

THE RECOLETOS OBSERVER

Vol. 16 Nos. 1-2

January - June 2015



“... becoming missionary disciples and prophetic witnesses of the Joy of the Gospel among the poor.”

Life and Mission Project of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno for the Triennium 2015-2018

Editor's note

Featuring the latest Provincial Chapter in this issue is simply inevitable, considering that the Chapter is the most important event in the Province at the onset of the year 2015 and perhaps for the rest of the new triennium.

The 6th Provincial Chapter was remarkably concluded. Like a blinking cursor on an empty page, it was just the first thing—the beginning of the beginning. But at least it was done.

We hope and pray that a good beginning will make a good end.

Enjoy reading...



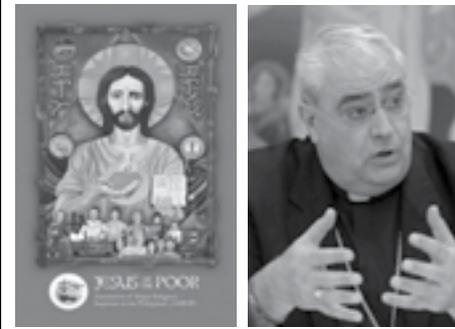
Fray Francisco Antonio, OAR
Editor, Recoletos Observer

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CEBU CITY—(February 14, 2015) Are you familiar of these stuff: Ordo capituli, masterlist, determinations, proposals, priority goals, and life and mission project? Those are the treasures of dreams and plans that the twenty five participants of the Sixth Provincial Chapter have to study, reflect, and discuss.

Ordo capituli or Order of the Chapter contains the methodology for preparing and conducting general and provincial chapters of the Order of Augustinian Recollects. This document covers procedures on: 1) preparation for Provincial Chapter, (2) Chapter procedures, (3) Officials of the Chapter, (4) Voting procedures, (5) Dynamics of the work of the Chapter, (6) Other matters, and (7) Appendix.

The Masterlist speaks of the summary proposals for the Provincial Chapter, gathered by the Pre-capitular Commission from various religious, communities, secretariats, commissions, and group-batch gatherings, and

the Philippines (CBCP) declared the year 2015 as the Year of the Poor. The Prior Provincial then presented to the vocals the direction that the Province needs to tread on that is divided into two parts: Part One that speaks of the charism to be “decentralized” in order that Jesus Christ alone is at the center and

CHAPTER CHRONICLE

Treasures of Dreams for Provincial Chapter

collated by some responsible persons tasked by the Prior Provincial and his Council. The determinations refer to the acts and decrees approved by the previous General Chapter, the latest of which was the 54th General Chapter held in Monachil, Granada, Spain on October 4 to November 13, 2015 and the Provincial Chapters, of which the most recent was the 5th Provincial Chapter held in Talavera House of Prayer-Recoletos, in Cebu City last February 13-27, 2012.

Proposals are suggestions to be proposed for deliberation to the Chapter that are composed in SMART format so that those proposals could easily be followed and understood. To be SMART means that the proposals are expressed in the following descriptions: specific, significant, stretching; measurable, meaningful, motivational; agreed-upon, attainable, achievable, action-oriented; realistic, relevant, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented; and time-based, time-bound, timely, tangible, tracktable.

A primary objective is proposed for the next period of administration or triennium (2015-2018) and is composed by the Prior Provincial and his Council, while the life and mission project speaks of the apostolic activity of the Order for 2014-2016 that needs to be cascaded to the eight Provinces of the Order spread all over the world. The report of the State of the Province, the Constitutions of the Order and the Directory of the Province, and the reports of the secretariats and commissions also need consideration and enough time to be reviewed.

Regarding the proposed primary objective of the Province for 2015-2018, Fr. Lauro Larlar emphasized that, “we should be mindful of the poor.” He chose that reminder from the Letter of St. Paul to the Galatians (2:10) because it is very relevant as the Catholic Bishops Conference of

Part Two that covers initiatives on how the charism of the Order will be lived out through the various apostolates in order to bear fruits.

Since there is still some ample time before the formal start of the 6th Provincial Chapter, Fr. Larlar proposed that probationary commissions be organized in order to read, study, and discuss in advance the proposals contained in the masterlist. Though, at first, there were varied reactions and suggestions regarding that proposal, at the end, the capitulars decided to organize themselves according to their inclination from among these commissions: (1) Governance, (2) Parish and Mission, (3) Education, (4) Formation, (5) Spirituality, (6) Social Apostolate. The twenty five delegates enlisted themselves, one by one, to be members of a particular commission with 4 members each except in the Social Apostolate which has 5 members.

The 6th Provincial Chapter TIMELINE

February 16 —Three days prior to the formal start of the 6th Provincial Chapter of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno on Monday, February 16, twenty five delegates (seven a iure and eighteen elected) together with the other friars who compose the Secretarial Team convened at the Talavera House of Prayer-Recoletos in Quiot, Pardo, Cebu City. Akin to the paschal mystery of the Lord, these three days were programmed to be spent in “fasting and prayer” to expel “the demons of the world.” Fr. Lauro V. Larlar, OAR, the Prior Provincial was facilitator of the recollection.

FEBRUARY
16

February 17 — The Sixth Provincial Chapter begun with its first session Tuesday, February 17, 2015. The Father General, Fr. Miguel Miró, who also sits as the Chapter President, led the 26 capitulars in invoking the Holy Spirit by singing the Veni Creator Spiritus. 25 Capitulars represented the various areas of apostolate of the Province, namely, the Priors with two delegates, the educational apostolate with 5, ministerial with 4, formation apostolate with 3, missionary apostolate and non-clerical brothers with 2 delegates each. Included as iure capitulars are the former Prior Provincial, the incumbent Prior Provincial and his Council, and the current Provincial Secretary.

FEBRUARY
17

The initial information phase kicked off in the afternoon of Tuesday, February 17 with Fr. Lauro Larlar presenting to the body his “State of the Province Address”. After the presentation, questions and clarification were raised by the capitulars.

The last session of the day started at 8:30 in the evening with Fr. Bernard Amparado, president of formation and vocation ministry, as the main proponent. Immediately after, questions and clarifications were entertained.



February 18—Fray René Paglinawan of the Commission on History, Culture and Heritage reported the following: the progress of the San Sebastian Basilica restoration, the Musica Sacra that showcased the beauty and acoustics of the Basilica; the move to integrate community development and San Sebastian restoration; the celebration of Cavite 400 which highlighted the evangelization of the Recollects in Cavite; and the Palawan Congress that celebrated the 390th arrival of the Recollects in the island.

FEBRUARY
18

FEBRUARY 18

The morning session also saw the presentation of Fray Leopoldo Estioko on the status of the Secretariat of Ministerial Apostolate and Commission on Missions. His report included the invitation to work in the Diocese of Saipan; the status of Balon Pari in Palawan, the Basic Christian Community and the involvement of the lay; criteria in opening a community in the missions.

Fray Edgar Tubio, drawing from his experience, shared the status of our mission in Sierra Leone, West Africa, particularly the current risk posed by the deadly Ebola virus. Likewise, he shared his assessment of the mission in Tambo.

Fray Joel Dequilla, representing our Taiwan missionaries, shared the work and ministry of our brothers in Taiwan. He cited the need to stabilize our mission personnel, preparation of the missionaries in terms of language, culture, and the safeguard of our properties.

Fray Julius Marcos in his report presented the following items: the implementation of the ordinances related to new evangelization and promotion of the OAR charism, the articulation of the OAR (Tatak Rekoleta) graduate attributes, formulation of the REAP administrative manual, the master plan of a standard school-based Recollect evangelization and many more.

FEBRUARY 19

February 19—The Commission on Social and Ecological Concern-Recoletos head, Fray Jaazeal Jakosalem, presented the status and accomplishment report. The capitular fathers congratulated the commission for a job well done and offered some recommendations to systematize and enhance the programs of the commission particularly on attracting more donors to augment the funds of the office.

Fray Virgilio Paredes – the National Vocation Director of the Province reported on the status, some updates and recommendations of the Commission on Vocation Promotion Ministry after which interventions and questions were raised.

Fr. Henry Santiago then presented his report on the financial status of the Province. Due to some urgent matters, the one hour session was extended for thirty minutes to accommodate more interventions and queries from the members.

FEBRUARY 20

February 20 — the capitulars dedicated the fourth day to formulation of the primary objective which will steer the province in the next triennium. The chapter president reminded the body to formulate a primary objective that is based, and inspired by the Order's Life and Mission Project and that the objective must also reflect the Augustinian Recollect nature of apostolic activity in the Church.



February 21—the morning session was dedicated to the collation and creation of proposed ordinances within the framework of the Life and Mission Project of the Order and in line with the formulated primary objective of the different commissions.

In the afternoon, a number of capitulars made a pilgrimage to Simala Shrine in the town of Sibonga, Cebu. The evening was spent in Laray per invitation by the Laray community.

February 23—the capitulars started with the completion of the proposals by the various commissions. Final proposals will then be presented to the plenary session.

February 24—after engaging in a serious plenary discussion on assigned topics, the capitulars were surprised by the Chapter President by announcing the top three candidates for the office of prior provincial. He informed the body that out of the 145 number of voters, 137 or 94% voted. Voted in the ternary were the following: Fr. Dionisio Selma, led the candidates for the major superior. In second was Fray Lauro Larlar. Third in line was Fray Leander Barrot. From among the three, one will emerge prior provincial after the 26 capitulars will express their choice by absolute majority.

Meanwhile, the commission phase of the Chapter continued, marked with logical arguments, linguistic analysis, persuasive debates, sharing of concrete experiences and the voting of the proposed life and mission project for the next triennium. The proposals were presented twice for voting and approval. Eventually, most of them were approved by absolute majority vote; hence said proposals became part of the Life and Mission Project of the Province for 2015-2018.



February 25—Fray Dionisio Selma officially became the new prior provincial of St. Ezekiel Moreno Province for the next triennium, 2015-2018.

February 26— after the commission phase was completed, and the message of the chapter was read, evaluated and approved, the election of the provincial councilors took place. Those who received the constitutional mandate were: Fray Julius Marcos, vicar of the province and first councilor; Fray Emmanuel Bolilia, second councilor; Fray Ian Espartero, third councilor; and Fray Edgar Tubio, fourth councilor.

On the last day of the Provincial Chapter, the Directory of the Province and the Message of the Chapter were scrutinized and approved.

FEBRUARY 21

FEBRUARY 23

FEBRUARY 24

FEBRUARY 25

FEBRUARY 26



CHAPTER CHRONICLE

Musing on chapter preparations

Looking at the bulk of papers containing the proposals for the 6th Provincial Chapter and the determinations approved in the previous Chapters, one may ask: Should religious congregations, the Recollects in particular, and their initiatives really need to be governed by laws and norms?

It would be helpful to link this fact to the query: that when Adam and Eve were created and placed in Eden, Yahweh gave both of them an order. Though they were considered highest in the grades of perfection among God's mortal creation, still they were imperfect and they transgressed. Thus, with the imperfection of man, laws are necessary. Why necessary? Aristotle states in *The Politics*: "Man, when perfected, is the best animal; but if he be isolated from law and justice he is worst of all. If man be without virtue, he is most unholy and savage being, and worse than all others in the indulgence of lust and gluttony."

