

Feast of the Lord The Giver of Life - All Life Is Sacred - January 19, 2025  
Homily by Bp. Romie- Jun Peñalosa

Viva. Mahina. Hindi pa yata kayo kumakain. Viva. That is a shout of praise. Viva means to live, to have life.

Okay? And today we celebrate the sanctity of human life. Yan ang celebration natin.

Every third Sunday of January, we come together to celebrate the life that God has given to us.

And, you know, this candle is very important to us in the CEC because this candle represents the life of the little children.

Yung mga batang na-abort na matay. But not just the little children who have been aborted, I think also of the children who have died dahil gyera ng gyera ang mundo.

Because of the wars that is going on, ang daming binabalita na nasira ang building, nasira ang hospital, pero hindi naman namin mention dun maraming batang na mamatay araw-araw sa gyera.

And so, our denomination, our communion, the CEC, we have this candle. Hindi nyo makikita to sa Roman Catholic Church.

You will not find this in an Anglican Church. You will not find this in an Orthodox Church.

It's only in the CEC that we have this little candle. Nakalagay yan tabi ng altar candle, especially the gospel side of the altar candle. Dito nakalagay yan.

And this reminds us as a people that even though these children are not known, hindi sila kilala, and these children, they die every day, we believe that the Father knows them very well. Kilala sila ng Diyos.

And so, we light this candle, every Eucharistic celebration we have, we light this candle as an expression of our faith that even though they are forgotten, they are not known,

God knows them, and because God knows them, we remember them. Amen?

We remember them. We wear our liturgical color that we use today is red. Anong kulay yung red? What does it signify?

Okay. Kulay, dugo, blood. Life is in the blood, sinabi sa Old Testament.

And so, even though this life, it seems like they're wasted, they're thrown away, but today we remember, it's not wasted. It has meaning to God.

And the life of these children who have died in abortion clinics, who died in the wars and everything, their blood cries out to their Father.

And the Father hears them, even today. And so, we wear this in remembrance of them.

We consider them as martyrs, witnesses, witnesses, that in this life, in this world, when we live out the life that God has given to us, we will always be opposed, we will always be persecuted.

In this world, sabi nga ni Jesus Christ, you are in this world, even though you are not of this world anymore. That will be part of it.

Our struggle against evil, unrighteousness, and wickedness, meron pong mga casualties yan.

It's always the innocent who suffers. And today, we remember them, we commemorate them, we value the life that was shed.

We value the life that has been given to them.

So I don't know if this is permitted, but I would like to put it here for a while.

Kahit itong araw lang, lalagay natin dyan sa kitna, as we remember the life of these children.

This year, we are going to go out into mission, full blast.

If the church is not involved in mission, it is not the church. Amen?

Are we the church? We are. Amen?

But we have to go into mission, because that is what church is.

A church who just sits down and sings songs and just worship every Sunday, but has no heart and burden for the people who have not known Christ yet, is not the church.

When Jesus ascended into heaven, he did not say to his apostles,

Okay, I'm leaving you now. Build yourself churches and just come and sing, Hallelujah.

