

12 January 2010 - For the first time, a Filipino Roman Catholic cleric to have the distinct honor and privilege of heading a Swedish parish.

Philippine Ambassador to Sweden Maria Zeneida Angara Collinson reported to the Department of Foreign Affairs that Father Gabriel Baldostamon has been installed as Parish Priest of the Saint Nicolai Church in Linköping, Sweden last January 10.

The ceremonial investiture of Father Baldostamon was officiated by Monsignor Mirojan Dudek during a well-attended Sunday mass celebrating the baptism of Jesus Christ. The mass was co-celebrated by Father John Mc Cormode and Deacon Karl- Eriik Jarerot.

During lunch which followed the mass, Saint Nicolai parishioners congratulated Father Baldostamon and assured him of their support.

Speaking on behalf of the Philippine Embassy and the Filipino community, Ambassador Collinson expressed pride at the historical first and stated confidence in Father Baldostamon's ability to renew and strengthen the Catholic faith, particularly in the context of increasing secularism in Europe.

Father Baldostamon hails from Marbel, South Catobato and has been serving the Filipino community in Sweden for several years.

As head of the Saint Nicolai parish, he will be attending to the spiritual needs and pastoral formation of the entire Swedish Roman Catholic community in Linköping with about 2,500 registered members. END

Sweden Installs First Filipino Parish Priest

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