Another consideration is that (aside from man's imperfection and the inclination to be controlled by his instincts) St. Thomas, in question 90 of the *Summa*, considers law as "the ordinance of reason for the common good, made by him who has the care of the community and promulgated." It should be noted well that one important aspect of this definition is the common good. Here, the prologue of the Rule of St. Augustine can be related: "Before all else, dear brothers, love God and then your neighbor, because these are the chief commandments given to us."

Even love is a command, a law. Although it is a command but because it comes primarily from God, who is Love himself, it benefits the one who obeys it. The Book of Psalms reminds, "The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The decree of the Lord is trustworthy, giving wisdom to the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The command of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The statues of the Lord are true, all of them just; more desirable than gold, than a hoard of the purest gold, sweeter also than honey of drippings from the comb; obeying them brings much reward" (Ps 19:8-12).

The intention of having laws and norms are noble and edifying. However, as what the Lord stressed to the disciples: "unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 5:20). Similarly, the same admonition should be marked by the capitulars as they spend some days to reflect, scrutinize, deliberate and determine laws and norms under the spirit of charity—as she enters another triennium of joyfully responding to the demand of revitalization and renewal. *RP*



A prelude to the Sixth Provincial Chapter

"Prayer and fasting... there is no other way"

BY FRAY LAURO V. LARLAR, OAR

I am very grateful to God when I heard the readings from the office of the hours. I thank God because our brief reading after the lauds also refers to what we have at present. The first reading reminds of these experiences. My dear brothers, let us give thanks to God. He has postponed the opening of the sixth Provincial Chapter. We have three days to prepare ourselves. Three days which remind us of the paschal mystery. Today is Friday, tomorrow is the day of hearts, and the next day is Sunday, a day of rest.

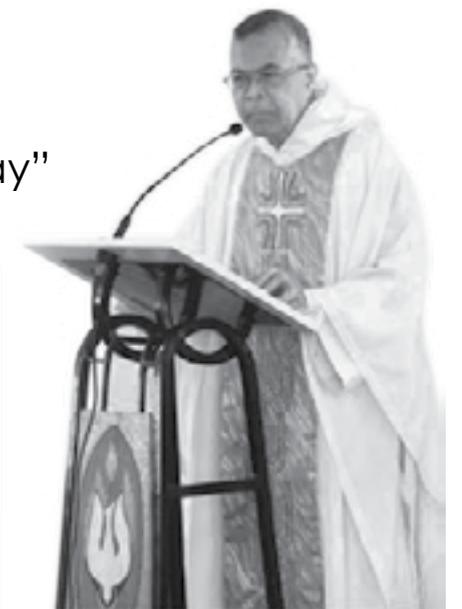
Today we begin our recollection, but the recollection has to do with prayer. It is a prayer that is in an atmosphere of recollection and silence. The silence that is referred to every time we talk of prayer is listening. This is what our Father St. Augustine did during his lifetime; to listen to the Word, to listen to God speaking in the pains of the brothers, to listen to Christ speaking in the poor and the persecuted, to listen to God in the inmost recesses of our hearts, and to listen to Christ in the quiet and in the secret of our being. That is why listening is difficult.

The point that I would like to share with you is the matter that I am very grateful for. You see, the postponement of the opening of our Chapter, I believe, is God's gift. It is an opportunity for us to prepare ourselves more intensely because our Chapter needs prayerful preparation. This is done because of the novelty of our sixth provincial chapter.



Fr. Lauro Larlar, OAR, prior provincial together with the two councilors Fr. Dionisio Selma and Fr. Bernard Amparado

In this sixth provincial chapter, the Mother Church asks us to really give attention to the needs of the people of God, to move away from so much discussion on theories and principles and move toward finding solutions—specific solutions to the problems that our brothers and the people of God suffer at the moment. We must seek response not only to our problems but also to the problems of the Church today. That is why we enjoin the faithful; we ask them to pray for us because we are in a very difficult situation. Our readings this morning, St. Paul in his letter to the Galatians spoke of our having returned to our slaveries, to our former addictions. We go back to the circumstances and the poor practices that impede us from growing in intimacy with the Lord. In the Lauds, St. Paul reminds us once again, "Do not conform yourselves to the world." We have conformed ourselves to the mind of the world. That is why the Holy Father is asking



us to move away from and out of the center and go to the periphery. We have been so attached to our minds, to our way of thinking and to our own comfortable situations that we find it very difficult to get out of the center and go to the periphery. We can do this by asking the help of our communities, friends and to the people whom we serve. We can do this in these three days before the opening of the Chapter by praying, by recollecting, and by talking in the Word of God and in response to the needs of the people especially those who need most of His mercy. We will try to do this within these three days without depriving us of the opportunity to pray personally and the freedom to pray with the community because the only way to drive out the demons in us is by prayer and fasting, and there is no other way.

The only way to detach ourselves from the tree of knowledge and evil—the only way we can "disconform" our minds to the world—is by praying and fasting. Let us do this, for this is what we are doing at present precisely, as we continue the celebration of the Holy Mass. *RP*

Fray Dionisio Q. Selma is new prior provincial

The 6th Chapter of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno has elected a new prior provincial in the person of Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR. He was the most voted by the religious of the Province. During the last triennium, Fray Selma was the Vicar of the Province and President of the Secretariat of Spirituality.

Fray Dionisio Selma was born 55 years ago in Minglanilla, one of the municipalities that compose Metro Cebu, the second largest city of the Philippines, and the center of the Visayan region. After finishing the elementary studies, he went on to high school at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Academy in Minglanilla. The school is run by the Augustinian Recollect Sisters.

Formed in the Philippines, Spain and Rome

He left his family circle when he decided to enter the seminary which the Augustinian Recollects have in Baguio City, in the north of the country. There with the program of an intern, he finished four years of philosophy and one year of novitiate. And in the same house, he professed his first religious vows on the 5th of July 1981.

At that time the province of St. Ezekiel Moreno did not exist yet, and so theological studies had to be taken in Spain, at the theology house of Marcilla (Navarra). There he studies four years of theology (1981-1985). He made his solemn profession there on October 20, 1984 and was ordained priest in September 9 of the following year. Then, he was sent to Rome where he obtained licentiate in Dogmatic Theology at the Gregorian Pontifical University.

Formator and Professor

Fray Selma is a formator. He dedicated his many years as a priest to the formation of candidates, one time as directly in-charge of young aspirants, at another as rector of the community at the OAR theologate in Quezon City as well as in the novitiate in Antipolo. To



Fray Dionisio Selma, OAR—the new prior provincial of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno for triennium 2015-2018.

this novitiate house he returned during these last three years, as prior of the community, at the same time serving as Vicar Provincial and President of the Secretariat of Spirituality.

But this new Provincial is, above all, a professor. During his whole sacerdotal life, he has practically not left teaching subjects in the field of Dogmatic Theology in which he is an expert. He started as a formator at the Recoletos Formation Center in 1985 and with a few gaps was a professor since 1987 up to the time he was elected Prior Provincial.

Without doubt, these preceding experiences of being a formator and professor will be for him highly valuable as he leads the brothers towards a new path of revitalization. **R**

THE 1ST HOMILY OF THE NEW PRIOR PROVINCIAL

Jesus is the center...

I have to say few words regarding the Provincial Chapter that we have just concluded. First of all, I experienced the first cross this afternoon during the choosing of the Councilors. It is good news. St. Paul, in today's first reading, says that it would be in vain not to preach the good news who is Jesus. Good because it is about our salvation. We cannot obtain salvation without the cross. So, it is the cross.

Second, much as I would have wanted that all be members of the council, but our Constitutions would limit the number to only four. It is neither a privilege nor an honor. You know that very well. Even by just looking at the last proposal of Fr. Marcos that each secretariat is to submit a quarterly report—that would not sound an honor but more as a cross.

But with God's guidance and help, we have accepted the responsibilities implored on us. And we are confident that with the collaboration of all of you we can move on and fulfill the tasks entrusted to us by this chapter.

It is indeed consoling to hear the words of our Prior General expressing his desire that all the brothers should cooperate and make themselves available and open for each other—an openness, too, that is expected of those who were not given responsibilities. I hope that we conclude this chapter without hurt feelings but rather happiness on your part that you were not given the responsibility. You do not have to worry. In the future you might be given one.

In this mass, we are reminded that each of us is given the task of preaching. We have just finished the Chapter, which means, the ordinances of the Life and Mission Project would not remain here as we go back to our respective communities. We should not forget that the focus in everything we do is the Lord himself. He is the center and to go away from the center is to get lost. Pope Benedict insists that to be away from the center—as an individual, community, society or religious congregation—is to lose one's direction. Therefore, in anything we do should be focused on Jesus Christ who is the center. That is why we have adapted the centrality of Christ in our Chapter message.

Jesus is sending us back again to our communities to put into practice the Life and Mission Project.

We know whom we preach—it is the Lord! But we cannot preach the Lord if we do not encounter Him deeply in our lives. The desire to have a deeper communion will only happen in an intense encounter with Him. Like an endorser of a product, he cannot convince people if he is not convinced of his own product. It is the same with us—we cannot be prophets of the Lord if we are not convinced of who we are in our consecrated life.

Like the apostles, Jesus has called us to be with Him and learn from the school of the Lord—the school of generosity, forgiveness, and all the things and values that come from His loving heart. In this school we will learn how to pattern our life, which means thinking like Jesus, feeling like

Jesus and acting like Jesus. This is a big challenge. Thinking and acting like Jesus is to see the goodness in each person. Feeling like Jesus is to have compassion on our erring brothers. The need therefore for more understanding and at the same time avoiding the “terrorism of gossip,” as pointed out by Fr. General quoting Pope Francis.

Jesus is sending us back again to our communities to put into practice the Life and Mission Project, without ever forgetting that Jesus is the center. Forgetting the center would mean that all the ordinances and proposals that we laborious made will just be put into waste and we will just continue backbiting, condemning and not collaborating. But with the positive attitude that we have, we can move forward despite our limitations.

I myself would not like to accept this, but this is coming from the special love of God who has chosen each one of us. What made me accept this? I remember the experiences of the biblical figures like Moses, Jeremiah and Paul. They have their own weaknesses. But God consoled each of them. God called them not because of their talents or personal background but He called them because He has special love for them. He assured them not to worry. He took charge of them. This action of God consoles me. After hearing and listening to all the interventions, I wanted to back-out. But the Holy Spirit continued to go on inspiring me.

Let us again invoke the blessings and graces from God through the intercession of our Mother Mary, Our Lady of Consolation, St. Augustine, St. Ezekiel, and all the saints so that we may be able to fulfill our mission in this part of the world. **R**



Fr. General Miguel Miró (second from left) with the top three (3) candidates for prior provincial: (from left to right) Frays Lauro Larlar, Dionisio Selma and Leander Barrot.

