

500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines (1521 to 2021):
A Rearticulation of Culture and Faith of the Indios

Fides del Castillo
fides.delcastillo@dlsu.edu.ph
De La Salle University Manila

Abstract

Cultural anthropologists and historians are in agreement that the indigenous people of the Philippines had a traditional religion before the Spanish expedition reached the archipelago in 1521 (Neill, 1964; Fernandez, 1979; Sitoy, 1985; Domingo, 2007). However, the Catholic faith took root, spread survived and progressed in the Philippines. In 2021, the Philippines celebrates the 500 years of Christianity in the country. The Philippine Church marks this a celebration of faith and thanksgiving with the theme "Gifted to Give." The Indios or the Christianized natives embraced the Catholic faith. Using the eye lens of Stephen Bevans, this study aims to rearticulate the interplay of culture and faith among the indigenous members of the Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs) in the Philippines. It hopes to show the lived experiences, struggles and vulnerability of the indigenous people within the communities. This also aims to show how the communities strive to be a giver and to live a renewed life towards Christological transformation.

Keywords: Catholicism, 500 Years of Christianity, Philippines, Christian communities, Mission