

**“We can only see
more clearly
through eyes washed
by tears.”**

Message to the Filipino faithful
on the passing of Pope Francis
from the Catholic Bishops'
Conference of the Philippines
(CBCP)

04/22/2025

April 21, 2025

Manila, Philippines

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

With deep sorrow, yet with profound gratitude, we mourn the passing of our beloved Holy Father, Pope Francis. His final words to his beloved Church echoed the joy of Easter. He said, “Today at last, the singing of the ‘alleluia’ is heard once more in the Church, passing from mouth to mouth, from heart to heart, and this makes the people of God throughout the world shed tears of joy.” It is okay to shed tears of sorrow during this joyful Easter Octave. After all, it was he who reminded us that “we can only see more clearly through eyes washed by tears.”

He was a shepherd who walked with his people, often choosing the dusty road toward the peripheries rather than the comfort of the center. Through *Evangelii Gaudium* and *Fratelli Tutti*, he reminded us that the heart of the Gospel beats most

strongly where pain, poverty, and exclusion dwell. He invited us to be a listening Church—one that opens its ears to the cries of the people and its heart to the stirrings of the Spirit.

Through his vision of synodality, Pope Francis challenged us to rediscover the Church not as a fortress, but as a field hospital—welcoming, healing, and journeying together. With *Laudato Si'* and *Laudate Deum*, he taught us to see the earth as our common home, entrusted to our care, especially for the sake of the generations to come. And with his characteristic wit and warmth, he once called our Overseas Filipino migrant workers “*contrabandistas de la fe*”—smugglers of the faith—reminding us that the witness of simple, faithful lives can cross borders and touch hearts where formal missionaries cannot go.

Pope Francis has now returned to the Father, but his legacy as a supreme pontiff—that is, as bridge-builder—will never be forgotten by the Church. Let us pray for the repose of his soul and commit ourselves to carrying forward his call: to grow into a Missionary Synodal Church—one that goes forth, listens deeply, walks humbly with others, and proclaims God's mercy with joy.

Let us pray:

O God of mercy and compassion, we entrust to You our beloved Holy Father, Pope Francis, whom You have called from this life to Yourself. Grateful for his tireless witness to the Gospel, his courage in proclaiming mercy, and his love for the poor and for the earth, we now commend his soul to Your eternal embrace. Grant him the reward of faithful service: the joy of seeing You face to face. May he

rest in the peace of Christ, whom he served with humility and hope. Amen.

+Pablo Virgilio Cardinal David

Bishop of Kalookan

CBCP President

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