DELEGATES TO THE SIXTH PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno

1. Fray Jose Ernil F. Almayo	10. Fray Bernabe M. Dosdos	19. Fray Albert A. Pellazar
2. Fray Bernard C. Amparado	11. Fray Leopoldo V. Estioko	20. Fray Emilio Edgardo A. Quilatan
3. Fray Regino Z. Bangcaya	12. Fray Jaazeal D. Jakosalem	21. Fray Rommel L. Rubia
4. Fray Leander V. Barrot	13. Fray Lauro V. Larlar	22. Fray Henry H. Santiago
5. Fray Emmanuel A. Bolilia	14. Fray Amadeo C. Lucero	23. Fray Dionisio Q. Selma
6. Fray Raul M. Buhay	15. Fray Julius M. Marcos	24. Fray Joseph Philip I. Trayvilla
7. Fray Feliciano C. Campomanes, Jr.	16. Fray Christopher C. Maspara	25. Fray Edgar P. Tubio
8. Fray Joel G. Dequilla	17. Fray Miguel M. Miró	26. Fray William C. Villaflor
9. Fray Arnel F. Diaz	18. Fray Anthony A. Morillo	



COMMISSIONS OF THE 6TH PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

GOVERNANCE	SPIRITUALITY	PASTORAL/MISSION
Fray Miguel M. Miró Fray Lauro V. Larlar Fray Henry H. Santiago Fray Feliciano C. Campomanes	Fray Dionisio Q. Selma Fray Regino Z. Bangcaya Fray William C. Villaflor Fray Emilio Edgardo A. Quilatan	Fray Leopoldo V. Estioko Fray Raul M. Buhay Fray Amadeo C. Lucero Fray Edgar P. Tubio Fray Joel G. Dequilla
FORMATION	EDUCATION	SOCIAL APOSTOLATE
Fray Bernard C. Amparado Fray Joseph Philip I. Trayvilla Fray Bernabe M. Dosdos Fray Rommel L. Rubia Fray Arnel F. Diaz	Fray Julius M. Marcos Fray Leander V. Barrot Fray Jose Ernil F. Almayo Fray Cristopher C. Maspara	Fray Jaazeal D. Jakosalem Fray Anthony A. Morillo Fray Emmanuel A. Bolilia Fray Albert A. Pellazar

LIST OF CAPITULARS

A IURE CAPITULARS

Prior General
Fray Miguel M. Miró

Prior Provincial
Fray Lauro V. Larlar

Councilors
Fray Dionisio Q. Selma
Fray Bernard C. Amparado
Fray Leopoldo V. Estioko
Fray Julius M. Marcos

Provincial Secretary
Fray Arnel F. Diaz

Former Prior Provincial
Fray Regino Z. Bangcaya

ELECTED CAPITULARS

Priors of the Houses
Fray Joseph Philip I. Trayvilla
Fray William C. Villaflor

Formation
Fray Bernabe M. Dosdos
Fray Rommel I. Rubia
Fray Emilio Edgardo A. Quilatan

Ministerial
Fray Anthony A. Morillo
Fray Raul M. Buhay
Fray Henry H. Santiago
Fray Amadeo C. Lucero

Education
Fray Jose Ernil F. Almayo
Fray Cristopher C. Maspara
Fray Leander V. Barrot
Fray Emmanuel A. Bolilia
Fray Albert A. Pellazar

Mission
Fray Edgar P. Tubio
Fray Joel G. Dequilla

Religious Brothers
Fray Jaazeal D. Jakosalem
Fray Feliciano C. Campomanes



TIDBITS

The provincial chapter is a central component of the Augustinian Recollect governmental system with roots in the earliest days of the Order.

While the Order is governed at the highest level of its internal structure by the Prior General and his Councilors in Rome, each province has the responsibility of creating and implementing specific legislation to direct the evangelical life of its friars.

This process is strengthened by the triennial provincial chapter, at which the capitulars discuss the life and mission of the province for the next triennium, craft legislations and elect a friar to serve as prior provincial for the next three years.

- Among the 26 delegates to the 6th Provincial Chapter, the youngest is 33 years old (Fray Albert Pellazar) while the eldest is 66 years old (Fray Regino Bangcaya).
- 2 delegates, Frays Lauro Larlar and Regino Bangcaya, have been present in all six Provincial Chapters.
- 9 capitulars are priors of communities (including the Prior General and the Prior Provincial).
- 2 of the capitulars are religious brothers: Frays Jaazeal Jakosalem and Feliciano Campomanes.



The Capitulars of the Sixth Provincial Chapter of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno

Message of the Sixth Provincial Chapter Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno

A Response to a Call

On the occasion of the universal Church's celebration of the "Year of Consecrated Life" and the local church's "Year of the Poor", we, the delegates to the 6th Provincial Chapter of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, gathered in the spirit of communal responsibility and ecclesial fraternity at the historic Talavera House of Prayer-Recoletos, Cebu City, that has been the home of previous Provincial Chapters, respond to the primal task entrusted by the Order through the 54th General Chapter: "To revitalize . . . in accordance with our charismatic identity, in order to better accomplish our evangelizing mission, by reorganizing our structures, and by intensifying our fraternal and ecclesial communion"¹ The same challenge of revitalization is a specific response to the call of the Mother Church on evangelization characterized in the words of Pope Francis as " . . . a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation."²

The delegates are high-spirited to face head-on the demands of the Provincial Chapter because of the confidence given to us by our brothers for this task and responsibility and the countless prayer intentions and sacrifices offered for the success of this noble endeavor by other Recollect Provinces of the Order, the OAR Nuns, the members of the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity worldwide, the AR Sisters, the local Ordinaries, the numerous male and female congregations and pious organizations, and the countless lay collaborators, students and faithful in the different areas of apostolate of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno. To all of them, the delegates are thankful, appreciative, and beholden.

¹ General Objective of the 54th General Chapter: Message, Determinations and Elections.

² Pope Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium*, 27.

Fidelity to Charismatic Identity

More than four hundred years ago our predecessors have toiled in this land implanting in her Faith in the God of destiny. They labored assiduously in communion with confreres separated by lands and seas, but never isolated in spirituality and dignity. They bore witness to a life of fraternal communion, a self-sacrificing labor of love,³ and a contemplative prayer characterized by intense oneness with the Divine and prophetic witnessing to the people.

The spirit of our founding fathers lives on. Conscious of the many setbacks and foibles due to our humanness, the Province clings on to the person of Christ, the epitome of humility and poverty and the personification of service and charity. Thus, as consecrated people, the members of the Province continuously struggle to take up Jesus's life of poverty, adopt his interior attitude, absorb his surprising logic and his scale of values, share in his risks and his hopes and be invaded by the Spirit⁴ so that each is transformed into the image and likeness⁵ of the Father in Christ.

The past triennium was as demanding as the previous ones. The constant call to align the Recoletos life with the spirit of the founding charism remained the first in the watch list of the major superior and local priors of the Province: to live in community as brothers, to follow and imitate Christ—poor, obedient and chaste; to search for truth, to be at the service of the Church, to endeavor to achieve perfect charity according to the spirit of St. Augustine and early legislators⁶ are but few of the many areas of reminders, exhortations and appeals. The requirements of formation as embracing the whole life of the religious⁷ have become more complex. Thus the need for religious in formation houses to attend to programs of immersion in the traditions and spirit of the Recollection and become experts in the science of human and spiritual formation. Academic, human, pastoral, and spiritual programs were revisited, reviewed and implemented for the sake of future effective, affective and committed Augustinian Recollect laborers in the vineyard of the Lord. The formation of the young who are considered as ". . . special gift of the spirit of God"⁸ has become more daunting as the 21st century progresses. The movement leading to the integration among ASEAN nations has ushered unsettling issues and concerns that rock the foundational and functional identity of our institutions. As one of the responses to its possible consequences, the province relentlessly pursued to establish a unified evangelization program that would leave a Catholic and Augustinian mark in the hearts and souls of the youth and lay collaborators of our academic institutions. The missionary and ministerial apostolates have been blessed with vibrant, generous and young religious to shepherd and tend the parishes and mission apostolates of the Province. They continuously labor to make our parishes and missions become places of encounter with Jesus Christ leading to the conversion of people effecting in them the separation from behaviors and lifestyles incompatible with the new life.⁹

Within the triennium, blessings poured in and acts of altruism were manifest. The momentous visit of Pope Francis to Manila and Tacloban, the city worst hit by typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), has awakened the slumbering hearts and weary souls of the rich and poor, the young and old to his message of "Mercy and Compassion." We have seen the heroism of our Recollect confreres who preferred to remain and serve in the missions of Africa despite the furors caused by the Ebola outbreak. The Provincial Chapter is itself a gift from God, but what greater gift is there than celebrating on the day of hearts, the second day of the Pre-Chapter, the elevation of Most Reverend Jose Luis Lacunza y Maestrojuan, OAR, Bishop of David,

³ Cf. 1 Thes 1:3

⁴ Cf. Pope Francis, *REJOICE! A Letter to Consecrated Men and Women*, 5.

⁵ Cf. Gen 1:26

⁶ Cf. Const. 1,6.

⁷ Cf. Const. 6, 118.

⁸ John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 9.

⁹ Cf. *New Evangelization and the Process of Restructuring of the Order of Augustinian Recollects*. Document 4. No. 8.

Panama, to the office of Cardinal by Pope Francis. The new Cardinal enters into the rich Recollect history as her first Cardinal from and for the Mother Church.

A Personal and Communitarian Encounter with Christ

This Provincial Chapter has been a transfiguration-like¹⁰ experience of the capitulars. The daily activities never started without the community seeking for blessings, guidance, and grace from God through meditation, praying of the breviary, and the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. The liturgical songs ushered in recollections of formative years, vocations stories, and spiritual encounters with Christ. The meals and snacks were not only occasions to refill empty and half-empty stomachs but were welcomed avenues to renew fraternal communion, recall memories, share experiences, and laugh to hearts content. Despite the new methodology in the conduct of the Provincial Chapter, following the untested Life-and-Mission-Project (LAMP) format of the Order, the discussions in the hall remained calm, serious and sacred focused on issues and concerns that would make the Province, for the next triennium, responsive to the requisites of the Mother Church, aligned with the vision of the Order, and mindful of the socio-cultural and spiritual aspirations of the Philippine society and overseas missions. Jest and jokes crop up here and there, for the Filipino-Recoletos' sense of humor, even in serious discussions, cannot simply be sidelined or relegated to the margin.

Our Lady of Consolation remained to be a guiding star during the whole Provincial Chapter. Invocations were constant through the daily praying of the rosary and the singing of the Salve on Saturdays. The day never ended without petitioning her for protection through a song or prayer. St. Joseph, St. Ezekiel Moreno and the other Augustinian Recollect saints were continuously invoked for the success of the day's endeavors. Indeed, "how good and pleasant it is when kindred live in unity"¹¹ as the psalmist proclaims.

Missionary Disciples and Prophetic Witnesses

After the chapter, the capitular delegates will go down from Talavera to re-join their respective communities of missionary disciples and together with them to take the first step, get involved and supportive, bear fruit, and rejoice¹² in the task of evangelization.

There is a plethora of podia from where to proclaim the good news of salvation. Guided by the Life and Mission Project of the Order and of the Province, all religious embark on, once again, the journey to truly become prophetic witnesses "permanently in a state of Mission."¹³ The social and ecological impact of natural catastrophes due to the country's location in the pathway of typhoons and within the vulnerable areas of calamities, commit the religious not only to aesthetic makeovers but to a collective and communitarian effort, through the *HeartAnonymous*, ". . . to promote authentic development of peoples."¹⁴ The celebration of historical landmarks of the Recollects' presence in the Philippines, such as the 75th year of the existence of Colegio de Sto. Tomas de Villanueva-Recoletos (1940), of San Sebastian College-Recoletos, Manila (1941), and of the inauguration of the edifice of San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish in Talisay City, Negros Occidental (1939), the 400th year of Augustinian Recollect presence in Cavite (1616), the 155th anniversary of St. Ezekiel Moreno's arrival in the Philippines (1870), the 25th anniversary of St. Ezekiel Moreno's canonization (1992), the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the image of Our Lady of

¹⁰ Cf. Mt 17:1-8

¹¹ Ps 133:1.

