

## DRAFT – PRESS RELEASE

### PH EMBASSY CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS SPIRIT THROUGH MASS IN KENYA



*(CDA, a.i. Maria Rosanna Josue, Fr. Philip Lazatin (center), Vice Consul Louie Dane Merced (third from right), and some members of the Filipino Community in Kenya posed for a photo after the Mass)*

**Nairobi** – The Philippine Embassy in Nairobi, led by Chargé d'affaires, *ad interim* Maria Rosanna O. Josue, attended Mass with the Filipino Community in Kenya on 19 December 2021 at the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Holy Mother of God (SFIC) in Langata, Nairobi.

The Mass, which was organized by the Filipino religious and lay leaders in Kenya, was celebrated by Fr. Philip Lazatin, SDP, and assisted by Rev. John Carl Gene Volante, FDP.

In his homily, Fr. Lazatin talked about the three comings of the Lord – the past, the present, and the future.

“The past is historical. The future is the coming of Jesus in glory, and the present is the coming of Jesus in our hearts. The invitation is for us to make each time an encounter with Jesus,” said Fr. Lazatin.

The Mass was also offered for those who were severely affected by Super Typhoon *Odette* which struck the Philippines, particularly the Visayas region, last week.

After the Mass, CDA Josue was asked to deliver a short message for the Filipino Community. “It’s more fun in the Philippines, but since we are currently not there, it could be it’s more fun in Kenya. While we are away from our loved ones back home, at least we are family here in Kenya and family takes care of each other,” she said.

CDA Josue also reminded our *kababayans* to strictly observe preventive measures against COVID-19 such as proper wearing of face masks, hand washing and sanitizing, and maintaining social distancing.



(CDA, a.i. Josue delivering her remarks before the Filipino Community)

Also in attendance were Third Secretary and Vice Consul Louie Dane C. Merced and Acting Cultural Officer Sherlyn M. Roxas.

The mass was followed by a socially distanced lunch reception featuring Filipino cuisines and delicacies such as *pork adobo*, *pinakbet*, *molo*, and *maja blanca*. The attendees were also serenaded by the religious sisters with Christmas carols.

Prior to this physical gathering, the Embassy hosted an online thanksgiving mass celebration in the spirit of Christmas which was officiated by Rev. Fr. Deem Virtudazo, PSDP, on 14 December 2021. It was livestreamed through the Embassy’s official Facebook page and virtually attended by the Filipino Communities in Kenya and other East African countries under the Embassy’s jurisdiction, including, among others, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda.



*(Fr. Deem Virtudazo during the online Mass celebration at the Embassy)*

**END.**