was on the tape player. “Come Holy Spirit, set my heart on fire. Here I am, Lord...”

The bus arrived at the Shrine of Divine Mercy at about 10:30 a.m. After an early lunch, the group proceeded to the chapel where there was a 2-hour wait to get inside. There were thousands of people since it was also the day that Sister Faustina was being canonized as a Saint. The mass was conducted in English and Spanish and the homilist, Fr. Groeschel, referred to Sister Faustina as the first saint of the new millennium. He paid tribute to John Paul II

and called upon all religions to know the mercy of God. The mass ended at 5 o'clock but it took a while for the traffic to clear in the parking lot. The group made it back to Philadelphia at 2 o'clock the next morning.

Filipinos in the Philadelphia area also participate in Marian pilgrimages to Georgia and Montreal and it is not unusual for them to take off from work in order to join these pilgrimages. As one pilgrim to the Shrine of Divine Mercy puts it, making a pilgrimage to these places allows them to get closer to Mary and God and at the same time, gives them the opportunity to be with other Filipinos who share their faith.<sup>52</sup>

### **Christmas Celebrations**

With 85% of the population professing Christianity, Christmas is more like a national *fiesta* that is fervently anticipated in the Philippines. Christmas in the Philippines is also affected by worldwide trends of commercialism, but Filipinos maintain the religious atmosphere of the season with a series of masses celebrated before December 25 and displays of the nativity scene in people's homes and public places. It is a long holiday season that formally begins on December 16 and ends on January 6, Three Kings Day. With three official holidays – Christmas, Rizal Day (Dec.30) and New Year's Day during that period, it is the time of the year when people do not expect official businesses to be accomplished but rather, it is a time for celebration.

### ***Simbang Gabi/ Misa de Gallo***

Christmas season begins on December 16 with the first of the nine masses (*novena*) that culminates with the ninth mass at midnight on Christmas Eve. These masses are called *simbang gabi* or *misa de gallo*. *Simbang Gabi* means "night mass" because it is held at dawn, when it is

still dark. They are also called *Misa de Gallo*, a Spanish term meaning “Mass of the Rooster” because it is celebrated at 4 o’clock in the morning when the cock begins to crow. Various traditions tell us that the *Simbang Gabi* was first celebrated in the early 1700s as a Mass of Thanksgiving for a fruitful harvest. It was later incorporated into the Christmas celebrations ending with the feast after the midnight mass on Christmas Eve. People offer different explanations for the timing of the mass, saying that it was a form of sacrifice or that it was a way of accommodating farmers who worked in the fields early in the morning.<sup>53</sup> In the Philippines, church bells toll not only to announce the mass but to wake people up at dawn. In some towns, a brass band goes around playing Christmas carols for this purpose. After mass, the churchyard is lined with food vendors, selling traditional cakes and snack, as some form of “breakfast to go.”

Early morning masses, however, would be an extreme hardship for Filipino Catholics in Philadelphia. Considering varied work and school schedules, St. Peter’s holds masses at 7 o’clock in the evenings beginning on December 15. Filipinos go straight to mass from work before going home. Individuals and families volunteer to sponsor each of the masses and they are designated as gift bearers for a particular mass. In 2001, St. Peter’s scheduled masses from December 15 to 23, a day earlier than the Philippine schedule and with a full set of nine masses before the Christmas Eve midnight mass. Each mass adopted the following themes: Shalom, Equality, God as a just Father, Family’s Obedience to God, Stewardship of God’s Gift, Celebrating Human Diversity, The family as an Agent of Social Transformation, Simplicity and Sharing, and Non-Violence and Creative Ways of Resolving Conflict in the Family. The homilies for these masses combined traditional Philippine family values and the place of God in their lives.

## Midnight Mass

Filipinos at St. Augustine's stage a *Panunuluyan* before the Christmas midnight mass. The *Panunuluyan* is a re-enactment of Joseph and Mary's search for a place before Jesus was born. In the Philippines, statues of Mary and Joseph, mounted on platforms, are carried all over town, on the shoulders of men. As men and women walk with the images, they sing the lines for Mary and Joseph. They beg for a place to stay and are met by different kinds of people who are not sympathetic to their plight. At St. Augustine's, the *panunuluyan* takes place within the church, without the images of Mary and Joseph. The



participants are dressed in costume as Mary and Joseph and walk to different parts of the church while singing their lines. The *panunuluyan* ends right before the midnight mass begins, with Mary and Joseph carrying the image of the baby Jesus to the crèche at the altar.