¹² *Evangelii Gaudium*, 24.

¹³ FIFTH GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BISHOPS OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, *Aparecida Document*, 29 June 2007, 201; Quoted in *Evangelii Gaudium*, 25.

¹⁴ Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 30.

Mount Carmel in the Philippines (1618), and the 50th anniversary of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary (1965), and the 50th founding anniversary of San Sebastian College-Recoletos, Cavite City (1966) are, on the one hand, reminders of the legacy of love of our forefathers and, on the other hand, challenges to commit ourselves to social change and ethical transformation founded on the gospel of love. The social media as a pulpit for evangelization and social transformation is a zone needing more immersion, improvement, and maximization so that Christ's gospel of love, integrity and compassion is heard audibly and lived faithfully by netizens. The opening of new areas of apostolate and mission engagements within the archipelago and in other Asian nations and the rest of the world is a persistent call to share our spirituality of communion and gift of persons for others.

The Joy of the Gospel among the Poor

The constant challenge then, now and forever for religious consecration is ". . . to adhere ever more closely to Christ, the center of consecrated life and once again take up the path of conversion and renewal. . ." ¹⁵ Without the poor-humble Christ at the center, all endeavors of the Province and of the religious are bereft of meaning, direction and dignity. There is the need to journey back to the well if only to meet the source of the "spring of water gushing up to eternal life"¹⁶, to toil for the human bread that perishes if only to encounter the "Bread of Life"¹⁷, and to be shepherds "living with the odour of the sheep"¹⁸, if only to encounter and become like the "good shepherd [who] lays down his life for the sheep."¹⁹

This profound encounter with the person of Christ makes us understand that "life grows by being given away, and it weakens in isolation and comfort."²⁰ Our deep union with Christ makes us realize that our consecration is a call to prophesy and "we are called to go to the places where the great majority of our sisters and brothers have been driven away from the centers of power, wealth, and opportunities and from there—with the marginalized—proclaim the Gospel and act on its demands."²¹

Within the next three years, the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno commits itself to a Priority Objective that defines its spirituality and mission for the church, the Order, the Philippine society, and overseas missions. She invokes the blessings of the Almighty Father for strength and guidance to live, breathe, and labor inspired by this goal:

Responding to the call of the Mother Church, we, the Augustinian Recollects of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, desire to experience a deeper personal and communitarian encounter with Christ by being faithful to our charism and our Life and Mission Project, becoming missionary disciples and prophetic witnesses of the Joy of the Gospel among the poor.

¹⁵ Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 30.

¹⁶ Jn 4:14

¹⁷ Jn 6:35

¹⁸ Pope Francis, *Homily on the Chrism Mass* (Holy Thursday), 28 March 2013.

¹⁹ Jn 10:11

²⁰ *Aparecida Document*, 29 June 2007, 360; Quoted in *Evangelii Gaudium*, 10.

²¹ Message of the AMRSP to all Consecrated Women and Men on the Occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life, www.amrsp.org/2015/01/prophetic-witness-of-the-gospel-of-joy-among-the-poor/

Secretariats and Commissions

Triennium 2015-2018

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Execom:

Fray Bernabe M. Dosdos, OAR
 Fray Emilio Edgardo A. Quilatan, OAR
 Fray Joseph Philip I. Trayvilla, OAR
 Fray Arian Josef M. Ocheda, OAR
 Fray Gideon Antolin U. Lagrimas, OAR
 Fray Lauro V. Larlar, OAR

Commission Liturgy

Chairman: Fray Arian Josef M. Ocheda, OAR

Members:

Fray Gideon Antolin U. Lagrimas, OAR
 Fray Jose Fortunato J. Garces, OAR
 Fray Henry H. Santiago, OAR
 Fray Joseph Dexter D. Palagtiosa, OAR
 Fray Roland P. Cepe, OAR
 Fray Leo G. Alaras, OAR
 Fray Alexis E. Mansueto, OAR

SECRETARIAT OF MINISTERIAL AND MISSION APOSTOLATE

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 Fray Amadeo C. Lucero, OAR
 Fray Jorge G. Peligro, OAR
 Fray Antonio C. Zabala, Jr., OAR

Commission on Missions

Chairman: Fray Allan M. Jacinto, OAR

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Members:

All formators assigned in the seminaries
 Local Vocation Promoters of each community

Commission on Formation

Chairman: Fray Lauro V. Larlar, OAR

Commission on Vocation Ministry

Chairman: Fray Virgilio M. Paredes, Jr., OAR

SECRETARIAT OF EDUCATIONAL APOSTOLATE

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 Fray Eduardo S. Celiz, Jr., OAR
 Fray Nemesio D. Tolentin, OAR
 Fray Cristituto A. Palomar, OAR
 Fray Sixto Ciriaco M. Bitangjol, OAR
 Fray Joel A. Alve, OAR
 Fray Leo G. Alaras, OAR
 Fray Henry H. Santiago, OAR

COMMISSIONS UNDER THE PRIOR PROVINCIAL

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Members:

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 Fray Albert A. Pellazar, OAR
 Fray Charlito A. Orobia, OAR
 Fray Amado Emmanuel A. Bolilia, OAR

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 Fray Allan Rubett A. Cabatian, OAR
 Fray Amado Emmanuel A. Bolilia, OAR
 Fray Feliciano C. Campomanes, Jr., OAR

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Members:

Fray Ken Oliver S. Lao, OAR
 Fray Hector C. Gonzales, OAR
 Fray Leo Neil C. Bullos, OAR

Commission on Communications-Recoletos

Chairman: Fray Jose Ernill F. Almayero, OAR

Members:

Fray Francisco L. Antonio, OAR
 Fray Leander V. Barrot, OAR
 Fray Reynaldo E. Jaranilla, OAR
 Fray Jaazeal D. Jakosalem, OAR
 Fray Anthony P. Irineo, OAR

Statistical status of the “Augustinian Recollect Family” in the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno

Following the metaphysical standpoint of Document 7 on “The Members and the Presence of the Order of Augustinian Recollects,” the statistical data that we present here “will allow us to reflect on the important aspects and objectives of our reality. [...] that, behind each unit, there is an individual brother [or sister] and a concrete community, and that in the light of faith, we believe that in this human reality we find Christ and the action of the Holy Spirit” (pp. 7-8).

We start with ourselves, OAR priests and brothers: As of July 25, 2015, we are 176 religious, 42 of whom are still under initial formation at Recoletos Formation Center, Quezon City. The remaining 134 are already in permanent formation, 8 of whom are religious brothers, and 126 are clerical religious. And we look forward still to those in our seminaries—around 110 of them: 11 in the high school seminary (San Carlos City), 78+ in the college seminary (Baguio), 14 pre-novices (who have just ended their exposure at Pililia, Rizal), and 7 novices (Antipolo).

Next, the OAR cloistered nuns at the St. Ezekiel Moreno Monastery in Brgy. Tangub, Bacolod City. There are 9 of them, 1 of whom is still under initial formation. Mo. Ma. del Carmen, OAR, a Mexican, is the current Mother Superior. Aside from Mo. Lourdes Eizaguirre, the lone Spaniard, the other 7 are Filipinos—2 from Quezon City, 3 from Negros Occidental, 1 from Negros Oriental, and 1 from Iloilo.

The Congregation of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters has 38 convents grouped into four Divisions—that of Talangpaz Sisters, Sacred Heart, Our Lady, and St. Joseph. At present, there are 250 professed Sisters: 239 are perpetually professed while 11 are juniors.

The Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity in the Province has already 16 Chapters (10 in Luzon and 6 in the Visayas), the newest of which is that of St. Ezekiel Moreno Spirituality and Development Center in Brgy. San Jose, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. As of May 2015, there are 1,052 “promised” members and 28 are still on their

Trial period.

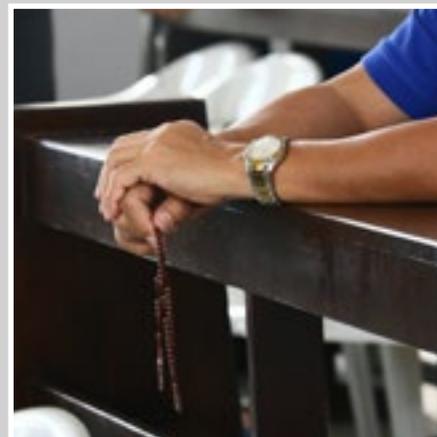
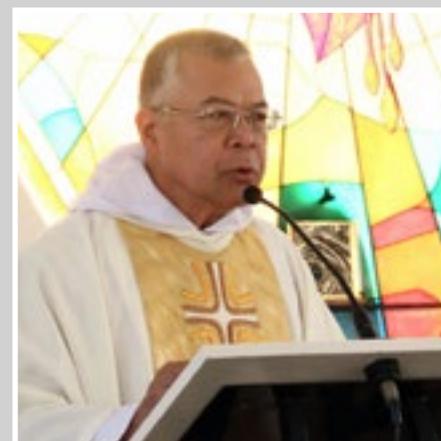
Additionally, we also count on the 6 Brothers- and Sisters-General of the Order, who are recognized for their exemplary contributions to the Province and the Order. The 2 Brothers-General are: Mr. Fulgencio Culaton (Baguio City) and Cong. Rufus Rodriguez (Cagayan de Oro). The 4 Sisters-General are: Ms. Brenda Saliendra, Dr. Milagros Espina, Mrs. Leonila Dosado—all of them from Cebu City, and Ms. Nestoria Bad-an (Valencia, Negros Oriental).

As to our youth and vocation ministry, especially through the RAY (Recollect Augustinian Youth), the Province has a vast field to take care of, noting that we handle 11 Recoletos school campuses, 13 parishes, and 5 chaplaincies in the Philippines alone. This school year’s total enrollees in all of these schools breached 31,000, which is nearly 40% of the total student population in 50 Recoletos schools worldwide.

[Excerpt from Prot. No. 0140/15, dated July 14, 2015; with some updated data]. R

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The 6th Provincial Chapter in Pictures



Mass of the Year of Consecrated Life and unveiling of the icon

BY FR. DEXTER TOLEDO, OFM

The Missionary Benedictine Sisters of St. Scholastica's Priory led the congregation in the singing of the psalms for the Solemn Lauds. Fr. Arnold Sta. Maria, OSA, parish priest of San Agustin Church presided at the morning prayer.

The ICON of Jesus of the Poor was also unveiled at this celebration. Fray Jaazeal Jakosalem, OAR, painted the icon upon the request of the AMRSP. The ICON is rich with symbolism and indigenous imagery. The ICON was presented to Pope Francis during his visit here in the Philippines and he blessed it as a sign of his solidarity to the religious people. The ICON will be having its pilgrimage to various religious communities this year.

Sr. Eden Panganiban, SSpS, and Sr. Michaela Gotangco, FdCC, composed a song entitled "Prophetic Witnesses" which was tagged as the theme song of the local celebration of the Year of Consecrated Life. The exhortations of the Holy Father and the theme for the year were the main inspirations for the lyrics of the song.