Magtipon lang kayo at magkantahan kayo dyan. Magworship. He didn't say that. Just before he ascended to heaven, very important words. Sabi ni Jesus, you go into the world. You go into the world and make disciples of all nations, teaching them everything that I commanded you. Preach the gospel. That is the church. The mission of the church is not the church. The mission of the church is the world. So this year, 2025, we are going to be very busy, because we are going to go out into the world. Amen? We will go out into the world. There are people who can never come to Christ. They will never come to church. That's why we need to bring Christ to them. Tayo mismo ang dadala kay Christo sa kanila. Pupuntahan natin sila. But for us to be able to do that, if we are going to do that as a people, we have to be very careful when we go out in mission. Kasi sabi nga ni Lord, I am sending you a sheep among wolves. Amen? We will be vulnerable to the world. May mga risk po yan. Si Jesus, nung pumunta sa mundo, pinako siya sa cross eh. So may idea na kayo kung anong mangyayari. When you go out and bring the gospel to the world, may idea na tayo kung anong nangyayari. Hindi naman tayong lubos-lubos tanggapin. Tinatanggap tayo ng mga taong hinahanap din ng Diyos. But for the rest, we will be persecuted. We know that. That is the risk that we have. But nevertheless, if we are followers of Christ, if we are the church that God wants us to be, then we have to go into the mission. We go out as sheep among wolves. Yan ang sinasabi ni Lord. Akala mong ikaw yung savior ng mundo, pero hindi mo kilala kung sino ka. One of these days, the world will just wallow you up. And before you know it, you become part of the world. That's why we have to have a sense of identity. To have a sense of identity will bring out the Christ-like character in you. Lalabas yung karakter ni Jesus sa loob natin. Yan ang vision ng CEC, diba? Visible the void. Everything that God deposited in our life, it's hidden in our heart. But it is our responsibility to bring them out. Kasi pag tinago lang natin yan, nandyan lang sa loob ng puso mo, ikaw lang yatang makikinabang dyan. Especially in the world today, ang kultura natin, we make our faith private. We don't share our faith, keep it private. Personal yan eh, taguin mo lang yan. No, that is not what Christ said. We don't make our faith a private matter. We go into the world and we bring our faith. We bring out our faith. We make it visible because it's void, it's empty, it cannot be seen. Ang dami natin sinasabi sa simbahan, ang dami natin kinikwento, ang dami natin pinipreach sa simbahan, nakikita ba? Nakikita ba? Palagi natin sinasabi, love one another, diba? O nakikita ba yan? Nagmamahalan ba tayong lahat? Sinasabi natin, magpatawad tayo, magpatawad tayo. We always say those things. We love to tell people about the forgiveness of God. But the question is, do we really forgive?

Kaya nga empty, kaya nga void, hindi nakikita.  
And the world today does not hear our message.  
The world today cannot understand the message of the gospel.  
Why? Because they cannot see.  
Eh, mga bata ngayon, pangaralan mo,  
magsalita ka na magsalita, kahit buong araw,  
walang napupulot sa sinasabi mo.  
Because they cannot see.  
Hindi nila nakikita.  
For this generation, for the world to hear,  
they have to see.  
Dapat makita.  
That's why yan ang mission natin.  
That's the vision that we have as a church.  
We go out into the world.  
We make visible the void.  
We make it tangible enough na makita ng tao.  
Pag sinabi mong mahal kita, pakita mo.  
Pakita mo.  
Pag sinabi mong pinapatawad ko na yan,  
ipakita mo.  
Amen?  
There are many people today, sinasabi nila,  
mahal kong pamilya ko, alam mo,  
Father, mahal na mahal ko talaga ang pamilya ko.  
Tapos hindi man pinapakain yung mga anak,  
hindi nagkakayod  
para maiahon yung pamilya.  
Nasabi ko, saan yung pagmamahal dyan?  
Nasa loob, Father, nasa loob.  
You know, what you feel for your family  
does not matter.  
What you feel for your family  
does not matter to them.  
It only matters to you.  
You know what matters to your family?  
What really matters to the family,  
it's what you do for them.  
Amen?  
When you provide for them,  
when you take care of your children,  
you take care of your family,  
that's what matters to the family.  
It's not what you feel for them.  
Yan ang problema ng simban.  
Yan ang problema ng simban.  
Puro tayo feeling, feeling.  
When we come to church,  
pa-iyak-iyak tayo,  
pa-kanta-kanta tayo,  
iyak-iyak tayo,  
Jesus, Jesus.  
It doesn't matter to God how we feel.  
What matters to God  
is that we love Him.  
And love is not a feeling.  
Sabi nga ni Jesus,  
if you love me, you will?  
You will obey me.  
It's what we do that matters most to God.  
It's what we do.  
And so we need to have that  
Christ-like character in us.  
We are still in the world

