

Message from Fr. Resti Galang

Last Tuesday, June 21, was a national holiday for the Bolivians as they celebrated the so-called 'Aymara New Year'. It coincided with the winter solstice here in the southern hemisphere. The Aymaras are the biggest of the 38 Bolivian ethnic groups, representing 25% of the population, and more than 1.6 million Bolivians speak Aymaran. Together with another Andean group called the Quechuas, they have survived as predominant indigenous communities that for centuries have inhabited the Andes Mountains, the largest continental mountain range in the world, stretching over at least 7 South American countries, including Bolivia.

In pre-Colonial America, the native peoples of the Andean highlands depended on agriculture, and a ceremony was performed early in the first morning of the coming year to ensure an abundant harvest. They have believed since then that the first rays of the sun emitted on the first day of the New Year would give them the special positive energy they need for the entire year.

St. Joseph Parish is entering into a fresh phase of its journey as one faith community in welcoming a new set of clergy leadership on July 1. As I write this last bulletin message, I want to express my deepest gratitude to the Lord, the diocesan leadership and to the entire community for the privilege of being your Parish Administrator. I am truly blessed to have worked with a fine Parish Staff, a dedicated Parish Council, and committed parish movements and organizations. I am also graced to have experienced a model school community. I will always be proud of the zealous youth and lovable kids' groups in our parish. I will always remember in my heart all the kindness and loving efforts that were exerted by individuals and groups in making my 25th Priestly Ordination anniversary celebration a very memorable one. I am sure that Frs. Brian and Cleetus, my fellow clergy who served St. Joseph together with me during my term, are also grateful for all your support and generosity. Like them, I am leaving with my heart overflowing with gratefulness.

May the community continues to gather around the fire of God's nourishing love. May the nurturing warmth that comes from that divine fire be the very source of openness and courage to say "YES" to God and to whatever He wills as the changes in leadership happen. Just as the Aymaras believe that the first glares of the glorious sun can give unique energy, may the rays of divine grace whenever the Bread of Life is raised in the Holy Eucharist emit the distinctive dynamism that the community needs as it turns a new page in its beautiful story as one blessed faith community.

May the Lord continue to bless our parish with His choicest blessings through the intercession of St. Joseph! Muchas gracias a todos!