Some performers also graced the event by singing some songs inspired by Consecrated People. Laarni Lozada rendered a song entitled "Mercy and Compassion". Both Fr. Raul Caga, SVD, and Jon Cadelina sang some songs from the album Faith, Like and Share produced by Carmelite Communications.

The Association of Major Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP) has organized various activities to celebrate this grace-filled year. Beginning March, there will be a monthly lecture series that will discuss various concerns of the consecrated people. There will also be pilgrimages to various monastic communities. There is also an upcoming Big Concert to raise funds for the various projects of the AMRSP.

The Executive Committee of AMRSP is headed by Sr. Eden Panganiban, SSpS, with Fr. Leo Dalmao, CMF, as co-Chairperson and Sr. Michaela Gotangco, FdCC, and Fr. Dexter Toledo, OFM, as Executive Secretaries. 



Icon of Jesus of the Poor by Fray Jaazeal Jakosalem, OAR

MANILA – It is both a colorful and meaningful day for the members of religious congregations and institutes as they celebrate the World Day for Consecrated Life in a celebration held at San Agustin Church, February 2, 2015. This annual event was made more special since 2015 was declared by Pope Francis as the Year for Consecrated Life. Almost a thousand consecrated men and women attended the liturgical celebration.

The mass was presided by Most Rev. Arturo M. Bastes, SVD, DD, Bishop of the Diocese of Sorsogon. In his homily, he highlighted the role of consecrated men and women in promoting the values of the Church of the Poor.

Fray José Luis Lacunza Maestrojuán makes history

José Luis Lacunza Maestrojuan, OAR, made history by becoming the first religious priest from the **Order of Augustinian Recollects** to be elevated to the cardinalate. **José Luis Lacunza Maestrojuán**, previously the Archbishop of David in the Republic of Panama, was elevated by Pope Francis on February 14, 2015.

Birth: February 24, 1944, Pamplona, Spain.

Education: Entered the Order of Augustinian Recollects, Province of Nuestra Señora de la Consolación. He studied at the Minor Seminary of San José of the Augustinian Fathers in Artieda; then, he attended the courses of philosophy in Zaragoza; and studied theology in the Major Augustinian Recollects Seminary Nuestra Señora de la Consolación in Pamplona. He made his solemn profession in the Order of Augustinian Recollects on September 16, 1967, in Pamplona.

Priesthood: Ordained, July 13, 1969, in Pamplona. About two years later he was sent to Panamá, where he was rector of Colego San Agustín; rector of the University of Santa María la Antigua; and president of the Federation of Catholic Schools.

Episcopate: Elected titular bishop of Partenia and appointed auxiliary of Panamá, December 30, 1985. Consecrated, in Panamá, January 18, 1986, by José Sebastián Laboa Gallego, titular archbishop of Zarái, nuncio to Panamá, assisted by Marcos Gregorio McGrath, C.S.C., archbishop of Panamá, and by José Agustín Ganuza García, O.A.R., titular bishop of Pauzera, prelate emeritus of Bocas del Toro. His episcopal motto is **Praesumus**

si prosumus. Transferred to the see of Chitré, October 29, 1994. Transferred to the see of David, July 2, 1999. President of the Episcopal Conference of Panamá from 2000 to 2004; and from 2007 to 2013. He works with indigenous peoples to protect them from mining interests.

Cardinalate: Created cardinal priest in the consistory of February 14, 2015; received the red biretta, the cardinalitial ring and the title of S. Giuseppe da Cupertino on that same day. He is the first cardinal of Panamá and of the Order of Augustinian Recollects (O.A.R.). On April 13, 2015, he was named member of the Congregation for Catholic Education; and of the Pontifical Council for Culture. Named member of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America on September 5, 2015.



His Eminence José Luis Cardinal Lacunza, the first cardinal of Panama

Spady speaks on OBE at SSC-R

BY KYLE JAMES S. SOLAR

MANILA — A seminar sponsored by Rex Bookstore was conducted April 25 at the SCC-R Bar Review Center. Entitled: “**OBE or CBO: That is the Question**,” the seminar was attended by over 250 educators from different schools and organizations, 75 of which came from SCC-R. Other participants came from other educational institutions such as Holy Angel University, LPU-Batangas, WCC-Caloocan, University of Makati, Letran-Calamba, PHINMA-Araullo University, University of the Assumption, SCC-R de Cavite, SSC-R Canlubang, SCC-R Manila, Colegio de San Juan, Angeles University Foundation, City University of Pasay, EARIST, Batangas State University, University of the East,

UE-Caloocan, Wesleyan University, UA-Pampanga, Our Lady of Fatima University, Adamson University, Arellano University, Centro Escolar University, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, St. Joseph College, San Beda College, Patts, Lyceum of the Philippines University, and MLSU.

Shedding light to the question posed about the choice between OBE and CBO, Dr. William Spady, the main speaker, discussed the specific details about OBE and CBO and its relation to the education system. Spady has a PhD in Sociology from the University of Chicago and is considered as the father of OBE. Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) is a means for clearly focusing and organizing everything in an

educational system around what is essential for all student to be able to assimilate more information successfully at the end of their learning experiences (Spady, 1994). The focus of OBE is on the outcome, and an outcome is defined as an observable demonstration of learning. Spady states that it is not enough to know and understand the content which is what is done in a Calendar-Based Organization (CBO). The students should be able to produce tangible outcomes, do something that is observable. As he stated, “if it is not observable, it is not assessable.”

According to Spady, right now, evaluation of students’ progress depends on what they have learned

is a specific time block. At the end of this time block (i.e. a semester), the students are labeled with permanent marks and because educators are mandated to do it, they do it in ink. He questions the idea by asking, “What if he uses pencils instead?” Using a pencil will enable possible changes for a better grade when the students learned. This provides an expanded opportunity for the students. When berated by the idea that it is unfair, he simply answered that “if you think it’s unfair, it simply means that you don’t want all of them, the learners, to learn well.” After all, the philosophy of OBE is ‘Success for All’, which means that the goal is for all the learners to be successful. To accomplish these, there is a need to set higher expectations following higher standards of learning to set optimum conditions maximizing success, and, at the same time, to provide an expanded opportunity. At the end of the day, the goal is to produce students who walk out the door as a self-directed learner, a cooperative member, a critical thinker, an asset to the community, and a quality-sensitive performer.

Questions from the participants

were raised after Dr. Spady’s speech, ranging from concerns on how to apply OBE without deterring from the existing rules implemented by CHED, to questions on how to appraise the learnings of the students without the presence of a numeric grading system. Spady answered by saying, “There is a difference between how you assess a student with labeling a student. Grades are labels.” People followed the issue up saying that we have performance measures because we have numbers, but Spady rebuts by stating that “outcomes are defined by words and not numbers.” He also suggested for educators to send petitions from certain academic institutions to serve as model sites of an experimental system and to be an exception with respect to CHED. As he said, “Don’t just comply. Don’t just pile up bricks; design a cathedral.” The discussion began to be about more of thinking as whole, looking at a new perspective. Spady ended by asking, “What kind of OBE do you want to have in the Philippines?”

The seminar seemed to pose that everything is a working progress. The ideas were mind-blowing but one cannot help but agree that it

will take time and a lot of thinking before these ideas materialize and be truly grasped by the existing system. It might take some time for it to be incorporated to the system but application on key ideas of OBE can be easily implemented in the classroom level. These ideas may allow the current system to progress, though, and allow it to stay on track. This seminar, therefore, seemed to have succeeded in giving the assurance that with one step at a time, the educational community is moving forward and is improving its system.

Closing the event, the SCC-R president expressed gratitude to the speaker, the organizers and the sponsors of this event. As educators, the college president urged everyone to continue promoting quality education and producing globally competitive graduates. Ending the message was a quote he took from St. Augustine: “Let knowledge be used as a kind of scaffolding to help build the edifice of love and understanding, which shall endure forever even after knowledge itself shall be destroyed” (Epist. 55, 21.39). **RD**



© Photo by Fray Nemesio Tolentin, OAR



© Photo from SSC-R correspondent

Vacationing missionaries on 20-day quarantine

BY FRAY TOL ALMAYO, OAR

PROVINCIAL CURIA — “Welcome home!”

For our brothers, Frays Jonathan Jamero and Dennis Castillo, who dauntlessly stayed put to be with their flock in Ebola-afflicted Sierra Leone, those words of welcome would still ring in a more homey tone in their ears 20 days after May 29, 2015, their arrival date in the country. They were immediately detained at the Bureau of Quarantine in NAIA 2 for mandatory health surveillance and control measures.

At 4:04 P.M. of May 29, the Emirates airline where the two boarded for their connecting flight from Dubai to Manila landed at NAIA Terminal 3. Meanwhile

classmates Fray Edgar Tubio and Alden Alipin who volunteered to welcome the missionaries were patiently waiting outside the terminal. The former was trying to reach the two via their cellphone but to no avail.

As it was already almost five in the afternoon, and none of the two showed up, Fray Alden went out of the lounge and went to the airline information desk to verify whether the two VIPs had really boarded the aircraft. Refusing at first to answer the inquiry as it meant breach of protocol, the man at the desk, after having assured of Fray Alden’s

identity as a priest and those two were his confreres, later gave an affirmative reply.

Inside the arrival area, the two missionaries, together with two other passengers from West Africa, were put on hold. A nurse was assigned to the two friars to accompany in their transit to the BOQ building. It was through this

still at the middle of the sea of slow-moving vehicles circling the rotunda near Resort World were contacted at about 7 P.M. to return to Bay 5 to fetch Fray Rex Bangcaya. Thanks to technology, Fray Rex was reached by phone and instructed to catch up with the group; he became an off-the-cuff part of the well-wishers.)

At the quarantine building, only

Fray Edgar, Fray Alden, and Rommel, the driver, voluntarily approached and talked to the new “arrivals” who, this time, were already wearing a blue scrub suit similar to that of a nurse, but only from a distance of around three meters.

“They had already taken their dinner when we met them,” Fray Edgar

reported, He also added that their talk lasted for around thirty minutes and, after that, they went back to the Provincialate sans the two vacationing missionaries.

At 9:00 A.M. of May 30, the local prior of the central house called up the cellphone number used by Fray Dennis. But, on the other line was Mr. Mark Trinidad, the nurse who accompanied the friars. “Yes Father, ako po ‘yun nurse na kasama noong dalawang pari na kasamahan po ninyo,” he confirmed to the prior. He also said that the temperature and blood pressures of the two are monitored twice a day, in the

morning and in the evening.

When requested if the prior could talk to any of the two, he said he was off-duty and that another one is in-charge through whose number the prior and later, Fray Edgar also, were able to talk to the two for follow-up.

“OK lang po kami dito, Father,” said Fray Dennis to the prior, obviously smiling, and quipped, “parang seminary lang po. Tig-iisa po

kami ng room. Pero air-conditioned po.” Then, he tittered. At that time, Fray Jamero was still asleep.

While this brief conversation was going on, Frays Henry Santiago and Feliciano Campomanes were on their way to bring the missionaries’ personal needs, including two SIM cards and a mass kit.

