

Written by Jesse Jose
Thursday, 24 July 2014 20:49 -

By Jesse Jose *A Cup O' Kapeng Barako* RACISM!!! A word in all caps, in boldface and with triple exclamation points.

This despicable practice in our Holy Family Church in Auburn, WA, compelled me to write this recent open letter to our Archbishop J. Peter Sartain, of the Archdiocese of Seattle, Washington.

Without further ado, here it is, Dear Readers.

To: Archbishop J. Peter Sartain
710 9th Avenue,
Seattle,
WA 98104

From: Jesse Jose

6421 Nathan Ave. SE
Auburn, WA 98092

Dear Archbishop,

I have a great need to tell you this, because I haven't gotten any response from our parish priest, Father Joseph, regarding this matter.

My family and I have been parishioners of the Holy Family Catholic Church in Auburn, Washington, for a decade now, since we relocated here from Florida. When we attended the Sunday mass in this church the very first time, we immediately took a liking to its family-like and community ambience.

My wife immediately volunteered as a Eucharistic minister and I volunteered as an usher. We were blessedly happy going to this church. I even joined the church's Knights of Columbus, and so did my eldest son, Jonathan.

I also volunteered to become a lector. I was accepted and trained how to proclaim the Word of the Lord by the person who was then in charge of the

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Liturgy and the scheduling of lectors and Eucharistic ministers.

On one-on-one basis, she thoroughly trained me on correct pronunciation and enunciation of difficult words, on the importance of eye contact and on emphasis of certain line of words for effect. She's an an English reading teacher.

I became proficient in proclaiming the Word of the Lord, thanks to the Holy Spirit and to my mentor of the church Liturgy. I received several comments from the congregation on how well I was proclaiming the Word of the Lord. Through repeating readings and weekly practices, I also began to get a better perspective what the Word of the Lord means.

Proclaiming His Words has become a Blessing to me, an honor and a privilege. I encouraged my son to be a lector, too. He was also trained by the same Liturgy Minister.

But due to illnesses, this minister has to step down, and another person stepped up to take her position.

As soon as this happened, my name was immediately deleted from the mass email list of lectors and Eucharistic ministers. I emailed this new Liturgy Minister and requested her to put me back on the list. And told her in no uncertain terms that proclaiming the Word of the Lord is a blessing to me, an honor and a privilege.

My name was put back on the schedule, but only temporarily. In the latest schedule (July-August), my name was removed as a lector. I also noticed that the other names of Asian-Americans and a Black American also did not appear as lectors.

On the 10:30 mass, there were always two lectors assigned to read the Sunday readings. However, on the latest schedule, only one lector was assigned, and all were Caucasians, when there were us, Asian Americans, who were always willing and available to lector on Sunday masses and on holy days of obligation.

I brought up this matter to the new Liturgy Minister, who writes the schedule,

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but she only gave evasive, roundabout answers, full of self-justification. I also brought this to the attention of our parish priest, but I haven't received any acknowledgement from him.

Archbishop Sartain, may I ask you to please look into this? Racism in any form should not be allowed to dwell in our Catholic churches. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,
Jesse Jose

PS: Dear Readers, as soon as I get a response from our Archbishop, I'll share it with y'all in my *Kapeng Barako* column. That's all.

JJ

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