Pope Francis cites PH Church as among world’s great Catholic nations

By Leslie Ann Aquino and Argyll Cyrus Geducos Updated December 2, 2018, 3:58 PM

Pope Francis has cited the noble Church in the Philippines as among the great Catholic nations in the world.

The Pope declared this in his letter of appointment for Osaka Archbishop Thomas Manyo Cardinal Maeda as his envoy to the upcoming 60th anniversary celebration of the postwar Manila Cathedral in Intramuros.

“When our predecessor Gregory XIII established around 440 years ago the Diocese of Manila, comprising the entire archipelago, had he thought at that time of how prosperous the development of the
Catholic faith there would be?” read the letter posted by the Manila Cathedral in its Facebook page.

“Indeed, the noble Church in the Philippines now stands among the great Catholic nations in the entire world. Hence, no wonder, she continuously sends missionaries to other regions,” the Pope wrote.

The pontiff, meantime, explained why Maeda was chosen to be his representative to the occasion.

“We appoint you by means of this letter to be our Special Delegate to that solemn feast –you whom we know to be an eminent pastor, always concerned about the welfare of the Church throughout the world,” he said.

“You are to act in our name, therefore, on the 8th day of the coming month of December, more than four years since we have visited it, at the Cathedral in Manila, –also called the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary –giving thanks to God for the beauty of this temple, but most importantly for the lively faith of the pastors and of the Christian faithful,” added the pontiff.

According to a CBCP News post, the archbishop of Osaka will celebrate Mass at the cathedral on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception on December 8.

**Drug war**

Malacañang said that Pope Francis’ stand against illegal drugs only validates President Duterte’s resolve to end the illegal drug trade in the country.

Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo made the statement after Pope Francis urged governments to combat drug addiction and courageously undertake the fight against who “deal with death.”

According to Panelo, the Pontiff’s remarks are exactly why President Duterte is keen on purging the illegal drug trade.
“The remarks of Pope Francis...are not only relevant but also timely when it comes to our country’s present situation,” he said Sunday.

“This is precisely the rationale behind the President’s war on illegal drugs in the Philippines: to save the young and future generations of Filipinos from the drug scourge,” he added.

“We consider Vatican’s remarks as a boost in our campaign as we battle the twin evils of crimes and drugs,” he continued.

Panelo also said that laudable developments have been achieved by the Duterte administration regarding the drug war despite the criticism “from the loud minority composed of his detractors and critics here and abroad.”

In a Vatican conference on drug addiction on Saturday, Pope Francis decried the “pathological forms derived from a secularized cultural climate, marked by the capitalism of consumption.”

The Pontiff also noted “existential emptiness” and the “precariousness” of human ties, and urged everyone, particularly the government, to build up the courage and fight “traffickers of death.”


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