Fray Dennis who hails from Mondaca, Tarlac and Fray Jamers from Norala, South Cotabato

together went to Sierra Leone in April 2014, When the threat of Ebola was on its peak, their two companions who went home for very urgent matters also went through the ordeal of voluntary quarantine.

With their schedule of vacation ready, they left Lungi Airport in Sierra Leone on May 28 via Casablanca in Morocco, then en route to Dubai. **RD**



Fray Jamers (left photo) with 2 African kids; Fray Dennis (right photo) demonstrating “Meron o Wala” using live chicken to Sierra Leone locals © Photos grabbed from Facebook

SARF-Philippines holds 12th national convention

BY EVELYN BALINGIT, SARF



© Photo from SARF correspondent

CEBU CITY — **The Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity in the Philippines** held its 12th National Biennial Convention las May 15-17 at the Talavera House of Prayer-Recoletos, Quiot, Cebu City, with the theme, SARF: TODAY’S WITNESSES OF ST. MAGDALENE OF

NAGASAKI IN HER POVERTY AND LIFE OF CONSECRATION.”

The Our Lady of Consolation Parish Chapter, Laray, Talisay City, Cebu, with its Spiritual Director, Fr. Leonardo Pauligue, OAR, and the SARF Chapter President, Sr. Fe Horcasitas, hosted the convention.

A total of 142 delegates from Luzon and the Visayas Chapters participated (74 from Luzon and 68 from Visayas Chapters) and were inspired by the presence of seven SATF Spiritual Directors: Fr. Regino Z. Bangcaya, OAR, SEMN-Recoletos-Antipolo and SARF National

Director; Fr. Emeterio Bunao, OAR, UNO-R Bacolod and SARF Regional Spiritual Director-Negros; Fr. Emilio L. Larlar, OAR, OLMCP-Cebu City and SARF Regional Spiritual Director-Cebu; Fr. Leonardo Pauligue, OAR, OLMCP-Laray, Cebu; Fr. Jose Ernil Almayo, OAR, SNTD-Talisay City, Negros Occidental; Fr. Emilito Villaflor, OAR, Mt. Carmel Parish-Quiapo, Manila; and Fr. Raul Buhay, OAR, spiritual director for the 3 Palawan Chapters (SHJHS-Brooke's Point, OLMCP-Inagawan, and SEMDSC-Puerto Princesa).

The first day started at 2:00 P.M. with welcome remarks of Fr. Emilio Larlar, OAR, followed by the roll call of Chapter Delegates by Sr. Marwin Oane, National Secretary and the opening remarks of Fr. Leonardo Pauligue, OAR, the host spiritual director.

Next was the presentation of the report of the SARF National President, Sr. Evelyn L. Balingit. The first part was the introduction of the SARF National Officers and the newly elected Chapter Presidents.

Included in the report was an illustration of how the SARF progressed and attained the mission set during the 2013 Biennial Convention which focused SARF's mission—"to grow in number, faith and love". The SARF President also presented the SARF Shared Achievements from May 6, 2013 to April 30, 2015 as well as the SARF National Proposed Program for July 2015 to May 2017.

Presented next was the Treasurer's Report by Bro, Edwin Ruiz, outgoing SARF National Treasurer and Sr. Mila Veniegas, the newly elected SARF National Treasurer. By 500 P.M., there was a Eucharistic celebration presided by Fr. Emilio Larlar, OAR.

A short program after dinner brought to a close the activities of the first day. Fifteen SARF candidates from different 15 chapters joined the "PANGALAWANG HIRIT... MS SARF PHILIPPINES" beauty contest.

The second day commenced with the recitation of the Holy Rosary and the Morning Prayers, followed by the Eucharistic celebration presided by Fr. Emeterio Buñao, OAR. Highlighting the second day of the convention was the conference given by Fr. Vicente Ramon, OAR, which emphasized the ten New Year's resolutions as proposed by Pope Francis.

Fr. Regino Bangcaya, OAR, SARF National Spiritual Director, gave a brief talk firmly reminding the whole delegation on the ideal qualities each participant must possess (humility, enthusiasm, contemplativeness).

The second night (May 16) became an exceptional experience that elicited laughter particularly during the talent portion of the search for Ms. SARF. Sr. Lucita Araneta, SEMN-R, Antipolo was crowned as Ms. SARF Phils 2015; 1st runner up—Sr. Felicely Estadilla, Mt. Carmel Parish-Manila; 2nd runner up—Sr. Jelly Azada, SNTDP-Quezon City; and 3rd runner up—Sr. Adela Torcedo, CaReS, Baguio City. Ms. Talent was Sr. Marlene Regalado of RFC-Mira-Nila Chapter.

On the last day of the convention (May 17), the Eucharistic celebration was presided by Fr. Regino Bangcaya, OAR. It was followed by a tour within Cebu City after which the delegates proceeded to Laray, Talisay, Cebu (host chapter) for a sumptuous lunch.

Another year has passed and another convention ended. The whole community will continue to pray that each delegate will bring home valuable realizations and experiences: to emulate Christ and proclaim Him to others.

The next national convention is scheduled May 2017 at RFC-Mira Nila, Quezon City. **R**



St. Magdalena of Nagasaki



Nowhere but here

BY BRO. JOSE ENRICO V. GALLEGO

© OAR Archive: Old Casiciaco Chapel

Casiciaco was originally planned to be in some other part of the Philippines but circumstances led for it to be finally built in its present site, Baguio. Looking back at the original plan, it's quite hard to imagine the place that many people once called home to be in another place.

It was in 1953 that Casiciaco was built to be a retreat house for the religious in the Philippines who are having their spiritual exercises. But in 1965 it had undergone some changes to turn it into a house for philosophical studies and novitiate. With 62 years as a building and 50 years as a formation house, its portals welcomed men young and old from all walks of life all of whom heeded the call given by God to live the Recoletos way of life. People may wonder why there is a striking similarity of this edifice with those on San Sebastian Convent in Manila, and Puerto Princesa Cathedral in Palawan; it's because it was designed by one man, Arch. Arturo Manalac. All of whom were built within a decade after the end of the Second World War.

On March 19, 1953, the Feast of St. Joseph, the seminary chapel was consecrated and dedicated

to Our Lady of the Pillar. As the years went by, pews were added to this hallowed shrine but seems to be insufficient for the increasing seminary population and Baguio residents that flock to attend mass with the community. In 1980, two lateral chapels were built to cater to the necessity of space in the hallowed shrine of the blessed mother.

To cater even more to ever increasing vocations in the Philippines, a three-storey annex building was built which includes dorm rooms, class rooms, and a mini theatre. It was inaugurated in January 1990 under the rectorship of Rev. Fr. Melquiades Modequillo, OAR. Unfortunately on July 16, 1990, barely six months after its inauguration, a magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck the City of Pines that inflicted much damage to the new building. The place they call

home is now in disarray with cracks seemingly present everywhere, forcing the community to bear the heat during the day and cold at night as they camped in the outdoors for fear of the building's collapse if seismic activity does not come to a halt.

A diaspora of seminarians to San Sebastian in Manila, Mira-Nila in Quezon City, and University of San Jose-Recoletos in Cebu came about so that the formation of seminarians will not cease despite of the closure of the institution for safety reasons. By the end of July, seminarians were able to come back to Baguio once more when seemingly endless Manualia and Laborandum await them. Fortunately enough, Casiciaco once more opened its doors to formands in November 1990 after much needed repairs were done to secure the stability of the building.

In 1996, the name Seminario

Mayor Recoletos was changed into Casiciaco Recoletos seminary under the rectorship of Rev. Fr. Lauro V. Larlar, OAR.

A year after Casiciaco crossed the threshold of the new millenium, a devastating fire gutted the right wing of the original edifice on May 2001 because of faulty electrical wiring. Oldphytes and neophytes were welcomed to the charred remains of their Baguio home but this did not hamper the spirit of the seminarians but instead

strengthened their community life in picking up the pieces and building over the remains of what was Casiciaco.

Life had to continue and Casiciaco rose from the ashes as the right wing was rebuilt. The Chapel was likewise refurbished to accommodate more people who flock to Casiciaco during Sundays and the *Simbang Gabi*. The new developments were inaugurated just in time for the 50th year of Casiciaco as a building in 2004. As we celebrate the 50 golden

years of the seminary, we look back at the history of the place where talent is at its finest; where people's warmth can beat the freezing cold in this mountainous terrain; where joy can be found in the simplest things; where smiles and laughter is more contagious than any virus there is; and where bonds among brothers grow and become stronger than any earthquake. Truly there is no place like Casiciaco. **R**

Kumustahan night blast

BY BRO. ROBERT NAVARRO

BAGUIO CITY—After the opening mass, all the alumni gathered in the seminary refectory for the “Kamustahan”, a special program intended to refresh them of their experiences during the time that they were still seminarians of the institution.

The entire community was serenaded by the all female band The Bean Bag Roasters of Kaffe Klutch. They brought the whole crowd into get-up-and-go stance.

To revive and perk up the memories of the alumni, a special video presentation containing pictures of how young they were

as seminarians and how they transformed after many years. The before-and-after throwback pictures of them set off the crowd to fall down laughing. “This celebration is really an awesome experience for me. I missed my batchmates and the community so much.” said by Rev. Fr. Russel Sungcad of

Batch 1987, who is presently the Parish Priest of San Antonio Abad Parish in Cebu. He further added, “I am always really inspired by the life of the Recollects. Even though I’m already a Diocesan Priest, my discipline and my spirituality is truly still Augustinian Recollect.”

During the roll call of the batches, the yell of the Batch 1994, who marked the largest number of attendees, dominated the crowd. It was attended by 9 alumni members. Mr. Peb Villacrusis, who is presently a Sheriff in Cebu City, said that the alumni homecoming actually served as a meaningful get-together for their batch. “Even though we are far from each other, we still continue to acquaint with each other. That is I think the secret why many of us were able to attend this event” he shared.

The night ended for whole Casiciaco Recoletos community with hearts full of joy. **R**



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Former Josenian salutatorian appointed Cebu auxiliary bishop

BY IOANNES P. ARONG



His Excellency Bishop Dennis Villarojo, D.D.
Auxiliary Bishop of Cebu

CEBU CITY – A high school graduate of then Colegio de San Jose-Recoletos (former name of USJ-R) became the latest alumnus to bring pride and honor to the school after getting promoted to the rank of bishops in the Archdiocese of Cebu.

Pope Francis announced the appointment of Msgr. Dennis Villarojo as auxiliary bishop of Cebu during his Angelus message at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome on July 3, said Msgr. Joseph Tan, spokesperson of the Archdiocese of Cebu.

“*Pasalamat ta sa Ginoo tungod ang pagka-obispo alang sap ag-alagad sa katawhan ug sa pagpalambo sa pagtuo* (Let us thank God for becoming a bishop is for the service of the people

and for nurturing of faith),” said Msgr. Villarojo in an interview over DYRF radio program Pan ug Bino (Bread and Wine) shortly after the Vatican announcement.

“*Dakong gasa usab kini sa International Eucharistic Congress 2016 kay mahatagan nato og labaw nga duso ang pagpangandam niani* (This is also a big lift for the IEC 2016 because we can now give more attention for its preparation),” the bishop-elect who is also the secretary general of the congress, added.

The 48-year-old bishop-elect has yet to receive the date of his installation as Cebu bishop. We will serve as aid to Archbishop Jose Palma in running the Catholic Church in Cebu.

