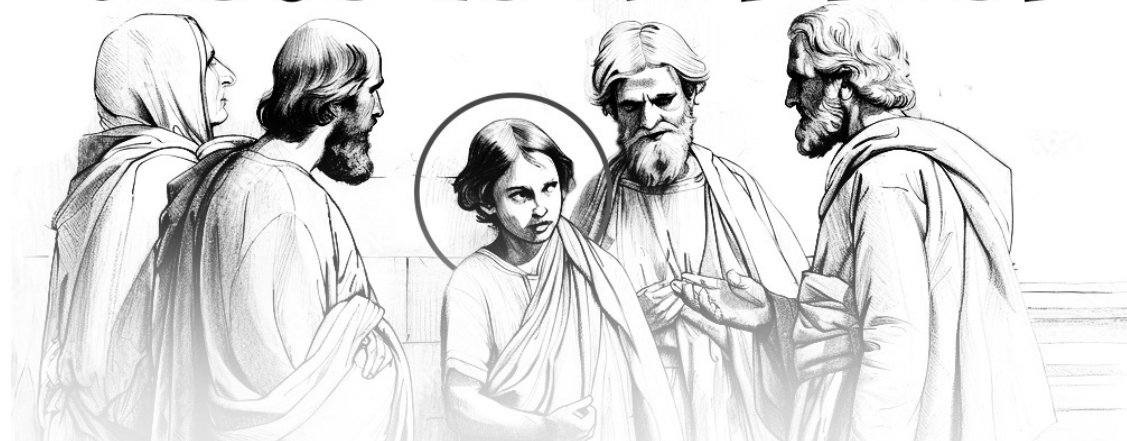


# JESUS IS NOT LOST



The feast of the Santo Niño, the Holy Child Jesus, is an extension of the Christmas mystery into Ordinary Time. This Filipino feast extends the celebration of Jesus' coming and birth to his growth and maturity as a child in the family of Mary and Joseph. Today's Gospel gives us the story of the finding of the boy Jesus in the temple. We often meditate on this story whenever we pray the rosary. It is identified as the fifth joyful mystery, but it narrates a story that is filled with grief, confusion, and great anxiety. It took Mary and Joseph several days before they finally found Jesus. They thought Jesus was lost, and perhaps due to being a child his identity was obscured to his parents. "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" (Lk 2:49). Jesus was however not lost; young though he was, he was already aware of his mission and was constantly attuned to his Father. He was occupied by the things that pertained

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**Fr. Marvin Cruz**

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to his Father as he listened, asked questions, learned from and responded to the teachers with whom he spoke.

Being lost is common these days when everyone and everything is supposed to "have a truth" and we can barely keep up with the information—the true, the deceptive, and the outright false—that pops up every now and then in the media. The future can appear bleak, dark, and difficult to bear. The First Reading recalls the Lord's message of hope announced by the prophet Isaiah: "A child is born to us, a son is given us" (Is 9:6). His presence is light that dispels uncertainty and darkness, bringing joy to the land of gloom. This child is Jesus. His youth is like a bud, a promise of the flowering of salvation; it is a small light that projects hope amidst a dark future. In his childhood we already see the fulfillment of God's promise of blessing

which he had planned even "before the foundation of the world" (Eph 1:4) and of the adoption he has destined for us (Eph 1:5). The birth and childhood of Jesus were already a glimpse into the fulfillment of the promise—a glimmer of hope that leads all who behold him.

We are pilgrims here on earth—or as this Jubilee year calls us, "pilgrims of hope"—on our way to our true home in heaven. As pilgrims we are lost on our own, and it is only by means of the light of Jesus that we find our way to the Father. Joseph and Mary began their trip home (Lk 2:43) but in looking for the child Jesus they were led back to Jerusalem; in finding him they in turn were directed to the Father. This can be said as the first among the teachings of Jesus. His childhood resembles God's hidden plan that we could not understand, but we can only recognize if we have faith. With hope in the realization of God's plan, we tread our earthly pilgrimage.

## THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

**Entrance Antiphon** (Is 9:6)  
*(Recited when there is no opening song)*

**A child is born for us, a son given to us; dominion is laid on his shoulder, and he shall be called Wonderful-Counselor.**

**Greeting**  
*(The sign of the cross is made here.)*

**P**—The Lord be with you.  
**All**—And with your spirit.

**Introduction**  
*(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly)*

**P**—The devotion to the Holy Child is the oldest and one of the most popular in the Philippines, and the Holy See has granted us special permission to celebrate the Feast of the Sto. Niño every third Sunday of January. The feast invites us to reflect on the mystery of childhood. This means having an open and trusting disposition to accept the Lord's gifts with gratitude, while seeing ourselves as humble stewards who serve the Lord in the least of our brothers and sisters.

### Penitential Act

**P**—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries. *(Pause)*

**All**—**I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, *(strike your breast)* through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.**

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

**All**—Amen.

**P**—Lord, have mercy.

**All**—Lord, have mercy.

**P**—Christ, have mercy.

**All**—Christ, have mercy.

**P**—Lord, have mercy.  
**All**—Lord, have mercy.

### Gloria

**Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

### Collect

**P**—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Almighty God, your only Son, begotten from all ages, humbled himself as a child in Nazareth and became subject to Mary and Joseph. Grant that we may learn from his example to embrace your will in all things and, holding fast to the dignity of all, serve our lowly brothers and sisters with open hands and gentle heart.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

**All**—Amen.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD



**First Reading** (Is 9:1–6) *(Sit)*

*Isaiah prophesies that through the child who shall be called Prince of Peace, God will grant peace and rejoicing to his people.*

**A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah**

THE PEOPLE who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light

has shone. You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing, as they rejoice before you as at the harvest, as people make merry when dividing spoils.

