

CATHOLICISM IN THE PHILIPPINES

by Ana Maria Coraz Bondoc, Philippines

When I tell people here at Notre Dame that I come from the Philippines, I have gotten used to the follow-up question, “Do you get a lot of Catholics over there?”

The answer is yes, and it is largely due to a history of Spanish colonization: even today, the estimate hovers at 85-90 percent. Populating over seven thousand islands, there is no one definitive picture of religion, or language, or really of any aspect of Filipinos. From personal experience, I can give examples of what Catholicism in the Philippines really looks like. It is an odd mixture of unique village customs combined with some of the same traditions I encounter as pleasant surprises here on campus.

In the bigger cities, you might encounter a scene that would be unimaginable at the UP Mall in South Bend. Within larger shopping centers in Manila, it is not uncommon to be browsing about when, all of a sudden, a podium and plastic pews appear out of nowhere, and everyone except the cashiers gather in the food court or another central area for Mass. The rites and the readings are familiar and the people are friendly enough, though

a nod and a smile may be a more common sign of peace among the shoppers than a hug or handshake. This just illustrates how many Catholics there are in the Philippines - enough to populate daily Mass at the shopping malls.

Outside the huge cities, Mass has more of that neighborhood feel that



colors the American experience. At the center of my grandmother’s village is a church, mortared together with huge stones of dark gray. When it’s time for Mass, Filipinos arrive from all directions, on foot or by bus or on impossibly small tricycles that somehow fit entire families. On an ordinary Sunday the dress code is slightly less relaxed than at your typical dorm Mass. In response to

the tropical climate and lack of air conditioning, flip flops are acceptable; however, sleeves and long pants are a must no matter how hot it is.

The whole village comes alive during special celebrations and festivals. Even the church’s somber exterior is suddenly colorful, and joyful singing with bells and tambourines ring in accompaniment. Everybody participates in these processions, whether it is by covering every surface of the route in flowers, by pulling floats with statues of saints and the Virgin around town, or by marshalling the unruly village children into something like an angelic choir.

It is this sort of atmosphere that I find most like the communal efforts in marking special events at Notre Dame. Sure, there will be the similarities in Mass wherever you go. But throughout the year here, I see whole clubs or dorms working together. When I see around campus Multicultural Rosaries, living Stations of the Cross, or even Carroll Christmas, I get the same sense of an exuberant and extraordinary community for God that I feel in the Philippines. Though the ways we gather may differ, what’s important is that we continue to gather in His name.



HARVEST HAPPENING

by Vindhya Panagoda, Sri Lanka

There is an old saying “When in Rome, do as the Romans do.” So, when you live in a foreign country, you have to get accustomed to things that surround you and live as the citizens do.

When I came to the United States seven years ago, I didn’t have an inkling about pumpkin carving or hayrides. I was excited to see my first winter snow, but I hadn’t even thought of carving



the first pumpkin of my life. Every year since I moved to Notre Dame in 2009, I now experience another type of “autumn celebration.” Our English as a Second Language (ESL) class calls it the “Harvest Happening.” It is a very interesting, great event for all of us, the international spouses in the ESL program. Every year during the last week of September, after autumn officially begins, we get together at our English Teacher Beverly’s house for a couple of hours to welcome autumn.

On that day, everyone comes with an authentic dish from his or her home country.

This year on September 29th, we met as usual to celebrate the Harvest Happening. Beverly had already decorated her entrance with scarecrows and things that were made with hay along with orange, red, and yellow-colored decorations. Everyone had a spectacular time there. We spent three marvelous hours trying delicious food that we had never had before and some of us also exchanged recipes. It was a way to see all of the ESL students and get to know each other better outside of class. There was food from most of the continents. Before we started to taste the delicious food, Mary, our new ESL teacher, explained to us why apple crumble is very popular around this time of the year. It is interesting to know about American customs from an American. The name “sushi” reminds us of Japan; however, we had sushi from Korea too. Which one was the best? Both were delicious to me. Jin, one of our Korean students, made acorn Jello with a spicy sauce. It was amazing to hear how they make acorn flour to make this dish.