Fr. O'Rourke celebrated the midnight mass and in his homily, focused on the theme of Jesus as the light of the world and the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. He emphasized that the whole message of Christmas is: God takes care of you and me. Fr. O'Rourke also spoke of Filipino traditions and the fellowship at St. Augustine. He referred to Filipinos as "roaming Catholics" – most probably because of the fact that millions of Filipinos are spread out all over the world – and carry with them their traditions and their faith. He acknowledged the contributions of Filipinos to St. Augustine's and noted that Filipinos had been at St. Augustine's for six years in 1998.



The *Media Noche*, a family meal eaten at home, with traditional Philippine food, follows the Christmas midnight mass in the Philippines. Unlike all other celebrations, there was no fellowship meal after the midnight mass at St. Augustine's. Filipinos went to their homes for their *media noche*.

## National Holidays

Filipinos also celebrate their national holidays at St. Augustine's and St. Peter's. Since



Filipinos are in a country where most of their social activities revolve around religion, it is not unusual that June 12, Philippine Independence Day, is celebrated with a mass and a fellowship lunch. When

Independence Day occurs on a weekday, and Filipinos have their usual work schedules, it is celebrated either the Sunday before or after June 12. It is not an official holiday in the United States but every year in Philadelphia, the City Council, for many years now, passes a resolution, on the recommendation of the Filipino Executive Council of Greater Philadelphia, declaring the week of June 12 as Philippine week. There are Filipino activities at Penn's Landing, where the USS Olympia, the ship that figured in the Filipino-American war of 1898 at Manila Bay, is anchored.



June 12, 1998 called for a special celebration because it was the centennial of Philippine independence from Spain. Since the day fell on a weekday, the mass was held on Sunday, June 14, 1998. Many Filipinos from the Delaware valley came to St. Augustine's in traditional formal attire. Filipino veterans of World War II led the procession to the altar, holding Philippine and American flags. The presence of both flags is an affirmation of their Filipino-American identity that balances their legal status as American citizens with their Filipino cultural and religious orientations. The Philippine national anthem was sung and the choir also did a rendition of *Bayan Ko* (My Country), a nationalistic song composed at a time when Filipinos were demanding independence from the United States. This is an emotional song that emphasizes a people's longing for freedom and it became the anthem of the left when President Marcos was in power.

The offerings for the Philippine centennial mass took on a Philippine flavor. Instead of just the usual hosts, water and wine, the items brought to the altar included a replica of a

Philippine grass hut, a broom made of coconut palm leaves, Philippine fruits and vegetables – items that create not only a sense of nostalgia but also a sense of community. They are reminders of familiar things and foods from home. At the end of the mass, attendees proceeded to the



social hall for the fellowship luncheon hosted by different Filipino organizations. FIAT prayer group, the choirs, the nurses group, organizations based on geography in the Philippines all take

turns in hosting these lunches. As we can see, the ceremonies, the liturgy, the *Santo Niño* images, the sounds and smell of the Philippines enhance the “sense of home” at St. Augustine’s.

Aside from the fact that 1998 was the centennial of Philippine independence from Spain, it was also the year when Filipinos in the Philadelphia-New Jersey area inaugurated the monument of Jose Rizal, the national hero of the Philippines, in Cooper River Park in New Jersey. Since then, the celebration of Jose Rizal’s birthday on June 19 at Cooper River Park has become one of the well-attended Filipino events.

In June, 1999, we attended the celebration of Rizal’s birthday in Cooper River Park. It was essentially a community picnic, with booths offering free Filipino food, blood pressure check up while other entrepreneurs sold cell phone and



long distance calling card packages. Filipino children were introduced to Philippine games while Eric Lachica, a lobbyist for Filipino veterans rights in Washington DC, dispensed advice and information on veterans benefits. There was a *fiesta*-like atmosphere as Philippine music and the aroma of Philippine food blended in the afternoon air.

The program began with the *Rigodon de Honor*, a traditional opening number for formal dances. There was a tableau that highlighted historical events during Spanish and American rules in the Philippines. It ended with a re-enactment of the execution by firing squad of Jose Rizal in 1896. The Consul General of the Philippines to New York, Ambassador Linglingayen



Mayor of Cherry Hill, New Jersey (second from left in white Philippine shirt)

Lacanlale was present, and together with the mayor of Cherry Hill, New Jersey, unveiled the marker for the Jose Rizal road in front of the monument. For Filipinos, having the mayor of Cherry Hill celebrating with them and wearing a Philippine shirt at that, is significant because it demonstrates recognition of Filipino presence in New Jersey.