and we have the responsibility  
to bring the gospel into the world.  
But we are not of the world.  
We don't have the character  
of the world anymore.  
Anyone who is in Christ  
is a new creation.  
Behold, the old things are gone.  
Now behold, the new has come.  
We are still in the world  
but we are not of the world.  
Therefore we have to cultivate  
and bring out the Christ-like character.  
And it begins with having  
a sense of identity.  
Who are you?  
Amen?  
Many times we pretend  
to be someone else.  
That's why di nakikita si Cristo.  
Gaya-gaya lang tayo.  
You have to know yourself  
your identity  
and having that sense of identity  
it will bring out  
the Christ-like character in you.  
And that Christ-like character  
is so strong  
that when you go into the world  
and go with a sense of mission  
into the world  
the world can never  
never overpower you  
if you have the Christ-like character  
burning inside you.  
Hindi ka pwedeng baguhin ng mundo.  
Alam mo mangyayari?  
Alam mo mangyayari  
sa sobrang mundong magbabago dahil sayo.  
Sa sobrang lakas  
ng karakter ni Cristo sayo.  
It's our responsibility.  
We have that character  
inside us already.  
All we need is to bring it out.  
And how do we do that?  
How do we do that as a people?  
Yes, I know the value of prayer.  
We need to be a prayerful people.  
Prayer brings out  
the Christ-like character  
but there is something today  
you want to bring out  
and strengthen  
and cultivate the Christ-like character  
in you.  
Then we need to participate  
in the life of the church.  
Hindi pwede yung  
doon lang tayo sa bahay palagi.  
When our community gathers together  
we have to participate.  
It's our responsibility.  
And the more we participate

in the life of the church  
in our community  
the more we bring out  
the Christ-like character in us.  
In our church  
in the life of our church  
there are three important  
three important events  
where we participate  
specifically by giving  
yung pagbibigay.  
And number one  
we have the mission offering.  
Remember every November 1?  
We bring our mission offering.  
That's how you participate.  
You don't participate  
by just sitting down  
and looking at the church.  
You participate  
how do we participate  
in the life of the church?  
By giving.  
Giving time.  
Giving effort.  
Giving even our treasure.  
That's how you participate  
in the life of the church.  
You don't participate  
by just sitting down.  
You give.  
You give time for your children.  
You give your effort  
your talent  
for your family.  
And you even give  
your wealth and treasure  
for the family.  
We participate in the life  
of the church by giving.  
And there are three important  
three events  
number one is the mission offering  
every November 1.  
Why?  
Because as a people  
we are committed to bringing  
the gospel into the world.  
Amen?  
We have a commitment to the Lord.  
We are going to bring  
the gospel into the world.  
We are not going to think of  
ourselves only here in church  
oh we are saved by the Lord  
we will just sing.  
No, there are people out there  
because the gospel of God  
is the power of God  
to salvation.  
The gospel is free.  
The gospel has been  
given freely  
and we can give it freely

the gospel is free  
but the means to bring  
the gospel is very expensive.  
That's why we need commitment.  
We need to give.  
Every November 1  
for the mission  
it expresses our commitment  
to bring the gospel to the world.  
The second giving that we have  
is what we call  
foundation offering.  
It's every June 26.  
Okay?  
What we call CEC Foundation  
we give \$10.  
Again  
that giving is a  
participation in the life of the church.  
We give our foundation offering  
because it reveals  
our commitment  
not to just bring the gospel  
into the world  
but to  
provide communities  
for those who have received the gospel.  
Those who received  
the gospel  
we have to bring them together  
to become a community.  
Why?  
So that they can live out the gospel.  
Amen?  
It is in community  
that we learn to forgive.  
It is in the community  
that we learn to love one another.  
That's why when you receive the gospel  
we should have  
a parish community.  
That's why June 26  
the funds that we give  
we use that to build churches  
to acquire land  
to buy land  
and build a church.  
In a few months time  
our church in Pulo will be completed.  
Okay?  
Foundations were laid already.  
Then our brothers and sisters  
from Parola  
from Fatima and Kawayan  
where we planted the gospel  
now they can come together  
to worship God  
and know God more in their life  
by providing a place for them  
where they can do that  
as a community.  
It's just us.  
Someone asked me  
does the government support us?