*Author Vindhya Panagoda and
ESL Instructor Beverly Wills.*

We spent time at Beverly’s house discussing our countries, cultural values, and customs, which gave us a chance to expand our knowledge about the world. Most of us took lots of pictures, which are treasures to us, especially when we go back home some day. We laughed, talked, argued, and above all, we had a very good time. For most of the newcomers this was their first time in an American home. We left Beverly’s home assuring her that we will come next year too if we are still here.

The ESL classes that are organized by ISSA are not only classes, but also a support network that provides a safety net for the many international spouses at Notre Dame. There is always someone there to share our joy, praise our achievements, and offer a shoulder to cry on. A very big thank you to ISSA for your great work!



MY KITCHEN, MY MOM, AND ME

by Hyewon Yun, Korea

I finally bought it: a \$15 zester/grater. This is not a must-have kitchen utensil, but absolutely the most expensive item in my kitchen. Considering I spent one year deciding whether or not to buy a \$5 hand mixer, this should be an unthinkable extravagance. What is happening to me? The strange thing is that I never thought about canceling the order or returning this item since I first saw it on the Internet. Hmmm...

My mother is the wife of a man who became the head of a big family at the age of 30 when his father died. She had to take care of her aging mother-in-law, her own three kids, and six of her husband's much younger siblings who were students in college, high school and elementary school. Her days started in the kitchen preparing breakfast for 12 people and packing school lunches for her husband's brothers and sister. My mother used to find the lunch box of the youngest brother-in-law tossed into the



For me as a young girl, it looked pointless to be a wife and mother when it was such a thankless job. I couldn't believe why anyone would like to become a wife or mother in

the first place. Why would my mother waste her whole life cooking, cleaning and supporting someone else when she could work for herself and for a greater purpose, for

example, a career? Naturally, I stayed away from the kitchen as much as possible and refused to help my mother. I worked hard at school believing that it was the only way for a girl to move on to the outside world and thrive in a country heavily influenced by traditional gender stereotypes back then - and I made it.

I went to college and become a member of Korea's first generation that was taught feminism at college and awakened to the self-awareness that we can achieve something as women rather than just being housewives. As ambitious and assertive young women, our goal was never to allow our lives to become like our mothers' lives - what a passive and negative goal it was! We wanted to do nothing rather than to do something. We wanted to break the vicious cycle: women got married at a young age because the social norm forced them to do so and showed no other option, and they got hard training under their mothers-in-law to be proper workhorses for their husbands' families. Thus they became the same relentless mothers-in-law for their sons' wives. After graduation, I got a job, worked hard to build my career and never cooked. I was also successful in landing a husband who never cared whether I was a good cook or not.

However, cooking became a daily routine when my husband and I came to America. My husband was studying as a graduate student while I stayed at home and supported him. I had to cook three meals a day: both of us loved Korean food and our household budget simply was not enough to eat out all the time. I got very surprised at how fast the next meal came after just finishing one meal. My husband sometimes invited his classmates or our neighbors who had helped us get settled in town. I had to become the sweet hostess who cooked and served authentic Korean food. Cooking, baking, dish-washing, cleaning and grocery shopping were endless. I didn't even have time to hate the job because it was such a mind-emptying swim-or-drown challenge. It was an excruciating boot camp for homemaking.

"Cooking, baking, dish-washing, cleaning and grocery shopping were endless. I didn't even have time to hate the job because it was such a mind-emptying, swim-or-drown challenge. It was an excruciating boot camp for homemaking"

trash can after he went to school. It was his childish way of protesting when he didn't like the food she had packed for him. He was too young to understand that food and other resources were in short supply with many mouths to feed in the family and his eldest brother's business was not always booming. Her cooking was rejected and wasted that easily.