Along with him, Msgr. Oscar Florencio of the Archdiocese of Palo was also elected bishop and appointed as auxiliary bishop of Cebu.

The appointments will bring three auxiliary bishops for Cebu, although Bishop Emilio Bataclan is reaching the mandatory retirement age of 75 for bishops September 2015.

Msgr. Villarojo is the first Josenian to be elevated to the rank of bishops in the Roman Catholic Church.

Though born in Cebu, Msgr. Viallrojo finished his elementary studies at the Butuan Central School. He later enrolled at the then Colegio de San Jose-Recoletos in 1980. He graduated from CSJ-R as one of the most decorated students in the 1984 batch, excelling both in academics and in extra-curricular activities.

He was the class salutatorian of the Boys' High and was named one of the Ten Most Outstanding High School Students of Cebu in the same year.

He also showed interest in fields as varied as campus journalism, citizen army training (CAT). Essay writing contests, and quiz bowls as shown by the awards he received during graduation.

He went on to study Philosophy at San Carlos College Seminary, the Cebu archdiocesan seminary, and theology at the Pontifical University (UST) where he obtained his Licentiate in Philisophy.

He was ordained a priest in June 10, 1994, exactly a decade after he graduated from CSJ-R. **R**

Electronics giant taps USJ-R for management course

BY IOANNES P. ARONG



© Photo from USJ-R correspondent

CEBU CITY—A leading electronics company that has a plant in Cebu is partnering with the University of San Jose-Recoletos for a short-term management course for its supervisors and managers to help “keep them abreast with the recent trends and development in the industry.”

USJ-R President Fr. Cristopher Maspara, OAR, signed a memorandum of agreement with Knowles Electronics Philippines Managing Director Joseph Emmanuel Liwag for the University to offer an 80-hour, 8-module management course for the company’s senior engineers and supervisors.

“This is a program that is worth promoting,” said Doctor Edgar Detoya of the off-campus setup where employees who will be enrolling in the program do not have to leave their workplace to attend sessions. USJ-R professors will be the ones who will come to the work venue and hold classes.

USJ-R is allowed to offer off-campus programs by CHED on account of its Autonomous Status. Dr. Detoya, who is also the dean of the University’s Graduate School of Business Management and Administration, added that this is USJ-R’s way of reaching out to the industry.

“This is our way of bringing USJ-R brand of education more accessible to you and more responsive to your needs,” he quipped.

The MOA-signing, which was held at Knowles corporate office in Basak, Lapu-lapu City, was witnessed by USJ-R VP for Academics Fr. James Bumangabang, OAR, and Knowles Senior HR Manager Agnes Lucenter.

The short term course will cover topics in process quality management

(PQM), strategic management, financial and business ethics, among others.

The company, which has almost 4 thousand workers, will pay for the tuition of the employees who will qualify for the management course, which will start July 19 and will end February 18 next year.

“Our company takes pride in the fact that we are a learning organization,” said Mr. Liwag. “We give priority and importance to the development of our employees, our human capital, so that they can be empowered and primed for success.”

“We know that our commitment to people development will eventually result to significant developments by engaged and high-performing employees,” he added.

Knowles Electronics is a huge player in the hearing aid components industry. They have plants in Asia, Europe and in North and South America.

Dr. Detoya assured Knowles that they are in the right track in picking USJ-R as its academic partner.

“As much as possible, we try to customize every program,” the dean said. “We want it to be very responsive to the specific needs of every organization,” he continued, adding that USJ-R carefully screens its professors who are not only academicians but also industry practitioners which makes them familiar to specific industry situations.

Both parties hope that the new-forged alliance becomes long term and mutual beneficial and that the participants get the most out of the program offered. **R**

Diocese of Cubao welcomes new OAR community in Project 6

BY FRAY JOSE ERNIL ALMAYO, OAR

QUEZON CITY—Among the three newly-established Recoletos communities in the Philippines was the community of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish in Project 6, Quezon City. It belongs to the Diocese of Cubao with Most Rev. Honesto Ongtioco, D.D., as the local ordinary.

The bilateral agreement was signed at the bishop’s house, with Fr. Dionisio Selma standing on behalf of the Recoletos while Bishop Ongtioco of the Diocese of Cubao. This was in keeping with the customary course in which Rome approves first the creation of a proposed community, then, both parties proceed to the signing of the MOA (Memorandum of Agreement).

The Recoletos presence in this parish started two years ago when Fray Larry Garces, OAR, was loaned

to be the parish administrator after the sudden demise of the parish priest. It was a special arrangement for reason of apostolate.

When the new triennium (2015-2018) set in, the bishop requested the new Prior Provincial to continue the ministry of Fray Garces in that parish. But to better manage the ministerial apostolate, the bishop agreed to establish a Recoletos community in the parish, to which the major superior in Rome was also amenable and eventually granted

the permission to establish a new religious community in Project 6.

The new community of Recoletos de Project 6 will be composed of Fray Emilio Larlar, OAR, as local prior and two other confreres: Fray Larry Garces to be installed as parish priest (July 14), and Fray Giovanni Gil Magbojos, OAR.

The two other new communities are in Tambo, Ayungon, Negros Oriental and in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. **R**



Fr. Dionisio Selma, OAR (Prior Provincial) with Bishop Honesto Ongtioco, DD (Bishop of Cubao) in a historic signing of the Memorandum of Agreement.

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CST-R UPDATE

SDPC conducts seminar-workshop for students with OFW parents



© Photos from CST-R correspondent



SAN CARLOS CITY—The Students' Development and Placement Center (SDPC) conducted a seminar-workshop for transferees and Grade 7 students with OFW parent(s). It was held at the CST-R AVR on June 27, 2015 with the theme "OFW Phenomenon: Bridging Lives from a Distance". The SDPC aims to help the students understand the impact of migration on the families and their well-being, academic performance, school behaviors, family and good relationships. The objectives of the said seminar-workshop are the following:

- For the students to identify their challenges of having OFW parent/s.
- For the students to identify the perceived effects, experiences, relationship of students with parents as OFW.
- Discuss the role of the school, SDPC, Peer Group, to the children with OFW parent/s. **RD**

CST-R hosts seminar-workshop on speech and teaching style

SAN CARLOS CITY—On August 22, 2015, a whole day seminar-workshop on "Speech for the Modern Educators and Teaching Stylishly in the City—a seminar-workshop for teachers and staff for ASEAN INTEGRATION—was held at the CST-R Cultural Center. It was conducted by Dr. Joselito Solante Flores, one of the prominent figures in Training and Development community.

It aims to promote the welfare of the faculty and staff as well as to develop and nourish their potentials as educators and at the same time serve as guide for teachers and staff in terms for personality development.

The said seminar-workshop was participated in by CST-R faculty and staff, teachers from Tañon College, and graduating students of Colegio de Sta. Rita.

It was organized by Fr. Joel A. Alve, OAR, School Director/Principal, and was sponsored by the JSF Foundation, CST-R PTA, and Tanquis Snackhaus. **RD**



© Photos from CST-R correspondent



Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary Community, Academic Year 2014-2015

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CASICIACO SEMINARY UPDATE

CaReS demographical updates

BY BRO. RALP ANDREW R. CEPE, JR.

This formation year 2014-2015 maintained its average number of formators and formands. The following present a demographics of the CaReS population.

The fourth year brothers (Sojourners) started at 30 but after three years, the number decreased because some of them chose to live and discern their lives outside the seminary. Currently, there are 17 seniors.

The third year formands (Believers) started at 28 but like the fourth year brothers, some of them also chose to live life outside. Few of them were also accelerated to the next level of formation. Presently, the total number of Juniors is 17.

The second year brothers (Luminaries) began with 31 aspirants. Few of them were accelerated to the next level of formation. Right now there are 19

Luminaries.

Through the efforts of the seminary's National Vocation Director, Rev. Fr. Virgilio Paredes, O.A.R., the community of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary welcomed 24 neophytes.

There are currently six priests and a religious brother in the seminary. **RD**

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2 Josenians top CPA board exams

BY IOANNES P. ARONG

CEBU CITY—The accountancy program of the University of San Jose-Recoletos once again proved to be one of the best in the country after 2 of its graduates landed in the top 10 of the recently concluded licensure examinations for public accountants.

John Lester Juarez Lastimosa and Bridget Aniñon Diaz occupied the 9th and 10th spots respectively in the recently concluded licensure examinations for Certified Public Accountants (CPA) earlier this month. Both graduated *magna cum laude* from USJ-R.

“To my mentors sa University of San Jose-Recoletos, USJ-R PRTC Review Center, SALAMAT. With your help, I would have not reached my dreams,” Lastimosa posted in his Facebook account. “Words are not enough . . . I am just so thankful.”

Lastimosa and Diaz headlined the University’s 69 total passers out of the 199 Josenians who took the exams. The University’s 57.98 % passing rate is way above the national passing rate of 35.7%. Of the 69 new Josenians CPAs, 61 took the exams for the first time and passed.

Diaz quoted Matthew 7:7 and posted it on her Facebook account, followed by a short thanksgiving to God for “answering [her] prayer,” while Lastimosa recounted how he

almost “surrendered the dream of topping the exams.”

“After the third day of the Board Examinations, I have raised the white flag,” Lastimosa shared on his social media account. “I was just like guessing my answers while taking Practical Accounting II and Auditing Problems.”

“I asked God to just allow me to pass the exams, but He has given me more and allowed me to place 9th,” he continued. “I thank God for the guidance and strength.” He also thanked all people who had helped him in one way or another in achieving his dream.

Mr. Edman Flores, director of the University’s state-of-the-art CPA Review Center, revealed that he was very happy and proud that once again the University produced another crop of CPAs with topnotchers to boot.

Lastimosa and Diaz are the University’s 5th and 6th topnotchers for the past 5 years. Previously, the University registered 3 topnotchers in 2010, and one each in 2011 and

2012.

Rigorous Training

“However, as the only Center of Development in Accountancy in Cebu, USJ-R could not let up in its pursuit of continued excellence,” Mr. Flores, who is also the chairman of the University’s Department of Accountancy and Finance, said.

“We will strengthen our standard of screening in the Integrated Class,” he said, referring to the last semester of the accountancy program where the subjects offered are the CPA board exam subjects to be handled by the Review Center.

“We implement strict admission and retention standards,” Mr. Flores said when asked about what separates USJ-R Accountancy program from the rest in the region. Over the last five years, he revealed, the University has a retention rate of only 20%.

“We are not just preparing them to be CPA passers or topnotchers, but we are preparing them to be

(continued on page 36)

Pointless Points to Ponder Not...

BY FRAY ONZ, OAR

SHADES OF POVERTY

A religious wrote a letter to his superior: “For a week I have been unable to sleep knowing that I have cheated on my vow of poverty. I did not turn over the stipends that I received and here I am enclosing a check of P2,000.00. If I still can’t sleep, I will give the rest.”

Robert Heilbroner, who has written dozens of books on the subject of the economy and material wealth, suggest that we can go through a little mental exercise that will help us count our blessings. Imagine doing the following and you will see how daily religious life is far more comfortable than a billion people in the world.

Take out all the furniture in our convents except for one table and a couple of chairs. Use wood and mat for beds.

Take away all of your clothing except our oldest shirt and old habit. Leave only one pair of shoes.

