

PROFILES

Name: Lerma Novales

Country of Origin: Manila, Philippines

Age: 32

Date of arrival in Britain: 1 September 2000

Why did you come to England?

I worked in Italy for almost six years and then my boss decided to move to England. He and his wife own a men's clothing shop in London.



Profession: A full-time nanny and housekeeper. My day begins at 7am and often finishes at 11pm. I look after two children aged seven and four and there is another one on the way.

What was the hardest thing about England when you came here?

Things in London are very expensive. I help my family back in the Philippines; I send money to my sister to help with her university fees. The majority of what I earn I send home and I keep a little bit of money for myself, for food and clothes.

Do you have a big family back home?

I'm one of 7. I try to talk to my family as often as I can. They come to visit sometimes, but it can be difficult for them to obtain the necessary papers.

And how did you find the Mass here?

It is wonderful to be able to praise our Beloved God.

Do you think your faith has deepened since you came here?

I feel that God uses all the experiences that I've had, including the hard ones, to teach me. I pray for peace and love in the world.

Have you been to an English Language Mass?

I sometimes go to Westminster Cathedral.

What's the difference between the English Mass and the Philippino Mass which you attend at Holy Redeemer, Oval?

When I go to Westminster Cathedral it's very quiet. Here at the Holy Redeemer it's very noisy. You know a lot of people and you chat with one another.

What do you think the Philippino community can bring to the Church in England and Wales?

We have brought our tradition of processions here to London. We process with a statue of Our Lady.

Hardest thing about being a young Catholic in England

It's not hard. I look to the Bible for discernment.