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KITCHEN

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I struggled for almost one year. While juggling and bumbling around in the kitchen, I slowly got used to fixing some food and started to put decent or even good food on the table. Sometimes, I had the luxury of spending some more time for presentation after already finishing the cooking process. I also found it deeply relaxing to bake cakes while listening to my favorite music, focusing on nothing but sifting, whipping or beating, and forgetting homesickness, boredom or mundane concerns as my cake's sweet aroma spread from the oven throughout the house. The kitchen became my meditation room, sanctuary and resting place.

Most of all, cooking and baking was sharing. It was a great way to spend happy times with good people: my husband, friends, and neighbors. I suddenly realized that for the first time in my whole life, I was putting in quality time and energy and truly sharing something with others. By offering my own food, the product of my blood, sweat and tears - as I often got cuts, sweaty working with the hot oven and tearful over cooking mishaps - I was reaching out to someone else and turning the time spent together into a fond memory. This is also what my mother has done for her whole adult life: readily sharing whatever she



had with the people around her and happily working for her loving family, not sacrificing or wasting her life. I never had once considered that my life was similar to my mother's. We are women who have lived different lives

in different worlds and different times, but when I cook and bake I transcend such differences and feel closer to her than ever. What irony that when we are an ocean apart I finally feel more strongly than ever that I am my mother's daughter.

I once brought up my new love for cooking and baking while I was talking with her over the phone. She

got very excited and cried, "Yes! Cooking is fun." It was a strange experience because I had never thought that my mother enjoyed cooking. However, I had not known her very well, after all, during all those years. As this passion for cooking has been inside me all the time waiting to be found, she might have been waiting to be found, too, by her own daughter.

SERVING AT THE CENTER

International Students Visit the Center for the Homeless



Volunteers prepare to serve lunch at the Center for the Homeless.

While most students were enjoying fall break, 11 international students spent October 19 volunteering at the South Bend Center for the Homeless.

"It was an eye-opening experience - not just to sort donations, but to learn about how the Center operates and how it helps homeless people to become independent again," said Katie Maxfield, one of the student volunteers.

Volunteers began the day by participating in an orientation, where they learned about homelessness in South Bend, toured the facility, and met several residents. Following the orientation, the students helped sort

donations and prepared and served lunch for the Center's 200 residents.

"I was surprised by all of the programs that were available to the guests and by how much the Center does to help them on their path to getting a job, finding their own apartment, etc.," Maxfield said.

Over the past 23 years, the South Bend Center for the homeless has served more than 45,000 men, women and children by linking them with the programs, agencies and people who can help them break the cycle of homelessness. Students who are interested in volunteering at the Center should contact Peter Lombardo, director for community involvement, at plombardo@cfh.net.

Words from the Wise:

Advice for new international students

The International Ambassadors, ISSA's student leadership team, congratulate new students on completing the first half of fall semester. Here are a few words of advice to help you get through the rest of the semester.

Freshmen from around the world,

Yes we know, it's getting cold. And yes, nobody told you about the 12:35 p.m. lunch rush at South Dining Hall. But we also know how many times you've thought how beautiful this campus is, you love many of your professors, and that you've been over-indulging in the cappuccino fro-yo.

Remember that there are so many people around campus who care about you and want to see you succeed while having the time of your life. You know where to find us to talk, to vent, to eat with, to make fun of, or to laugh with; we're here for you. We love seeing you around campus and love hearing about your semesters even more. So keep in touch, and flag us down if we see you but don't register you.

Lots of love, Nikita

"College life can be stressful, but don't forget to relax sometimes...Also, never be afraid to ask for help, because it's definitely there, you just have to go get it!" - Grace

Dear International Freshmen,

Hopefully the first half of the semester has been going well for all of you. Get ready for what's coming next: Midterms, break, papers, more homework, WINTER! But don't worry about it. We have all survived them before, and I'm sure you all will. However, if you find yourself too caught up with things, reach out to any of the IAs. If you wish to talk about school work or just procrastination-related talk, you can contact me by e-mail or find me at LaFun.

