STAY WITH US, LORD

When a significant person dies, especially if he/she is a breadwinner, the whole family is exceedingly affected. It is as if the whole world comes crashing down and the family members become disoriented. The future becomes blurred and bleak, and the scenario ahead is uncertain. The situation becomes bearable only when there are people around who provide soothing presence as well as emotional, moral, spiritual and financial support and to whom the family can share stories. Nevertheless, the absence of the loved one is deeply felt.

How much more if the person is of far greater value than imagined? Such is the case of Jesus’ death. The followers of Jesus—his mother, relatives and the disciples and apostles—were all devastated by his crucifixion and death. All people in Jerusalem were talking about him. He was a man of incredible stature—a rabbi/teacher, a healer, a man of spiritual authority who could drive out demons and forgive sins, a miracle worker who multiplied bread and fishes that fed thousands, someone who commanded the winds and sea, who raised dead people to life, etc.—fitting to be called a “Messiah”. As St. Luke narrates in the Gospel: all these might seem nothing as the two disciples of Jesus walked downcast away from Jerusalem on the road to Emmaus. Even as Jesus joined them in their journey, “their eyes were prevented from recognizing him”; they were simply blinded by their own unmet expectations that Jesus could be the Messiah, until Jesus revealed himself at the breaking of the bread.

Truly, the disciples of today could also be like Cleopas and the other disciple, who might forget the wonderful words and deeds of Jesus, until someone relates back to us the meaning of the Scriptures “beginning with Moses and all the prophets”. This is exactly what happens in the Holy Mass. When “two or three are gathered in my [Jesus’] name, there am I in the midst of them” (Mt 18:20).

In the first part of the Holy Mass, the Holy Scriptures is read and proclaimed with some parts from the Old Testament, the Letters and the Acts of the Apostles, and the Gospels—linking the stories of salvation from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant fulfilled in Jesus, the Anointed One (the Messiah/the Christ).

The sacrificial offering at the cross is made present in the Eucharist, at the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup. This mystical communion happens to join the whole church (the people of God with Jesus) as the one body is joined to its head. Then, “their eyes were opened and they recognized him” when Jesus is presented as the ultimate sacrifice that joins us to the Trinity (as the Doxology declares: “Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever.” And then, as one voice, the whole assembly of believers makes their assent: “Amen, Amen, Amen.”

Our hope rests on Jesus, the resurrected Lord. As in the first reading, Peter proclaims in the Acts of the Apostles: “God raised this Jesus: of this we are all witnesses. Exalted at the right hand of God, he received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father and poured it forth, as you both see and hear” (Acts 2:32-33). The whole season of Easter is a prolonged recounting of the resurrection stories. Yet, let every Sunday be an Easter celebration of Christ risen from the dead, and who dies no more; and an invitation “Stay with us Lord!”

— Fr. Ruben C. Areño, SSP

The Dialogue Vision of Vatican II

Fr. James H. Kroeger, MM

Most Catholics are unaware that the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) produced one entire document on approaches to other faith traditions, Nostra Aetate (NA), the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Other Religions. Although the shortest document of the Council, it has had a wide-ranging impact on the life of the Church, especially in her relations with the followers of other living faiths (e.g. Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism). This is particularly true here in Asia, where less than three percent of Asia’s more than four billion people are Christian.

Nostra Aetate (“in our time”) transformed the Church’s view and relationship with other religions; NA asserts: “The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and life, those precepts and teachings … which often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all people” (NA 2).

“The Church, therefore, exhorts her children, that through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, … they recognize, preserve, and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values found among these people” (NA 2). How do Catholics in the Philippines live this teaching in daily life?
Entrance Antiphon
(Cf. Ps 66 [65]:1–2)
(Recited when there is no opening song.)

Cry out with joy to God, all the earth; O sing to the glory of his name. O render him glorious praise, alleluia.

Greeting
(The sign of the cross is made here.)

P — Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
All — And with your spirit.

Introduction
(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)

P — The road to Emmaus traveled by the two disciples is the path taken by those whose hopes in life have been crushed. Like the disciples, may we turn to the Lord and invite him: “Stay with us, Lord.” May we recognize him in the Eucharist where he explains the Scriptures to us and breaks bread with us, setting our hearts on fire and making us witnesses that indeed he is truly risen and is alive in our midst.

Penitential Act

P — Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.
(Pause)
P — You were sent to heal the contrite heart: Lord, have mercy.
All — Lord, have mercy.
P — You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.
All — Christ, have mercy.
P — You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.
All — Lord, have mercy.
P — May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.
All — Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading
(Acts 2:14, 22–33) (Sit)
The greatest proof that he is indeed the Messiah of God is his resurrection from the dead. It is the core and the foundation of our faith.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

THEN PETER stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed: “You who are Jews, indeed all of you staying in Jerusalem. Let this be known to you, and listen to my words. You who are Israelites, hear these words. Jesus the Nazorean was a man commended to you by God with mighty deeds, wonders, and signs, which God worked through him in your midst, as you yourselves know. This man, delivered up by the set plan and foreknowledge of God, you killed, using lawless men to crucify him. But God raised him up, releasing him from the thrones of death, because it was impossible for him to be held by it. For David says of him: I saw the Lord ever before me, with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed. Therefore my heart has been glad and my tongue has exulted; my flesh, too, will dwell in hope, because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, nor will you suffer your holy one to see corruption. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.

