

Election 2010

With the 2010 Philippine presidential election looming in the horizon, one cannot help but notice a few presidential contenders courting the support of Filipinos based in the USA. This is not all too surprising considering that there are reportedly more than 3 million Filipinos living in the USA. Indeed, it is not quite a far-fetched idea to envision that in this and succeeding elections, more overseas-based Filipinos especially those based in the USA would be more actively involved in the Philippine political arena. This distinct possibility of Filipino-Americans being involved in Philippine politics, whether voting as a dual citizen/absentee voter or simply influencing their relatives and friends to vote for certain select candidates bodes well for a nation which is desperately seeking/searching for changes and/or alternative choices in the Philippine political arena.

However, it has also been commented that with more than 3 Million Filipino-Americans, we could and should have, by now, achieved substantial clout in US political affairs. Unfortunately, the rather divisive, aloof, rivalry-oriented mentality/attitude of our so-called community leaders aggravated by pervasive indifference and apathy among many of our people for political affairs, has remained unabated all these years and will continue to derail our people's thrust towards beneficial social enhancement, economic stability and political maturity. It is my fervent prayer that more Filipino-Americans, particularly those endowed with God-given integrity (MAKADIYOS), deeply-seated patriotism (MAKABAYAN) and Christ-centered compassion for the poor (MAKATAO), start getting more united in spirit and ideals and someday instill a God-fearing, Christ-centered dimension in the economic, social and political affairs of our people not only here in the USA but even more so in the Philippines.

There is indeed, a clarion call for each and every Catholic/Christian, the chosen people of God to stand fast in the ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor, holding his/her ground as members of one body, with the belt of truth around his/her waist, a breastplate of righteousness, the zeal to propagate the Gospel as his/her footgear, holding up the shield of faith to extinguish the fiery arrows from the evil one, putting on the helmet of salvation and wielding the word of the living God as a double-edged sword so as to free the Filipino people from deeply-rooted pride, envy, jealousy, division, selfish rivalries and parochial factionalism which are very much at work in Filipino society wherever it may be. This so-called "crab mentality" has already shattered dreams, wrecked havoc in well-

meaning programs, fostered confusion and instilled disillusionment among our people as it is. It's got to stop once and for all. But alas, many are saying that it is easier said than done. But nonetheless, it must be reiterated for all that it's worth that, only if and when more and more overseas-based Filipinos, especially those based in the USA, would realize that together, there is so much we can do to alleviate the dire plight of our beloved countrymen even with minimal investments in time, effort and money...then and only then, can we truly see our country rise up from being a third world impoverished country to a first world progressive one in no time at all. Indeed, each one of us have the inherent potential to be a life-changing catalyst for the people in our own backyard, so to speak. After all, it is written in Mathew 5:13-14, "You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world...Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."...Di ba?

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