### **Love of God, Love of Country and Nostalgia**

Considering the popularity of *Santo Niño* and Our Lady of Perpetual help *novenas* among Filipinos, St. Augustine's (as the national shrine of *Santo Niño* in the United States) and St. Peter's (as the first church to hold *novenas* to the Mother of Perpetual Help in the area) have become important places where Filipinos, through their religious rituals and social activities shape and re-shape their identities as an ethnic group in the Philadelphia region. They are places where Filipinos show their love of God through worship, their love of country through the celebration of national holidays and displays of the Philippine flag, and their nostalgia for things Philippine through the wearing of traditional clothes, serving of Philippine food and sale of Philippine ritual objects and crafts. These churches also serve as venues for recalling memories of home and recreating a past that they want so much to preserve in this new environment. The remembered rituals and religious artifacts like the *Santo Niño* statues and various images of Mary draw Filipinos together as a community in Diaspora, thus performing an integrative

function in a country where work schedules and distance do not allow for frequent contacts as they did with friends in the Philippines. These religious and social activities at St. Augustine's and St Peter's help ease Filipino adjustment to a pace of life so different from the homeland. For a people whose religious commitments affect their way of life to a great extent, having their "home church" gives them a sense of belonging. They afford the opportunity not only to meet other Filipinos but also to learn, through informal discussions, about issues as veterans' rights, social security benefits and to receive tips on available jobs. The loneliness and fear of being a stranger in another land dissipates with the camaraderie of one's countrymen.

In their desire to preserve as much of home as they could, Filipinos have learned to accommodate, to improvise and to compromise to some extent but never to drastically change nor abandon the rituals learned as children in the Philippines. Holding the *Sinulog* in the summer instead of winter, changing the time of the *Simbang Gabi/Misa de Gallo*, re-enacting the *Panunuluyan* and staging the Passion Play inside the church instead of around the town or in a public square are some of the concessions they had to make so that they could ensure the continuity of rituals that speak so much about their religious and cultural heritage, which, in turn, help Filipinos define themselves. Filipinos at St. Augustine's are even talking about a fluvial procession in the Delaware River in order to make the Philadelphia *Sinulog* more like the Philippine *Sinulog*. This is already being done in Montreal, Canada and it will not be a surprise if Filipinos in Philadelphia follow suit.

Home rituals, like the *Pabasa*, *novenas* to various saints, "Mary's visits" and other prayer meetings are done exactly as they are in the Philippines. When one is attending these home rituals amid handicrafts, pictures and religious images imported from the Philippines lined up in

home altars while the aroma of traditional foods and refreshments waft from the kitchen, it is like being in the home country all over again.

As noted above, we observed that women represent a majority of those involved in church activities. There are a number of husband and wife teams that take the lead in various committees at St. Augustine's and St. Peter's. They serve as *hermanos* and *hermanas*, lead in prayers, organize schedules, plan the celebrations, manage the preparation and serving of food during fellowship meals and raise funds to ensure the continuity of programs in both churches. Sister Loretto Mapa is in the midst of all these activities. Aside from coordinating celebrations, she visits Filipinos in their homes, the sick in the hospitals, counsels Filipinos and is always available to help the community.

Fr. Efren, who is actually based in another parish, is the main celebrant in Philippine religious rituals at St. Augustine while Fr. Tomichek officiates at St. Peter's. Their homilies tend to bring out some of the issues faced by Filipinos in their adjustment to American life but they always emphasize that love of God will help Filipinos overcome those problems. For a time, the Augustinian order sent Fr. Pido from the Philippines to study at Villanova University and in the course of his academic program, he officiated at most Filipino functions at St. Augustine's. Fr. Pido returned to the Philippines after receiving his master's degree.

Both St. Augustine's and St. Peter's have become places to show what Thomas Tweed calls "diasporic nationalism" in his study of Cubans in Miami. Diasporic nationalism is a sentiment expressed by dispersed peoples, which includes not just affection for remembered traditions and attachments to the home country, but also concern for the preservation of their culture.<sup>54</sup> For Filipinos, Catholicism as observed in the Philippines is part of this diasporic nationalism. The celebrations at St. Augustine's and St. Peter's bring them back to the