“My brothers, one can confidently say to you about the patriarch David that he died and was buried, and his tomb is in our midst to this day. But since he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants upon his throne, he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he abandoned to the netherworld nor did his flesh see corruption. God raised this Jesus; of this we are all witnesses. Exalted at the right hand of God, he received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father and poured him forth, as you see and hear.”

— The word of the Lord.
All — Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 16)

R — Lord, you will show us the path of life.

Cl. R.S. Rivera, SSP

1. Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge;/ I say to the LORD, “My Lord, you are my allotted portion and my cup;/ you it is who hold fast my lot.” (R)  
2. I bless the LORD who counsels me;/ even in the night my heart exults me./ I set the LORD ever before me;/ with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed. (R)  
3. Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices;/ my body, too,
conversing and debating, Jesus happened that while they were things that had occurred. And it called Emmaus, and they seven miles from Jerusalem of the week, two of Jesus’ THAT VERY DAY, the first day All —

**Gospel according to Luke**

— The word of the Lord.
All — Thanks be to God.

**Alleluia (Cf. Lk 24:32) (Stand)**

All — Alleluia, alleluia. Lord Jesus, open the Scriptures to us; make our hearts burn while you speak to us. Alleluia, alleluia.

**Gospel (Lk 24:13–35)**

P — A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
All — Glory to you, O Lord.

**Second Reading (1 Pt 1:17–21)**

Our Christian faith and hope rest on Jesus who died and rose from the dead. With such a solid foundation we have no reason to be discouraged.

**A reading from the first Letter of Saint Peter**

BELOVED: If you invoke as Father him who judges impartially according to each one’s works, conduct yourselves with reverence during the time of your sojourn, realizing that you were ransomed from your futile conduct, handed on by your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ as of a spotless unblemished lamb.

He was known before the foundation of the world but revealed in the final time for you, who through him believe in God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

— The word of the Lord.
All — Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**Homily (Sit)**

**Profession of Faith (Stand)**

All — I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

**Prayer of the Faithful**

P — Let us put our petitions to the loving Father who accompanies us in our journey. With Jesus, let us address him as we pray:

R — Father, give strength to your people.

C — Father, bless our Church and civil leaders that they may not tire of serving you in your people, especially the poor, the outcast, and those who have no voice in society. We pray: (R)
Communion Antiphon (Lk 24:35)

The disciples recognized the Lord Jesus in the breaking of bread, alleluia.

Prayer after Communion (Stand)

P — Let us pray. (Pause)

Look with kindness upon your people, O Lord, and grant, we pray, that those you were pleased to renew by eternal mysteries may attain in their flesh the incorruptible glory of the resurrection.

Through Christ our Lord.

All — Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P — The Lord be with you.

All — And with your spirit.

P — Bow down for the blessing.

(Pause)

Be near to those who call on you, O Lord, and graciously grant your protection to all who place their hope in your mercy, that they may remain faithful in holiness of life and, having enough for their needs in this world, they may be made full heirs of your promise of eternity.

Through Christ our Lord.

All — Amen.

Dismissal

P — Go forth, the Mass is ended.

All — Thanks be to God.

C — Father, be with those who are burdened with doubt and discouragement and those who undergo crises. We pray: (R)

C — Father, bless our efforts and the work of our hands. Protect us from all harm, give us plentiful harvest, and guide those who travel by air, land, and sea. We pray: (R)

C — Father, in the evening of our life, when our days are coming to a close, comfort us with your merciful love. Look not upon our sins, but remember your fatherly care for us. We pray: (R)

C — Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (pause). We pray: (R)

P — Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in this table fellowship as Christ once did to his disciples at Emmaus. This we ask through the same Christ our Lord.

All — Amen.

Presentation of the Gifts (Stand)

P — Pray, brethren…

All — May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P — Receive, O Lord, we pray, these offerings of your exultant Church, and, as you have given her cause for such great gladness, grant also that the gifts we bring may bear fruit in perpetual happiness.

Through Christ our Lord.

All — Amen.

Preface II of Easter

P — The Lord be with you.

All — And with your spirit.

P — Lift up your hearts.

All — We lift them up to the Lord.

P — Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All — It is right and just.

P — It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, at all times to acclaim you, O Lord, but in this time above all to laud you yet more gloriously, when Christ our Passover has been sacrificed.

Through him the children of light rise to eternal life and the halls of the heavenly Kingdom are thrown open to the faithful; for his Death is our ransom from death, and in his rising the life of all has risen.

Therefore, overcome with paschal joy, every land, every people exults in your praise and even the heavenly Powers, with angelic hosts, sing together the unending hymn of your glory, as they acclaim:

All — Holy, Holy, Holy… (Kneel)

Acclamation (Stand)

All — Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord’s Prayer

All — Our Father…

P — Deliver us, Lord…

All — For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion (Kneel)

P — Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All — Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.