

B. The 25th Anniversary Celebration

Why is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the La Union Consecration of the Philippines to God Our Father important? Celebrating helps us remember God's goodness and faithfulness. We are humbled and grateful for the countless blessings, and to declare that good news to God and to others. This is the reason why in spite of the internal and external constraints, we pushed through in the construction of the chapel the putting up of the columns; the laying of the stairways going up the tower based on Jacob's Ladder; the installation of the three water tanks; and the repainting of the Nuestra Senora de la Luz and putting up of water faucets for future water fonts.

We celebrated the Holy Mass in the chapel with the big Image of the Crucified Christ. In 1997, it was then designated as the year of Jesus Christ. Blessed are you, Father, who, in your infinite love, gave us your only Begotten Son. When the statue of God the Father was being carved in Manila, the Crucified Christ statue was in the sculptor shop watching the God the Father. Coincidentally, the sculptor offered to me (Luz), because the former customer failed to claim. By power of the Holy Spirit. He became incarnate as in 1998, was the year of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person in the Triangle. The image at the façade of the chapel was bought online. Thus, we give honor and praise to the Trinitarian God.

As Mary is the Mother of Christ, and Christ is head of the Church, then Mary is the Mother of the Church. Mary is also seen as the model of the Church, which exemplifies the mission of the Church in all of her actions. At *Bantay(Hill)*, we honor Mary in one of her titles as Nuestra Senora de la Luz, Our Lady of Light. I, (Luz) saw her image at Barcelona, Spain and Mexico. In the Philippines, Nuestra Senora de la Luz image are seen in Cainta, Rizal and Loon, Bohol.

In the Catholic Church, a bishop is an ordained minister who holds the fullness of the sacrament of holy orders and is responsible for teaching doctrine, governing Catholics in his jurisdiction, sanctifying the world and representing the Church. Catholics trace the origins of the office of bishop to the apostles, who it is believed was endowed with a special charism and office by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Catholics believe this special charism and office has been transmitted through an unbroken succession of bishops by the laying on of hands in the sacrament of Holy Order.

The Story of the God the Father Tower

We Twins could memorize this prayer _ Lord, may everything we do begin with your inspiration, continue with your help and reach perfection under your guidance. We pray it anytime of the day. Through Mary, we remain strong in answering His call. Unlike in the Story of Bernadette, who was instructed to, “Go, drink at the spring and wash in it,” we received a call from God to, “Continue with my God the Father Tower, making it worthy for the 25th Anniversary celebration of the La Union Consecration of the Philippines to God Our Father.

Conceptualized by Architect Gerardo Ocampo, the God the Father Tower describes as “an equilateral triangle with its major axis pointing at approximately 80 degrees northwest to the Holy City of Jerusalem from Luzon, its two sides facing the vastness of the ocean and overlooking San Fernando Bay. Its design is concentrated on the Arabic number three which signifies the Holy Trinity. It has three stages, each stage diminishing in height in a regular pattern following a three degree tapering of the columns from the vertical. It is 12 meters from the base to the top deck and this 12 meters height represents the 12 original tribes of Israel. It can be reached by a twin semi-circular stairs. A special feature of the design is an incorporation of three level water tanks suspended from beams in the three stages, to serve as pendulums when earthquake occurs.

On the 25th anniversary many people responded to our invitation . The celebration went as scheduled with the Holy Mass concelebrated by two bishops, all the guests, friends, the OCDS family, the Sea and Sky College students and faculty present, sans our loved ones to be seen around. With God’s call, difficulties and oppositions were encountered, since not everyone understand our actions and motivations. We find joy in following God, our Creator to continue our mission.

The Pendulum Damper

A pendulum damper is a device used in structures to absorb energy and dampen vibrations. It consists of a heavy mass suspended from a spring. allowing it to oscillate back and forth. When subjected to external forces, the pendulum swings, dissipating the energy and preventing excessive movement of the structure.

Figuratively the pendulum damper signifies the pendulum of faith. It is a critical element to keep one's foundation from the relentless forces of nature.

In many ways, our faith is akin to a pendulum damper for our lives. It provides a stabilizing force, anchoring us amidst the storms of life. Just as the pendulum absorbs the energy of vibrations, our faith absorbs the shocks and stresses we encounter.

When faced with challenges, doubts, or uncertainties, our faith can swing back and forth. We may question our beliefs, grapple with our fears, or feel disconnected from a higher power. But like the pendulum, our faith can find its equilibrium, returning us to a place of centeredness and strength.

Jacob's Ladder

In this dream, Jacob envisions a ladder, or stairway, that reaches from Earth to Heaven. Angels are seen ascending and descending on the ladder. He is so convinced of the holiness of the place where the Lord visited him that he decides to rename it. Previously called Luz, the place will now be known as Bethel. The word Bethel means "House of God."

The Columns

The Roman columns played an important role in ancient architecture and had both structural and aesthetic purposes. They supported buildings while adding grandeur and elegance to public spaces. With styles such as Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian, Roman columns continue to be used as a tribute to classical design..