For the yoke that burdened them, the pole on their shoulder, and the rod of their taskmaster you have smashed, as on the day of Midian. For every boot that tramped in battle, every cloak rolled in blood, will be burned as fuel for flames.

For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace. His dominion is vast and forever peaceful, from David's throne, and over his kingdom, which he confirms and sustains by judgment and justice, both now and forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!

—The word of the Lord.

**All**—Thanks be to God.

### Responsorial Psalm (Ps 98)

**R**—The Lord is king; let the many isles be glad.

Fr. Dindo Purto, SSP

The Lord is king;  
let the ma-ny isles be glad.

1. Sing to the LORD a new song,/ for he has done wondrous deeds;/ his right hand has won victory for him,/ his holy arm. **(R)**

2. The LORD has made his salvation known:/ in the sight of the nations he has revealed his justice./ He has remembered his kindness and his faithfulness/ toward the house of Israel. **(R)**

3. All the ends of the earth have seen/ the salvation by our God./ Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands;/ break into song; sing praise. **(R)**

4. Sing praise to the LORD with the harp,/ with the harp and melodious song./With trumpets and the sound of the horn/ sing joyfully before the King, the LORD. (R)

**Second Reading**  
(Eph 1:3–6, 15–18)

*God loves us and has made us his adopted children in Christ. Paul reminds us to live up to our dignity by leading a holy and blameless life.*

**A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens, as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before him. In love he destined us for adoption to himself through Jesus Christ, in accord with the favor of his will, for the praise of the glory of his grace that he granted us in the beloved.

Therefore, I, too, hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and of your love for all the holy ones, do not cease giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a Spirit of wisdom and revelation resulting in knowledge of him. May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones.

—The word of the Lord.  
**All —Thanks be to God.**

**Alleluia** (Jn 1:14, 12) (*Stand*)

**All—Alleluia, alleluia. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. Alleluia, alleluia.**

**Gospel** (Lk 2:41–52)

**P**—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

**All—Glory to you, O Lord.**

EACHYEAR Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom.

After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him.

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers.

When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety."

And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them.

He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favor before God and man.

—The Gospel of the Lord.

**All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Homily** (*Sit*)

**Profession of Faith** (*Stand*)

**All—I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.**

**I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;**

**through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (at the words that follow, up to and including and became man, all bow) and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.**

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

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

**Prayer of the Faithful**

**P**—On this Feast of the Sto. Niño, let us pray to the Father to make us worthy of being his beloved children. Let us remember in a special way the children of this nation and around the world. Let us pray:

**R—Hear the prayers of your children, Lord.**

**C**—For the Church: may she never lose the spirit of a child and so live with the spirit of friendship, freedom, and openness. We pray: (R)

**C**—For those who hold public office: may they care for all children, show them the beauty of life, and guide them to the respect of laws. We pray: (R)

**C**—For all children of God: may they grow in faith, charity, and fear of the Lord so that the entirety of their lives may be an endless praise to the Father. We pray: (R)

**C**—For all of us: may our celebration of the Feast of the Sto. Niño be marked not only by

cultural and religious festivities but also by a deepening of faith in Christ who is always attuned to the will of the Father. We pray: (R)

C—For all the faithful departed: may the Lord grant them perpetual light and peace. We pray: (R)

C—Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (*pause*). We pray: (R)

P—Father, hear the prayers of your children who trust in you. May your Word and the Eucharist be our support and our guide. Give us a childlike disposition, for your kingdom belongs to little children.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST



### Presentation of the Gifts

(*Stand*)

P—Pray, brethren...

All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

### Prayer over the Offerings

P—God our Creator, we offer the gifts of bread and wine to recall the childhood of your only Son. Let our offering become the sacrifice of him who brought forgiveness and peace to the world.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

### Preface II of the Nativity of the Lord

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

P—Lift up your hearts.

All—We lift them up to the Lord.

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

All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

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For on the feast of this awe-filled mystery, though invisible in his own divine nature, he has appeared visibly in ours; and begotten before all ages, he has begun to exist in time; so that, raising up in himself all that was cast down, he might restore unity to all creation and call straying humanity back to the heavenly Kingdom.

And so, with all the Angels, we praise you, as in joyful celebration we acclaim:

All—Holy, Holy, Holy...(Kneel)

### Acclamation (*Stand*)

All—We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

## THE COMMUNION RITE

### The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...

P—Deliver us, Lord...

All—For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.

### Invitation to Peace

### Invitation to Communion

(*Kneel*)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

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

### Communion Antiphon

(Cf. Lk 2:51)

He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to Mary and Joseph.

### Prayer after Communion

(*Stand*)

P—Let us pray. (*Pause*)

Loving Father, you have nourished us at the banquet in honor of the Child born of the Virgin. We pray that we may advance in wisdom and grow daily in faith and works of love, so that we may find favor in your sight.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

## THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

### Solemn Blessing

P—May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, (†) and the Holy Spirit.

All—Amen.

### Dismissal

P—Go in peace.

All—Thanks be to God.