

DIVERSiGENCE & DIVERGiSENCE

Two words for remaining present while becoming ever-more helpful.

We come to one another unfinished.

Each of us carries gifts, habits, wounds, convictions, and ways of seeing that someone else does not. We also carry blind spots. Living together asks us to develop enough depth to stand for something, enough breadth to meet differences efficaciously, and enough humility to learn from our encounters.

For that work, I offer two coined words: **DIVERSiGENCE** and **DIVERGiSENCE**.

Their meanings belong together. Each needs the other.

DIVERSiGENCE is the work of formation within.

Hear **DIVERS-i-GENS** inside it: my wordplay for working on the *gens* that are you and me, developing the capacities to meet a diverse world. This is the work of becoming people who can cope, contribute, and create amid differences.

The *i* stands within that formation. We practice listening beyond our first interpretation. We examine what we believe. We develop skills, question habits, and become more capable of meeting circumstances we could not have anticipated.

Difference gives us something to learn from. Difficulty gives us something to work through. Other people have something to teach us that we cannot supply for ourselves.

DIVERSiGENCE asks: *What needs to grow in you and me so that we can meet more fully—and receive what each brings?*

DIVERGiSENCE is that formation carried into the world.

Hear **DIVERG-i-SENCE**: the person meeting divergent situations, sensing what is happening, and bringing their formation into helpful action.

And hear the **censer** in that *sence*.

A thurifer carries a censer—a thurible—through a place. The incense travels beyond its vessel. In my wordplay, we *cense* our DIVERSiGENCE outward: what has formed within us becomes perceptible through our presence, choices, and conduct.

The *gens* we cultivate becomes the presence we *cense*.

For me, that image carries the breath of the Holy Spirit and the mercy of Our Shared Human Heart. Its practical invitation is open: let our presence bring something we can receive from one another, question, and help shape together.

We listen for what matters to those involved. We bring what we can offer, discover what others can offer, and work out a response together.

DIVERGiSENCE asks: *What can we make possible together, right on the streets where we live?*

These are meanings I am coining through the interplay of the words. Their usefulness will be in what they help us practice.

The i stays small. The person grows.

That lowercase *i* is intentional. Our dignity remains whole while our need to occupy the center makes room for others.

Then comes **T**: a typical *i*, all grown up inside.

Cross the *i*. Dot the T. The dot remains. The person remains. The cross-member gives breadth and arms for service.

Here is the hidden person in the invitation to become **the refreshing ICED-T that YOU were ALWAYS meant to BE™**.

In my symbolic reading, the dash offers its breadth to the *i*—the Heh-inspired breath of Spirit finding expression in a person with arms to offer.

Refreshing is something we offer and receive. Each of us gets a say in whether the encounter helped.

And D gives us a hinge.

Impact. Contribution. Engagement. Then Data: what actually happened?

Did we receive what we needed? Who carried the cost? What did we misunderstand? What might we continue, repair, or stop?

D looks backward toward delivery and forward toward change. It brings the experience of DIVERGiSENCE home to DIVERSiGENCE, where another round of formation begins.

The *gens* learns from what its *censing* brought into the world.

There is always more to learn from one another.

Mercy finds its place in the ordinary details.

At Mabuhay Land, this would mean water, food, rest, access, fair treatment, useful assistance, and room for grief as well as celebration. It would mean making that care mutual among guests, workers, and the surrounding community.

A busy afternoon, a disagreement, a mistake, or a budget meeting gives us somewhere to practice. Each offers a chance to discover whether Mercy Magnified is becoming part of how we manage—and how it could become more helpful.

These words are offered for use. Bring your experience to them. Question what fails. Help improve what serves. Those of us affected need a voice in defining what helpful means and judging whether it happened.

Come and Look.

Bring the person you are. Make room for the person beside you. Let the encounter teach us both.

DIVERSiGENCE forms our capacity to meet.

DIVERGiSENCE puts that capacity into practice.

And the next encounter opens the work again.

People first. Product second. Helpful presence always.

Butterscotch ALWAYS.

~G