Philippines and these churches are places where love of God, love of country and nostalgia converge. Although Filipinos could have worshipped in other American parishes, their need to express their religiosity in familiar ways and to connect with other Filipinos in a new environment serve as strong incentives to find and create a “home church.” Many of those who go to these churches still worship at their respective parishes and come to St. Augustine’s or St. Peter’s for special occasions. However, the number of Filipinos who go to St. Augustine’s or St. Peter’s instead of their regular parishes for the weekly masses is increasing. Interestingly, one of the aims of the Socio-Pastoral Institute held in 1993 at St. Joseph’s University was to motivate Filipinos to become part of mainstream American parish life. It is evident, however, that instead of becoming part of American parishes, Filipinos in the Philadelphia area have created their own Catholic communities with rituals and celebrations that bring them closer to the home country and keep them distinct from mainstream American parishes. ■

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Miguel de Loarca, "Relacion delas Islas Filipinas," in E. Blair and J. Robertson, *The Philippines*, vol. V, p. 171

<sup>2</sup> Eighty five percent of Filipinos are Catholic.

<sup>3</sup> Antonio Pido, "Macro/Micro Dimensions of Pilipino Immigration to the United States," in Maria P.P. Root, ed., *Filipino Americans: Transformation and Identity*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication, 1999, pp. 21-38; Lafcadio Hearn, "St. Malo's Story," *Harper's Weekly* (March 31, 1883). This may be viewed at [www.http://pages.prodigy.com/pilipino/stmalo/html](http://pages.prodigy.com/pilipino/stmalo/html). See also Malcolm H. Churchill, "Louisiana History and Early Filipino Settlement: Searching for the Story," *Bulletin of the American Historical Collection* (April/June 1999): 25-38 for discrepancies on prevailing explanations of how Filipinos settled Louisiana.

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Okamura, "Filipino Americans," in Franklin Ng, ed. *The Asian American Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2 (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1995): 429.

<sup>5</sup> The United States and Spain signed the Treaty of Paris in December 1898. Under the terms of the treaty, Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States for a sum of twenty million dollars.

<sup>6</sup> There is some variation among historians as to which constitute the first and second "waves." Nevertheless, it is clear that at various times, there tended to be a concentration of specific groups (i.e., farm laborers, government scholars, professionals, veterans) coming to the United States. See Ronald Takaki, "Dollar a Day, Dime a Dance: The Forgotten Filipinos" in Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1998), pp. 315 - 356; Barbara Posadas, *Filipino Americans* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1999).

<sup>7</sup> Okamura, *op. cit.*, p. 429.

<sup>8</sup> H. Brett Melendy, *Asians in America: Filipinos, Koreans, and East Indians* (Boston: Twayne 1977) p. 32

<sup>9</sup> Takaki, *op.cit.*, p. 319.

<sup>10</sup> Among them was Carlos Bulosan who wrote about the experiences of Filipino farm workers in the west coast. See his *America is in the Heart* (reprint edition). Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000.

<sup>11</sup> Jeffrey M. Burns, Ellen Skerrett and Joseph White, eds. "Filipino Immigrants," *Keeping Faith: European and Asian Catholic Immigrants*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2000, p. 263.

<sup>12</sup> Lorenzo Zamora, President of the Filipino Catholic Club, letter to Filipino Friends and Countrymen, 23 May 1922 in Burns, et.al., *op. cit.*, pp. 263-265.

<sup>13</sup> This is a term used for Filipino males who came to the US as migrant workers when the Philippines was still an American colony.

<sup>14</sup> Fred Cordova, *Filipinos: Forgotten Asian Americans*. Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing, 1983 p. 171.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>16</sup> "A Dollar a Day, Ten Cents a Dance." This documentary on the life of Filipino migrant workers include interviews where Filipinos who came as migrant workers before World War II talk about living conditions, race relations and unfair labor practices in the west coast.

<sup>17</sup> Posadas, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

<sup>18</sup> The Eilberg Act of 1976 required a job offer from the United States before an immigrant could come to the United States. The Health Professions Educational Assistance Act (HPEAA of 1976) claimed that there was no longer a shortage of medical professionals in the US so medical immigrants were also required to secure job offers as provided in the Eilberg Act.

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990.

<sup>20</sup> The Chinese constitute the largest group.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

<sup>22</sup> *Evening Bulletin* 26 May 1951.

<sup>23</sup> *Evening Bulletin* 19 June 1943.

<sup>24</sup> *Evening Bulletin* 24 November 1945.

<sup>25</sup> See Bruno Lasker, *Filipino Immigration* (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1969).

<sup>26</sup> Tomas Claudio was a Filipino who enlisted in the United States army and fought in World War I. He was killed in action in France.

<sup>27</sup> *Evening Bulletin* 5 February 1945.

<sup>28</sup> *Evening Bulletin* 2 June 1945.

