

Don't lose hope, Cardinal Tagle tells Manila inmates

Don't lose hope, Cardinal Tagle tells Manila inmates Prelate celebrates Mass in one of the Philippines' most overcrowded jails.



Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle of Manila has told inmates of one of the most overcrowded prisons in the Philippines not to lose hope and rise from their failures, after admitting that he too has made mistakes and sinned.

"Let's not lose hope. All of us, including me, commit mistakes. We are all capable of betrayal but let's not forget that we're also capable of loving," said Cardinal Tagle.

The cardinal celebrated Mass with inmates at Manila City Jail on March 23, Holy Wednesday.

Manila City Jail houses about 3,000 inmates in a cramped 1.2-hectare space, making it one of the most congested prison facilities in the country.

"Let us not forget that we sinned like Judas and Peter, but let's not forget that we can still be like Jesus who, even if we're not worthy, took care of us as his friends," Cardinal Tagle told the inmates.

Prior to the liturgical celebration, Cardinal Tagle, along with Archbishop Giuseppe Pinto, papal nuncio to the Philippines, led the opening of the "Holy Door" at the detention center's chapel.

"In entering the door of mercy, enter into the heart of Jesus, and there you will experience how God loved us and offered His life. We still have hope," Cardinal Tagle said.

Cardinal Tagle asked the inmates to pray for their families and loved ones "who are also hurt" so that they too will experience hope and God's mercy.

"And to all of you here, open your hearts to other people. You are like one family here. Spread God's love to each other [through service]," the Manila prelate said.

Cardinal Tagle became teary-eyed when the inmates sang the Prayer of St. Francis at the end of the Mass.

Roy Lagarde - UCAnews