Empty the storeroom and the refrigerator except for a small bag of dilis, some sugar and salt, a bottle of instant coffee, a loaf of bread and a dish of galung-gong.

Dismantle the bathroom, shut off the running water, and remove all the electrical wirings in your convent.

Take away the house itself and move the confreres into the tool shed.

Build your house in a shantytown.

Cancel all subscriptions to newspapers, magazines and books. This is no great loss because now none of you read anyway.

Leave only one radio for the whole community. Do away with gadgets and entertainment stuff.

Throw away bankbooks, stock certificates, health care plans, insurance policies. Leave the community a cash hoard of two thousand pesos.

Give each community a few hectares of land on which the brothers can raise a few hundred pesos of cash crops, of which one third will go to the curia and one tenth to the poor.

By comparison how blessed are we than a billion people in the world. But with our blessings come responsibility. Let us use things wisely, not to be wasteful, and more importantly help others.



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“A religious community is a group of wonderful persons who live together spatially in the same domicile and in the same time frame. They share many things in common. They share common meals, participate in common prayers and even may view the same T.V. programs. They draw their disbursement money from a common fund. They discuss community affairs at house meetings. As needed, they drive cars provided for common use. They talk pleasantly to one another at table and in the common rooms. A good education is provided for them. They are well provided for without housing, clothes, recreational facilities, and travel money. Their medical costs are completely taken care of. In short, the religious and community life appears to fulfill the scriptural promise of a hundredfold now, plus an eternal treasure in heaven.”

Who would ask for more? God has been so good that giving thanks to Him should not even be a question.

PROPHETIC OR “PROFITIC” WITNESSING?

Amidst the increasing competitive marketplace, can our religious educational institutions maintain and enhance the prophetic mission of the Province and attach more importance to the prophetic vision and voice in our ongoing school operations? Are we more prophetic or profitic witnesses?

I find it helpful to recall a lesson on Prophets which our dear Fr. Hubert Decena inculcated in us, that:

The word prophet comes from the Greek word “*fas*” meaning “to speak out.” The prophets were people of vision and voice. They could see through the present situation, evoke the covenantal commitments of the past and energize a people with hope for fulfilling the ancient dream. The prophet was called by God, spoke God’s word, and was rooted in the heritage of faith. The prophets were perceptive evaluators of existence as it really was, stripped of pretense and illusion. These persons of vision were grounded in sacrifice, discipline, simplicity of lifestyle and prayer.

Within the school apostolate of the Province, do we perform this prophetic ministry... or are we at times more attentive to the profits and thus making our apostolate undifferentiated from the contemporary secular corporate culture?

Can we become more “prophetable” without being “profitable”? It is good to be reminded that the more we value the prophetic vision and voice in the schools, the more successful our schools will become. **RD**

2 Josenians... (cont'd from p.34)

outstanding performers in the workplace,” he said.

Accountancy students need to score at least 2.0 in all their major subjects if they want to proceed. Failure to reach the prescribed mark means the student has to retake the subject, or shift to Bachelor in Science in Management Accounting (BSMA), a program that won’t make the degree holder eligible for the board exams.

Aside from the cut-off, students also need to pass the qualifying examination at the beginning of every academic year starting second year. If they fail, again they will be advised to shift to BSMA.

Mr. Flores said the department is not worried about the low number of graduates it churns out every year because it “prioritizes quality over quantity.” **RD**

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THE RECOLETOS OBSERVER

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Circulation

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Publisher

Recoletos Communications

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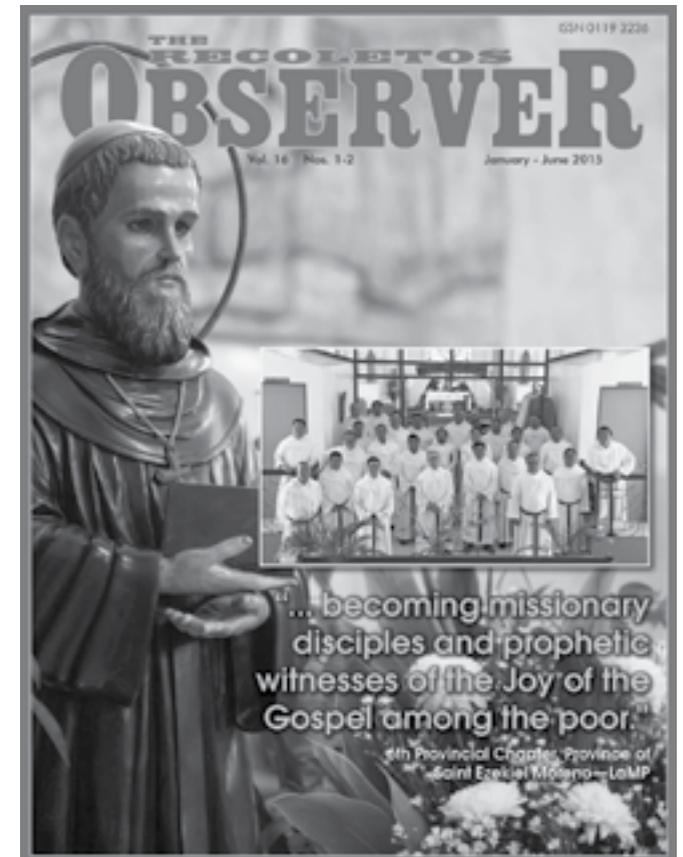
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The Recoletos Observer is the official Newsletter of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno Order of Augustinian Recollects

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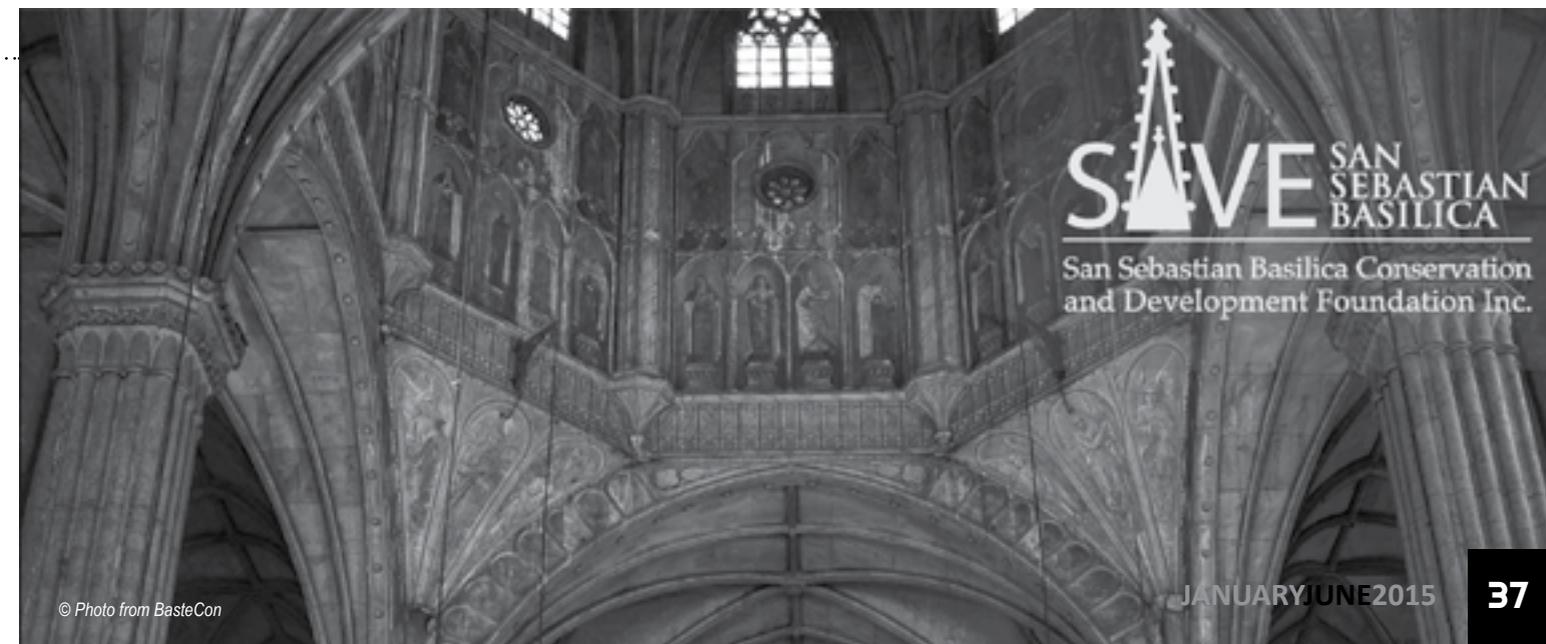
1106 Quezon City, Philippines

Tel. (02) 921-6103

Fax. (02) 456-1658

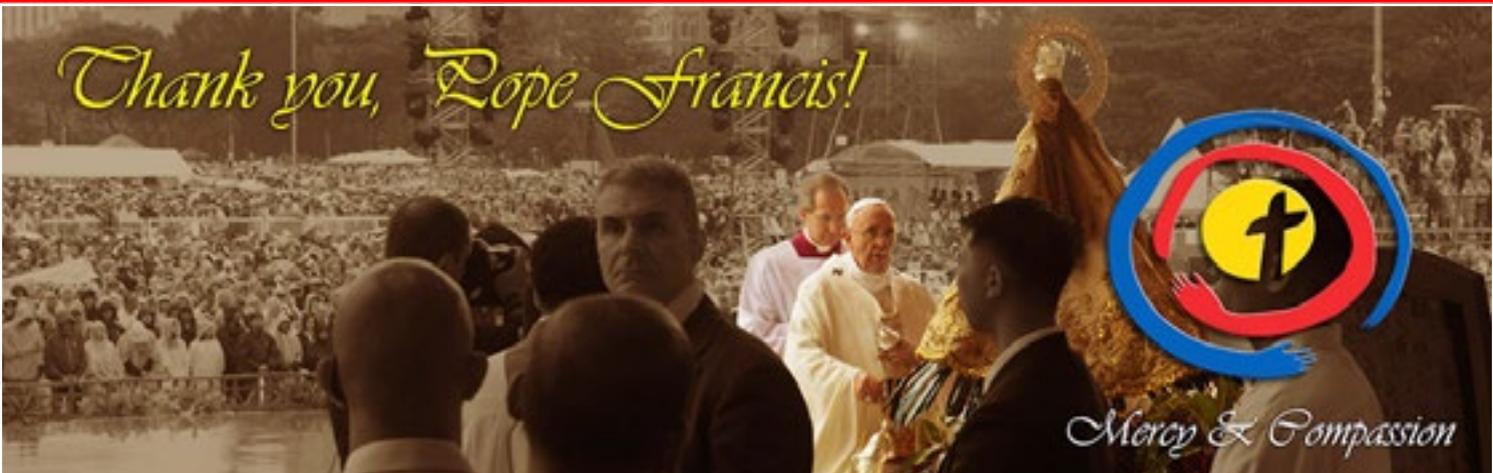
email: observer@recoletos.ph

website: recoletosfilipinas.org, recoletos.ph



© Photo from BasteCon

Thank you, Pope Francis!



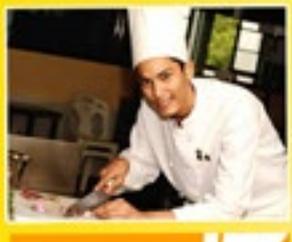
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