



## **Archdiocese of Toronto to hold Inaugural Mass for the 500<sup>th</sup> Year of Christianity in the Philippines**

The Archdiocese of Toronto, in unity with the Filipino faith community, will hold a virtual Inaugural Mass to mark the 500th year anniversary of Christianity in the Philippines.

The Eucharistic Celebration will air online from Our Lady of the Assumption Parish on Tuesday, March 16 at 11:00 am, via [www.ph500toronto.com](http://www.ph500toronto.com); [www.facebook.com/500yocTO](https://www.facebook.com/500yocTO) and [YouTube: Gifted to Give – Toronto 2021](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gifted-to-Give-Toronto-2021). The parish, located near Toronto’s “Little Manila”, has a large Filipino congregation coming from all over the GTA. It is also home to the Filipino Catholic mission of the diocese.

Fr. Lorenzo Salandanan, Pastor of the parish, and Chair of the Organizing Committee for the diocese’s celebration of the Quincentennial event, will preside over the Inaugural Mass. Concelebrants will be Fr. Ben Ebcas, Pastor of St. Therese’s Parish, and Msgr. Edgardo Pan, Pastor of St. Rose Lima Parish. Both parishes, located in Scarborough, also host a significant number of Filipino parishioners.

His Eminence, Cardinal Thomas Collins and Archbishop Romulo Valles, President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, will deliver pre-recorded inspirational remarks.

It was in March 16, 1521 when Christianity first came to the Philippines and from then on, spread throughout the archipelago, making it the only predominantly Catholic nation in Asia. In the past 500 years, Filipinos shared fervently in the good news of evangelization. Filipino Catholics make their faith communities stronger and vibrant places through their joyful willingness to serve.

Fr. Salandanan encourages the Filipino faithful in the diocese to support the activities planned for the celebration. Following the multi-parish Simbang Gabi last Christmas and the Family Day talk done by Fr. Carlos Macatangga, SVD in February, other Filipino clergy and religious are also scheduled to give several talks for the Youth, for Families and for Holy Week. Renowned priest, Fr. Jerry Orbos, SVD, will celebrate the Easter Mass and deliver an inspirational message of hope.

For more details, please visit [www.ph500toronto.com](http://www.ph500toronto.com) or email [ph500@archtoronto.org](mailto:ph500@archtoronto.org).

*For questions and information, please contact the “PH500 Celebration Toronto” Organizing Committee:*

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