The Chapel

Coincidentally, the sculptor offered to Twin Luz the image of the Crucified Christ because the former customer failed to claim.

The Stained glass of the visionaries was made by Rene Gooc of REGO STAINED GLASS from Pangasinan. The design of Our Lady of Fatima and the three visionaries _ an original stained glass panel measuring 3 ft. x 5.5 ft.

The Altar table is made of marble from Romblon measuring 118" x 39" by Alma Gurion of Aeg Poolbuilders. Both the stained glass and the altar table were blessed on September 26, 2024, Feasts of Saints Cosmas and Damian, patron saint of twins.

The Holy Mass

First Reading: Ephesians 1: 15-23

Gospel Luke: 12: 8-12

During the homily of Bishop Daniel O. Presto, D.D. he said that sin is the obstruction to communion with God and with one another. In the beginning God plans that human beings be in communion with God and with one another. But sin is the separation of God with man and man from his

fellowmen. That is why St. Paul in his letter to Romans said: Ask the Father to open your hearts and to enlighten your innermost vision. Who can separate us from the love of God. No one can separate us from the love of the Father if we open our hearts “Shall trials, temptations, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” Nothing, because Christ is alive and is still loving us now. Let us listen to the call of St. Paul, we open our innermost thoughts to the knowledge of God and love God through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

In preparation for Jubilee Year 2025, it is our prayer that we always pray so we will be closer to God and one another. Now is the month of the Rosary and as the late Fr. Patrick Peyton said “the family that prays together stays together.” “The community that prays together, stays together.” “There is no big problem to a prayerful person.” God the Father will help us overcome temptations, hardships, trials, loneliness, sickness. We ask the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our lives for alone we can do nothing, but with God we can do everything for nothing is impossible with God. To accompany others to pray. As we like to remember the consecration of our province La Union to God our Father, let us also pray for those whose lives have been filled with sins, whose lives have been out of tract with God to change their lives. Just like St. Monica’s prayers for her son Augustine and husband Patricuis, God heard her prayers and they were baptized as Christians. This Sunday is World Mission Sunday. Praying for others is already a mission.



Bishop Daniel Presto, D.D. Diocese of San Fernando de La Union

The Message

First of all my brothers and sisters is CONGRATULATIONS that I am invited for the anniversary of your Consecration _ 25 years consecration to God the Father. Let us clap for the abundant love of the Father.

Secondly, I was born at Santa, Ilocos Sur near the sea. My father was a fisherman. There was one early morning, he brought me to get fish at the sea. The sea was calm but when we returned home nearly night, the sea waves was big and windy. The small boat of my father could not reach the shore at once. So he got the anchor and went out of the boat.

What I can not forget about my father, when he sees a big wave coming, he will raise me up. When the wave gets small, he will bring me down. When he sees a big wave again, he will bring me up. We reach the shore not even my feet getting wet. And that's I remember the love of my father.

This image of my father was the start of the great love of God to me. As I look back, it is no longer the hand of my father who is holding me as I face the storms of life, but that of God.

Brothers and sisters, we have reached this 25 years of Consecration because of the great love of God to you. So we have to be grateful. And, maybe the call of this is celebration, it is not only through prayers but to live it up. We have to share the blessings of God through our love for each other. Prayer for the year of hope, through the light of our love for each other it will bring a big hope especially to those who are in need.

May the light of your love sharing the Father's love to everyone be a hope for others. This is what Pope Francis calls the synodal church. Oneness, as a way of the Church, we hold each other towards the kingdom of God. Happy Celebration, Congratulations again, and may the love of the Father shine by the love you have for one another. And our mission tomorrow, World Mission Sunday, and especially to the lost, to the last and to the least brothers and sisters.



Bishop Leopoldo Jaucian, SVD, D.D.
Diocese of Abra

The Consecration Prayer to God the Father of All Mankind

My dearest Father please accept this offering of myself— My Body, Mind and Soul: I PRAISE You for Your Creation—All Your Works and Wonders. I THANK You for giving me life and for all that You have done for me. I OFFER up to You all that You have so generously given me. I am sincerely SORRY for not knowing, loving, serving and honoring You as I should. I embrace my INHERITANCE as Your child, both the joy and the responsibilities. I give You my “YES” so that I may be an instrument of Your Will. I pledge my FIDELITY and I ask for the grace of steadfastness and perseverance in my faith.

Most loving, caring and merciful of Fathers, in Your Divine Presence, I sincerely proclaim my love for You; I give myself and my family to You; and I solemnly CONSECRATE myself (and my family) to You—now and forever.

Dearest Father, as Your child, I ask— that You send Mary to guide me to Jesus, and that Jesus sends me the Holy Spirit so that they may all bring me to You. That You dwell with me and in me —a living temple prepared by Mary, dedicated to Jesus, and purified by Your Holy Spirit. And may I always be with You and in You. That you permit, as Your child , to be Your true and intimate friend — one who loves You above all things. And that You come for me when I die, to bring me home to You.

