

## Why Not All Filipino Catholics Are Christians - MabuhayRadio

Written by Bobby Reyes

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As the Christian world prepares for Easter Sunday, the Roman Catholic Church of the Philippines (RCCP) will again celebrate the martyrdom of Jesus Christ and his resurrection. As the Easter vigil ends and masses at dawn herald the rising from the dead of the Redeemer, the fact that not all Filipino Catholics are Christians will again be highlighted.

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Once again, many of the country's lay leaders – from the national stage to the congressional and the provincial and town levels – will be attending Easter masses at various RCCP places of worship. Most of them will receive the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament of communion. Some of the celebrants of the Easter masses will be members of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), who must have heard probably the confessions of the public officials and government employees in the first place.

The crooks in the government bureaucracy and the politicians presumably will tell their confessors that they are sorry for their sins. The CBCP members and their priests should not merely ask the penitents to say 10 Our Father and/or 10 Hail Mary and/or 10 Glory-Be prayers as penance. They must be asked to return to the public coffers the moneys that they have looted from the public treasury and/or demanded from contractors of public works and contracts. Forgiveness implies not only remorse but restitution.

We can cite ad infinitum so many practices of Filipino Catholics and the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines that violate the teachings of Jesus Christ.

The reality is – for this Easter Sunday and all the other Sundays, year in, year out – the bishops and the priests continue to administer the rites of confession and communion to the said crooks. The Filipino men of the cloth should instead threaten to excommunicate the crooks for continuing on with their corrupt existence. Many bishops and priests cannot censure publicly the crooks in the government and the crooked contractors because their diocesan organizations are often the beneficiary of the ill-gotten wealth and other favors that the church officials receive.

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The Philippines continues to be a poor country in spite of its image as the only Catholic country in Asia. Why? The RCCP, as led by the CBCP prelates, continues to be part of The Imperial Manila and the Vested Establishment. In short, the Catholic prelates never really understood the teaching of Jesus Christ that his kingdom is not of this world and that to be a Christian is to renounce worldly goods and desires.

The RCCP and various Catholic institutions continue to be some of the biggest landowners in the country. But the Catholic bishops follow in the footsteps of the Cojuangco clan and other big Filipino Catholic landowners, as if all of them have not heard of the land-reform law. Several of these Catholic entities are some of the biggest stockholders of the biggest banks and financial institutions in the nation. The Archdiocese of Manila has still to explain what happened to the insolvency of the Monte de Piedad Savings Bank that it controlled.

We can cite ad infinitum so many other practices of Filipino Catholics and the RCCP that violate the teachings of Jesus Christ. In fact, if Christ were to return to the Philippines, we would bet that the first thing he would do is to denounce some of the Catholic bishops as the modern-day versions of the Pharisees. And probably, he would give an imprimatur to this editorial that, yes, not all Filipino Catholics are Christians.

Hallelujah! The son of man has risen from the dead and yet some of his Filipino followers continue to be living embarrassments to the Christian faith. # # #

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