



MINOR BASILICA OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY OF MANAOAG  
Manaoag, Pangasinan 2430  
Philippines

April 16, 2020

His Excellency,  
The Most Reverend Socrates B. Villegas  
Archbishop of Lingayen Dagupan

Dear Archbishop Soc,

Happy Fiesta!

This pandemic has disrupted many aspects of our lives. While it presses to test our resiliency and strength of character, our community at Minor Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Manaoag continues to innovate ways to meaningfully sustain our traditions. For this reason, we are happy to inform you that we plan to continue with the Misa de Gracia practice, albeit with modifications. Herewith is the content of the letter we intend to communicate to Parish Priests of ALD.

### **Apo Baket and Misa De Gracia: Testament to Unending Grace and Manifestation of eternal gratitude**

Misa de Gracia literally means thanksgiving mass. In Pangasinan, Philippines, particularly in the Archdiocese of Lingayen Dagupan, this tradition is an annual act of communal thanksgiving for all the graces received through the intercession of Apo Baket. Celebrated during the month of May, parishes organize a pilgrimage of their parishioners to the Minor Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Manaoag and culminates in a mass presided by their respective Parish Priests. The month of May is traditionally known as “Mary’s Month” and in the Philippines, this is also typically the harvest season. Hence, the connection between harvest and thanksgiving (harvest offering) underpins the meaning of Misa de Gracia. Although, agricultural in its beginnings, Misa de Gracia is a communal thanksgiving mass for all the graces that devotees of Apo Baket receive from God through her maternal intercession. Also, although this practice started within Pangasinan, parishes and religious organizations from other provinces started to celebrate this expression of gratitude to God through Apo Baket.

“This year, due to this ongoing pandemic, we are prevented to celebrate Misa de Gracia in the usual manner. However, even in challenging times, we cannot fail to acknowledge God’s generosity – His unending grace. In a way, Apo Baket’s devotees will not be rested until gratitude is expressed. For this reason, the Minor Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Manaoag offers a way to sustain Misa de Gracia - virtually, i.e., through livestreaming of masses and broadcasting through Radyo Manaoag. How do we propose to do this?

1. For the whole Month of May 2020, initially, the 11:00 a.m. masses at the Minor Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Manaoag shall be dedicated for Misa de Gracia which will be officiated by respective Parish Priests at the main altar.

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2. For parishes who celebrated Misa de Gracia last year, we will get in touch with respective parish priests and inform them of this opportunity. Should they approve of this invitation, they will choose a schedule of Misa de Gracia of their parishes.
3. This practice is also open to other parishes and organizations who would like to offer the same thanksgiving mass. Kindly communicate your intent through email ([manaoagparish@yahoo.com](mailto:manaoagparish@yahoo.com) / [info@manaoagbasilica.org](mailto:info@manaoagbasilica.org)) or by contacting our Parish Office (075 529 0249 / 09420775302).
4. If allowed by current pandemic-related ordinances and if within 2-hr driving distance, the pilgrim image of Apo Baket visits and drives through the main thoroughfares of the parish on the day of Misa de Gracia. However, should there be more than one thanksgiving masses on the same day, we will follow “first come, first serve basis” principle.
5. In compliance with existing health ordinances, only the parish priest, a reader, commentator, and acolyte will celebrate the Holy Eucharist.
6. The Social Communication personnel of the Minor Basilica will provide the following services;
  - a. Announce the schedule of Misa de Gracia through Radyo Manaoag and through Facebook and Youtube
  - b. Communicate to the parishioners the request or instruction of the parish priest
  - c. Broadcast the Misa de Gracia through Facebook, Youtube and Radio platforms.

Indeed, by continuing these beautiful practices, we are not only showing resiliency of spirit, but we are also expressing our conviction that “Nothing can separate us from God’s love” (Romans 8:39)

In Christ and St. Dominic,

Fr. Stephen Redillas, OP