I further ask You, Father, for the sake of all mankind:

To have mercy on all Your children —past, present and future. To bring peace to the world and to gather all Your children to Yourself. And that Your Kingdom comes and Your Will is done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

The Toast

Today, we are celebrating the 25th anniversary of the La Union Consecration of the Philippines to God the Father. This devotion started 25 years ago by the Ortega Twins, Luz and Nila is a very special movement for La Union commitment to the transformation of the Philippines for the world. This completion of the shrine made the province now a pilgrimage destination and San Fernando as God's City. With this mission of the Ortega Twins Luz and Nila, today we become witnesses to the God the Father Tower where his colossal image is permanently shrined. This is a reawakening of our devotion to God the Father, a particular celebration feast for Him. Here, in this hallowed hill, it is called Bantay ni Ama ken Maria, we also see the shrine of the Blessed Mother with her title Nuestra Senora de la Luz, Our Lady of Light. We are grateful to all present this morning for the silver anniversary celebration of the La Union Consecration of the

Philippines to God the Father. Hence, join me to give a happy loud cheers to all of us present here, to the unwavering faith and love of the Ortega twins, cheers to Luz and Nila, cheers to our beloved Bishop of La Union, Most Rev. Daniel O. Presto, and Bishop of the diocese of Abra, Most Rev. Leopoldo C. Jaucian, to the Sea and Sky College students, to all the craftsmen and laborers who worked hard for the completions, Cheers to all of you who are here this morning. Good morning to everyone.

The Ortega Twins' Message

Pope John Paul II who became a Saint on April 27, 2014 was instrumental in letting us twins understand the Trinitarian God. Each Person of the Trinity is fully and equally God, yet they fulfill different roles, highlighting the difference in their functions within the Godhead. The Father initiates creation, who is on top at the Tower.

I would like to compare the Dead sea and the sea of Galilee. Both the Dead sea and sea of Galilee receive their water from river Jordan, and yet, different. Why? The water from river Jordan simply passes through the sea of Galilee in, and out, that keeps the sea healthy with plants and fish. The Dead sea high in salt content and far below the mean sea level, has no outlet. It takes water from the River Jordan and holds it. It does not give. Result? No life at all_ No plants and fish.

Lessons: Life is not just about getting. It's about giving. God created us because He chose to love us. Thus, we owe everything to Him that we love and praise Him. I had the huge statue of God the Father in 1999, the year of God the Father to show my great love to Him. From stampita of the Holy Trinity. Now, 25 years later, we listened to the promptings of the Holy Spirit to transform the Bantay ni Ama ken Maria as a pilgrim site, in keeping to do our baptismal promise to Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed.

EPILOGUE

We, Ortega Twins believe the truthfulness of this saying: "if God wills it, it will happen. If He did not, nothing I do will bring it to pass."

During our Fatima 100 Pilgrimage, it was evident that twin Luz cannot expect financial support from her family. I have to solve the problem of "show money" to get travel visas. A proof that God approves of our travel/pilgrimage was the timely sale of our lot along the national highway at Sto. Domingo, Ilocos Sur. A bank statement was issued that I used for my "show money".

One day Luz asked me, "Can we borrow from the Nueva Segovia Consortium of Cooperatives (NSCC)?" The NSCC granted Twin Luz One Million Pesos and half Million for me. What could be the reason why God gave us what we asked for? St. Teresa of Avila said: "You pay God a compliment by asking great things of Him." Jubilee 2000: a year of the Lord's favor.

Pilgrimage had brought us to Nazareth, where Jesus was conceived of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit, and reached Jerusalem, where he "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried". Joining a pilgrimage on Jubilee 2000 allowed us Twins to experience immense joy setting foot where Jesus spent His days in fellowship with His Apostles.

This year on Christmas Eve, 2024, Pope Francis, like Pope John Paul II in 1999, will open the Holy Door to begin a Jubilee Year in 2025. It will be an ordinary holy year - in accordance with the tradition of the Church to celebrate such a year every 25 years, to give every generation a chance to experience that special time of grace and mercy in their life. Pope Francis is calling on Catholics to renew their hope in Christ, and to rediscover the importance of prayer.

It gives us peace and hope in knowing whatever happens in any circumstance, all we have to do is live in submission to God, be thankful and God will work the rest. Obedience is our responsibility, results come from the Lord, Our God. Matthew 7:24-27 contains Jesus' famous illustration contrasting two foundations for life. One is lived according to His teaching, the other is not. Foundations matter, both in construction and in the way a person views the world. Those who follow Jesus' teaching are like a wise man who built a house on a rock.

We would like to follow the advice of Mother Angelica, the foundress of EWTN who had said, "We have lost the theology of risk. There is an inner confidence that we've lost. We've lost zeal. We've lost guts. Unless you are willing to do the ridiculous, God will not do the miraculous." Thus, we the gutsy Ortega Twins pray:

May our good Lord glorify Sr. Lucia through the intercession of Mary and Jesus because she lived a life of heroic virtue and spread the message of Fatima. Amen.