Best wishes, Ricardo Duarte Bodewig

International Students:

Now that you can (hopefully) pump your fists in rhythm during the Celtic chant and not miss a step in the Irish jig, I hope that you seek to immerse yourself in the community known as Notre Dame and discover the little joys of being a student here.

Lawrence Itela

Dear International Freshmen,



I hope now you've settled in, made some friends, and your classes are going (somewhat) smoothly. College life can be stressful, but don't forget to relax sometimes. Never underestimate the power of a good study break! Also, never be afraid to ask for help, because it's definitely there, you just have to go get it!

Love, Grace Meikle

Hello International Students!

I'm sure you've all adjusted wonderfully, but here are a few tips to remember for the upcoming winter:

1. It's OK if you take out your heavy coat in October...I did my freshman year. :)
2. Mix it up at either North or South Dining Hall. The more you mix it up, the more interesting the food will be!
3. Enjoy your classes as freshman. This is the one year you can take random classes that seem interesting to you that aren't necessarily part of your major.
4. Have fun!!

Hope you guys are having a great year and continue to do so!

Sincerely, Cynthia Salom

DIWALI

by Shailaja Kunda, India



Diwali is one of the most famous festivals that Indians celebrate, and globalization has definitely put the festival on the world map. In fact, the TV show “The Office” has one episode completely dedicated to the celebration! Some say that the Diwali celebration is similar to the American celebrations for Thanksgiving (food!), Christmas (lights and gifts!), and Independence Day (firecrackers!) combined. So why does an entire country and one billion people stop their daily routines to shop, eat for five days, and spend evenings lighting candles and bursting firecrackers?

Diwali is essentially a festival that celebrates the defeat of evil. The “good” and “evil” in this case are characters from the Hindu mythology *Ramayana*. The story goes that Lord Rama, a popular king who was living his life in exile due to an ill-fated power play, lost his wife to the clutches of the evil and powerful King Ravana. Lord Rama, with his army of half-monkeys, attacked King Ravana. Rama rescued his wife and returned undefeated to his kingdom after 14

years. The night of his return happened to be that of a new-moon. The people of the kingdom lit oil candles (Diya) all along the street to celebrate Rama’s victory, which gave the festival its name.

Diwali is celebrated according to the lunar calendar and wraps up month-long festivities and prayers. In some sects it is also the beginning of a new year. Prayers are offered to Lord Ganesha, “the remover of obstacles” and Goddess Lakshmi, “the goddess of wealth.” Prayers, good food, sweets, lit candles, and flowers form an important part of the offering.

I probably realized the deep-seated meaning of this celebration very late. For us kids, the festivities meant new clothes, gifts, and money from elders, unending good food, and experiments with new firecrackers. Diwali has now become a festival larger than the religion of Hinduism - it is a festival that joins communities together in harmony.

IMMIGRATION

Updates

OFF CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

The Immigration Services Office (ISO) reminds F-1 and J-1 international students that off campus employment is not permitted without specific authorization. This includes any work, translation, or service that is performed for a person or company where payment or compensation is not issued by the University of Notre Dame. Please remember that

this also includes the acceptance of honorarium payments. Unauthorized employment is a violation of immigration status and is an event the University must report to the U.S. government. Please contact the ISO before accepting any employment if you have questions about whether or not it is permitted under the regulations.

SNAPSHOTS

Family Friendship Program Kick-Off



On September 22, ISSA hosted the Family Friendship Program Kick-Off Party. The Family Friendship Program helps international students learn more about American culture by pairing them with local families. More than 120 people attended this year's Kick-Off Party to meet their new host family or international student.



MICHIGAN CITY FIELD TRIP

Nearly 50 international student joined ISSA for a field trip to Lighthouse Place Premium Outlets in Michigan City on September 25. New students stocked up on winter clothing and boots in preparation for their first South Bend winter.



Conversation Exchange Partners Kick-Off



On September 26, participants in the Conversation Exchange Partners Program met their conversation partners for the first time over dinner. The Conversation Exchange Partners Program is a joint program between ISSA and the Center for the Study of Languages & Cultures (CSLC) that pairs students in order to practice other languages.