<sup>29</sup> Telephone interview with Msgr. George Tomichuk, 1 May 1998.

<sup>30</sup> "First Augustinian Church," *Catholic Standard and Times* 29 September 1967.



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- <sup>31</sup> Interview with Mrs. Isabel Largoza, 10 April 1998.
- <sup>32</sup> Interview with Dr. Pura Penaverde, 10 April 1998.
- <sup>33</sup> Doreen Carvajal, "How a church dying slowly found new life as a shrine," *Philadelphia Inquirer* 12 February 1992, B1.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>35</sup> Interview with Dr. Junie Irizary 23 May 1998.
- <sup>36</sup> Interview with Sister Loreto, September 29, 1998.
- <sup>37</sup> Warren P. Angliongto, "The Sto. Niño Devotion: An Enduring Spanish Legacy," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 14 January 1999.
- <sup>38</sup> Although the Philippine constitution guarantees the separation of church and state and has an anti-establishment clause similar to that of the United States, it is very common for government to be involved in the planning and celebration of religious festivals. In the case of Cebu, the government tends to benefit from the Sinulog since it brings not only tourists but also Filipinos overseas to Cebu city. Thus, it is both a religious celebration and a tourist attraction.
- <sup>39</sup> Ben G. Salgado, "Basilica gets into the Fiesta Señor Spirit," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 14 January 1999.
- <sup>40</sup> See Marcela Mijares Reyes-Tinagan, *Viva! Kay Señor Santo Niño Viva!* Manila: National Commission for Culture and the Arts, 2001.
- <sup>41</sup> In December 1992, the steeple of St. Augustine was destroyed by strong winds and was rebuilt soon after. The cross, however, is now kept inside the church.
- <sup>42</sup> *Kasaysayan ng Pasiong Mahal ni Hesukristong Panginoon Natin*. (1884 version). Manila: Ignacio Luna and Sons, 1949, p. 213.
- <sup>43</sup> Interview with Rodna Luna, 10 April 1988.
- <sup>44</sup> For a description of *pasion* singing in a Philippine town, see Linette Rivera-Mirano, "The *Pabasa* of San Luis, Batangas," *Asian Studies* Vols. XXII-XXIV (1984-86), pp. 99-116
- <sup>45</sup> Interview with Mrs. Cargado, 20 March 1999.
- <sup>46</sup> Interview with Mrs. Largoza, 10 April 1988.
- <sup>47</sup> Interview with Mrs. Ochabillo, 10 April 1998.
- <sup>48</sup> Interview with Mrs. Largoza, 10 April 1988.
- <sup>49</sup> See Nicanor G. Tiongson, *Kasaysayan at Estetika ng Sinakulo at Ibang Dulang Panrelihiyon sa Malolos* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1975).
- <sup>50</sup> The town of Morong, Rizal, in the island of Luzon is one of them.
- <sup>51</sup> Interview with Dr. Pura Penaverde, 10 April 1998.
- <sup>52</sup> Interview with Ms. Salud de Lara, April 30, 2000.
- <sup>53</sup> *Christmas in the Philippines* (Chicago: World Book, Inc. 1990), p. 18.
- <sup>54</sup> See Thomas Tweed, *Our Lady of the Exile* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).



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Charismatic Conference, Our Lady of Hope Church, May 23, 1998  
Charismatic Prayer Communities Conference, Hilton Hotel, Crystal City, VA. 30  
July 1999  
Christmas Midnight Mass, St. Augustine's 24 December 1998  
Easter Mass, St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 12 April 1998  
Easter Mass, St. Augustine's Church, 4 April 1999  
Holy Thursday, St. Augustine's, 1 April 1999  
Independence Day Mass of Thanksgiving, 13 June 1999  
Jose Rizal's Birthday Commemoration, Cooper River Park, New Jersey, 19 June 1999  
Mass, St. Augustine's Church, 15 June 1999  
Mass of Thanksgiving Mass, St. Augustine's Church, 7 June 1998  
Migrant mass, Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul, Philadelphia, 18 March 1999  
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St. Lorenzo Ruiz Feast Day, St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 26 September 1998  
Smithsonian Institution Folk life Festival Featuring the Philippines, 4 July 1998  
Socio-Pastoral Institute, sponsored by the Office for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the National Catholic Conference of Bishops, St. Joseph's University, May 19-23, 1993 (this was long before this research project)  
Symposium on the Philippines, Sponsored by the Filipino Executive Council of Greater Philadelphia, St. Augustine's Social Hall, 15 June 1999

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