Did the government give us money?  
Did the government give us money?  
Well, actually, no.  
The government gave us  
a piggy bank.  
Okay, it's okay.  
They gave us five trucks.  
I said, I'm grateful  
for what they gave.  
But we are the ones  
financing the building of the church.  
The world will never finance  
the work of God.  
I will not expect  
help from the world.  
It's us.  
Amen?  
That's why I'm praying  
for all of you to get rich.  
Amen?  
Who doesn't want to get rich?  
Okay.  
Everyone wants to get rich?  
Yes.  
We want to be rich.  
We want to be rich enough  
to provide  
for the work of God.  
We want to be rich enough  
to finance God's work.  
Why? Because the world will never  
finance the work of God.  
We will finance it.  
And it's already happening.  
It's already happening.  
They said it's impossible  
to have our own church in Antique.  
I started there.  
I dreamed of buying land.  
When I dreamed of buying land,  
we had no money.  
We had no money in Antique.  
But now,  
we have our own land  
and we build a building there.  
We had land  
in Candelaria  
and we already have a building there.  
Now, we have land in Tangalan.  
And we have an outreach there.  
We're ministering to children  
and people there.  
We already have our land  
given to us.  
Now, we're going to build a church again.  
Let's prioritize the island  
because they're already looking  
for a place of worship.  
And every year,  
this is my target.  
Every year,  
we will plant churches  
and build churches for the people.  
That's the work of God.

But you need character for that.  
Amen?  
Our Christ-like character should be strong.  
We'll be weak  
if we don't have a Christ-like character.  
So, we participate by giving.  
The third giving,  
and this is very important,  
we'll be giving on this day.  
We'll be giving  
for the CEC for Life.  
Okay?  
So, every third Sunday  
of the month of January,  
we celebrate the Feast  
of the Lord and Giver of Life.  
We give.  
Why?  
When we give  
to the CEC for Life,  
again, it reveals our character,  
who we are as a people.  
We are a pro-life people.  
Amen?  
We are not anti-life.  
We are not pro-abortion.  
We are a pro-life people.  
That is our identity.  
Amen?  
So, when we are asked,  
what are you?  
Are you in favor of the right of people  
to kill a child?  
No, we are not that kind of people.  
The Church is pro-life.  
And that is a character  
that we should cultivate in our life.  
And it begins by giving.  
Today, we'll be giving  
a special thanks offering.  
All of our special thanks offerings  
are for the CEC for Life.  
We will support.  
Because we have people working  
in the CEC  
who conduct seminars  
and counseling,  
especially for people  
who are going through  
difficult times,  
like single mothers who got pregnant,  
teenagers who got pregnant.  
They are being taught.  
They counsel that  
not to go through the abortion.  
And there are people  
who went through abortion.  
Now, they are suffering.  
They are so tormented in their minds,  
so depressed.  
We still continue to help them.  
We don't condemn them.  
Amen?  
We have people marching

on the streets  
for the value of life.  
Now, Father,  
why do we keep on doing this, Bishop?  
You know what?  
Because even the Church Fathers,  
they were pro-life.  
From the very beginning,  
the Church always  
defend the fatherless.  
They always defend the helpless.  
Those who cannot defend themselves,  
the Church defends them.  
It's been a long time.  
It didn't just start  
during our time.  
The Church has always been  
defending the right  
of those who are helpless,  
those who are vulnerable.  
That's why we express the same,  
the same commitment  
even in our time.  
If the apostles back then,  
the saints back then,  
they defended the life.  
Now, it's our time.  
Now, it's my time  
to uphold life.  
It's my time.  
That's why we do that as a Church.  
We give for the CEC for life  
later on.  
Amen?  
It's important.  
When we say,  
we uphold life,  
show it.  
I uphold life, Father,  
it's in my heart,  
not just in my heart.  
We should show it.  
We should manifest.  
We should give for the  
CEC for Life Foundation  
because it supports,  
it helps people  
who are undergoing  
difficulties,  
especially with abortion.  
These are three important  
celebrations of the Church  
that we need to participate in.  
Our gospel today  
starts with a question,  
who is great?  
Everybody is asking,  
who is great among us?  
And sometimes,  
even us Christians,  
we're prone to that mistake.  
We still want to strive  
for who will become great.  
And so, you know what Jesus did?