MARSHMALLOW ROAST & HAYRIDE



More than 60 Family Friendship Program participants celebrated the start of fall with a trip to Bendix Woods County Park on October 1. Attendees roasted marshmallows and hot dogs, made s'mores, and went on a hayride.



INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK

November 14-18, 2011

International Student Etiquette Dinner

Monday, Nov. 14, 6:00-7:30pm
Oak Room, South Dining Hall

Attendees will learn proper dinner etiquette as well as how meal etiquette varies throughout the world. Dinner will be provided. Business attire requested. Cost: \$10. Sign up to participate in 105 Main Building by Thursday, Nov. 10. *Presented by ISSA and The Career Center.*

International Taste of South Bend

Wednesday, Nov. 16, 6:00-8:00pm
LaFortune Ballroom

Sample international cuisine provided by local ethnic restaurants. Free. *Presented by ISSA.*

Provenance (Theatre)

Nov. 16, 17, 18, 20
Philbin Studio Theatre, DPAC

Provenance is the latest play by University of Notre Dame Moreau Fellow Anne Garcia-Romero. Cost: \$5-10. For ticket information, visit <http://performingarts.nd.edu>. *Presented by the Department of FTT and DPAC.*

Latina Theater Today: New Voices Conference

Thursday, Nov 17, 1:00pm
McKenna Hall, Room 210

This one-day conference on contemporary Latina theater will feature two free panels of leading theater professionals and scholars exploring the current state of Latina theater. For a complete schedule, visit <http://ftt.nd.edu>. *Presented by the Department of FTT.*

Canadian Ball Hockey Tournament

Thursday, Nov. 17, 6:00-10:00pm
Rofls Floor Hockey Arena

Cost: \$2 per player or \$5 per team (up to six players). Prizes go to the top team! To sign up, contact lprzybyl@nd.edu by Nov. 14th. *Presented by CANDY.*

Gallery Talk by Artist Nandita Raman

Thursday, Nov. 17, 6:30pm
Snite Museum of Art Mestrovic Studio Gallery

Artist Nandita Raman will speak on her award-winning suite of 14 large-format black and white photographs of old Indian cinema halls. Free. *Presented by the Snite Museum of Art.*

Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives (Film)

Thursday, Nov. 17, 8:00pm, DPAC

This mystical Thai film won the Palme d'Or at the 2010 Cannes Film Festival. Cost: \$3-6. For ticket information, visit <http://performingarts.nd.edu>. *Presented by DPAC.*

The Kitchen (Encore broadcast of a live theatrical performance from London)

Friday, Nov. 18, 7:30pm, DPAC

Arnold Wesker's extraordinary play about a London restaurant premiered at the Royal Court in 1959 and has since been performed in more than 30 countries. Cost: \$16-20. For ticket info, visit <http://performingarts.nd.edu>. *Presented by DPAC.*

Ten Thousand Villages Sale

Nov. 14-18, 10:00am-6:00pm
Hesburgh Library Atrium

The fair trade retailer Ten Thousand Villages will return to campus to host an annual sale of international handicrafts. *Presented by ISSA and Ten Thousand Villages.*

American Red Cross Refugee Resettlement Program Supply Drive

Nov. 14-18

Please join ISSA and Notre Dame International to support local refugees by donating school supplies, toys, and toiletries. Donation collection boxes will be available in 105 Main Building from November 14-18, and at the International Taste of South Bend on November 16. *Presented by ISSA and Notre Dame International.*



For more information, visit <http://issa.nd.edu>.

Co-sponsors: Canadian Association of Notre Dame Youths (CANDY), The Career Center, DeBartolo Performing Arts Center (DPAC), Department of Film, Television and Theatre (FTT), Hesburgh Library, Multicultural Student Programs & Services (MSPS), Notre Dame International, Snite Museum of Art, and Ten Thousand Villages