DIOCESE OF CATARMAN

PENTECOS

27TH DIOCESAN PENTECOST VIGIL AND FAMILY DAY CELEBRATION

St. Anthony of Padua Parish, San Antonio, Northern Samar **May 23-24, 2026**

BISHOP TO PILGRIMS:

SURRENDER FEAR TO HOLY SPIRIT



HOLY MASS. *Most Rev. Nolly Buco, bishop of the Diocese of Catarman, presides over the Holy Mass held on Pentecost Sunday, May 24, 2026, in San Antonio, Northern Samar. Photo by Nadine Soriano*

BISHOP Nolly Buco, D.D., bishop of the Diocese of Catarman, called on thousands of Catholic faithful to surrender their fears to the Holy Spirit during the 27th Pentecost Vigil and Family Day Celebration held May 23–24 in San Antonio, Northern Samar.

"Ginoo, kuhaa an amon mga kahadlok (Lord, take away our fears)," he said in his Homily on Pentecost Sunday, May 24, 2026.

He reflected on the birth of the Church at Pentecost, describing it as Christ's own desire for people "to gather as one" despite differences in language, culture, and background.

"The Holy Spirit gives courage… Kun aada an Espirito Santo, aton atubangon an kinabuhi nga may pagsarig (When the Holy Spirit is with us, we face life with confidence," he said, citing the missionaries who boldly proclaimed the Gospel after receiving the Spirit.

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He encouraged the thousands of pilgrims who attended the Pentecost celebrarion to move forward despite life's challenges, anchoring his message on the Church's celebration of the Jubilee Year of Hope.

"Padayon, sulong pa gihapon," he said. "Hope gives us light to face the struggles of life."

He stressed that the Holy Spirit unites people amid diversity, noting that Pentecost revealed "different people yet one message" — the message of God's love.

"We were not made to be the same, but to be one," he told the pilgrims, urging respect for each person's gifts and abilities while promoting love and forgiveness within families and communities.

In one of the strongest points of his homily, Buco warned against relying solely on digital communication and artificial intelligence at the expense of human presence and relationships.

"We cannot substitute the physical manifestation of every individual," he said. "We cannot substitute by mere Artificial Intelligence."

While acknowledging the benefits of technology, he stressed that authentic communion requires real human interaction.

"Physical presence matters because it qualifies that God is present among us," the bishop added.

Buco reminded the faithful that every baptized Christian has a mission: to bring peace, hope, forgiveness, and the love of Christ to others.

He concluded by praying for stronger and united families and communities, asking God to make His people "witnesses of Christ" in the world.

The two-day Pentecost gathering drew participants from different parishes across Northern Samar for prayer, worship, and family-centered activities celebrating faith and unity.

Buco announced that next year's diocesan Pentecost celebration will be held in the coastal Pacific town of Lapinig. **(LRM)**

OVER 6,000 PILGRIMS GATHER FOR 27TH PENTECOST

THOUSANDS of people gathered in the town of San Antonio on Saturday, May 23, 2026, as Northern Samar celebrated Pentecost through a diocesan vigil and family day.

Pentecost in Northern Samar has long been observed not only as a major Christian feast but also as a time for prayer vigils, community reflection, and family gatherings. The feast commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and the Blessed Virgin Mary, empowering them to proclaim the Gospel to the world. In Christianity, it is regarded as the "birthday of the Church."

This year's celebration, hosted by San Antonio, carried the theme: "Conversion through the Holy Spirit: A Gift to Every Community in Mission." Lay evangelizer Bro. Noe Dora, a pastor-turned-Catholic, was this year's guest speaker.

In his talk during the diocesan Pentecost vigil, Dora shared his journey as a living testament embodying the Pentecost theme. His speech centered on the work of the Holy Spirit in his conversion from Protestantism to the Roman Catholic faith.

"Walang Katoliko na nag-imbita sa ako na maging Katoliko. But it was the Holy Spirit who guided me and inspired me to discover the beauty of the Catholic faith," he said.

Rev. Fr. Anthony Salazar, parish priest of Saint Anthony of Padua, welcomed the pilgrims during his address on Saturday evening.

"Dako an akon pagpasalamat san tapod nga ginhatag didi sa amon yana sin pag-host sini nga selebrasyon yana nga tuig, ngan dako an akon pagpasalamat ngan mapaso nga pagkarawat sa iyo ngatanan. Hinaut nga mapuno an aton kasingkasing sin kalipay yana nga gab-i," he told the pilgrims.

San Antonio Mayor Gary Lavin also thanked the pilgrims and visitors for joining the celebration.

"Ini nga katitirok mahinungdanon ini para sa aton ngatanan kay kanan Ginoo ini pagbuot pinaagi sin paggiya san Espiritu Santo. Hinaut kunta nga ini nga misyon magpadayon sin paglarab, magpabaskog, magpasarig, ngan magparig-on san aton pagtoo bilang Kristiyano," he said.

"Thank you for this opportunity to be of service to our local church," he added.

The pilgrims came from at least 31 parishes and mission centers across 24 towns in Northern Samar, including Allen, Biri, Bobon, Capul, Catarman, Catubig, Gamay, Laoang, Lapinig, Las Navas, Lavezares, Lope de Vega, Mapanas, Mondragon, Palapag, Pambujan, Rosario, San Antonio, San Isidro, San Jose, San Roque, San Vicente, Silvino Lobos, and Victoria. **(LRM/Kyla Ellaine Cula)**

















Photos by CJ Diego and Aliah Bree Are

"REMAIN STEADFAST IN FAITH"



FAMILY SHARER FROM HOST PARISH. *Mr. and Mrs. Ricardo Justiniano receive a plaque of appreciation during the 27th Pentecsot Vigil and Family Day Celebration.*

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THE Pentecost 2026 gathering in San Antonio, Northern Samar was marked by a testimony of faith and perseverance despite hardships as Mr. and Mrs. Ricardo Justiniano shared their life journey during the celebration Saturday, May 23, 2026.

Bro. Ricardo "Nonoy" Justiniano and his wife, Eduvigis "Nang Edu" Justiniano, recounted their personal struggles and reflected on how their relationship with God changed their lives.

Bro. Nonoy, a retired police officer and businessman from the Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals (BCBP) Calbayog Chapter, admitted that he once relied only on his own strength and was consumed by vices and pride. He said he rediscovered faith through a BCBP fellowship in 2000.

Nang Edu, for her part, shared her humble beginnings in Northern Samar, where she grew up in a poor but deeply religious family. She said she was able to finish her studies through scholarships and support from the Franciscan community.

The couple openly spoke about the loss of their infant daughter and the death of their son in 2023 due to health complications. Their faith and the support of the BCBP community, however, helped them endure and move forward.

They also reflected on the meaning of Pentecost during the gathering on Saturday, stressing that the Holy Spirit serves as their source of courage and renewal.

"Pentecost is a reminder that we are temples of the Spirit. He dwells in us, guiding our decisions, comforting us in grief, and strengthening us in prayer. Just as the apostles were sent out, we too are called to bring Christ's light into our families, workplaces, and communities," said Nang Edu.

They called on fellow Christians to remain steadfast in faith even during life's darkest moments.

"Life is a journey filled with trials and tests, and God, in His infinite wisdom, allows these challenges to shape and strengthen our faith," said Bro. Nonoy.

"The Holy Spirit is not only a gift of the past but a living presence today. He unites us as a community, breaks barriers of fear and pride, and empowers us to serve," he added. **(LRM)**