Jesus did when the disciples,  
the apostles were fighting,  
who is great?  
He took the child.  
That's when I saw  
when Jesus was teaching,  
not only the elders were there,  
but also the children.  
Because he took a child  
and he placed the child  
in front of everyone  
who wants to be great.  
To all the people  
who want to be great,  
he took the child and placed it.  
And he said,  
if you want to be great,  
if you want to make it  
to the kingdom of God,  
you have to become  
a great person.  
Therefore,  
this is what I believe.  
Every child  
is great.  
Amen?  
Tell the person beside you,  
every child is great.  
Amen.  
So, treat them well.  
Don't let the children  
to be judged.  
Because they are the image  
of Jesus.  
What makes children great?  
What makes them great?  
Number one,  
number one,  
why children are so great?  
Number one,  
they are so vulnerable,  
just like us.  
When we go into the world,  
we're vulnerable.  
Children are very vulnerable.  
It makes them so great.  
And the second thing about children,  
why they're so great?  
They're so vulnerable.  
They don't fight for position.  
They don't care about position.  
All they want is  
to be with their parents  
and to be able to feed them.  
They're okay with that.  
We should be like that.  
We should be content  
that we're with God  
and we're being fed by God.  
Let's not fight about  
what else to fight about.  
And it's important  
that we have a father  
that actually,

emotionally,  
the father feeds us.  
What is the feeding for  
so that we grow  
and mature in Christ?  
That's the reason.  
When you kill all the children in the world,  
no one will remind us anymore  
that we should be vulnerable,  
that we should be humble  
before God.  
No one will remind us.  
We take care of our children,  
love our children  
and always remind us  
to be humble.  
As long as our mind  
is on the children,  
the next generation will follow us.  
It will always keep us humble.  
Amen?  
Amen.  
I remember when I was called,  
there was this family,  
a well-to-do family,  
a prominent family in Iloilo.  
They called me.  
They said,  
So, I went there  
to the hospital.  
I wore my long sleeves.  
Because it's an important family,  
so I have to wear and represent the church properly also.  
I brought my bag,  
I brought my holy water,  
I brought my oil.  
Then, when I entered the room,  
their grandmother was about to  
expire.  
So, they were all there.  
So, when I entered,  
they said,  
Father is here, Father is here.  
So, I went inside.  
It's like I was the one  
that everyone was waiting for.  
Then,  
I said,  
You may sit.  
So, the family sat down.  
There are lawyers in the family,  
there are doctors in the family,  
all professionals.  
And they looked at me.  
Then, I opened my bag,  
I will take out my cross,  
when I opened my bag,  
the first thing I saw  
was Michaela's barbed wire  
in my bag.  
There was a barbed wire  
and there was a note  
that said,  
I love you, Papa.

Please do not forget me.  
Remember me.  
So, the barbed wire was there.  
I thought that if I take this out,  
the family will look at me differently.  
There is a difference.  
I think this guy has a saiyan.  
So, I didn't know what to do.  
I did not know what to do.  
I couldn't get the holy water and oil.  
Barbie asked me to hurry up.  
I need to get Barbie out first.  
And I could not do it  
because I feel so important.  
I feel so high and lofty  
as a father.  
But I had no choice.  
I took out the barbed wire first.  
I didn't take it out.  
I just put the barbed wire there.  
The family saw that  
my bag already had a barbed wire.  
I took the note,  
I put it in my pocket  
and I took it.  
And all throughout my prayer,  
everyone was silent.  
No one asked.  
That's why I didn't talk about the barbed wire.  
And for the first time in my life,  
I felt so, so embarrassed.  
I was so small.  
It was humbling.  
But that was what I need at that time.  
To be able to pray,  
to be able to minister,  
you need to have humility.  
And my daughter did that for me.  
She gave me a barbed wire.  
To keep me humble.  
Okay?  
When I got home, my daughter said,  
Did you see what I gave you?  
I said, Yes, it's beautiful.  
I almost cried because of what you gave me.  
And until now I remember that  
a child,  
you look at a child,  
spend time with children  
because they will remind you  
of who you are  
and who you are supposed to be.  
Look at them every day.  
Spend time with them.  
Makulit.  
You know, just play with them.  
Children would lead us  
into greatness  
because there is vulnerability,  
there is humility in a child.  
You learn from them.  
Today as we celebrate life,  
we remember the life of those children  
who died

in the abortion clinics.  
We remember them  
and we pray for them  
and we believe that God  
would bring them to His presence  
at this time.

Amen.

Amen.

Amen.