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A journey towards
holiness

OPENING VIGIL
YEAR OF HOLINESS
AGUSTINO RECOLETOS

Called
to be holy

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Augustinian Recollect Family "concludes" Year of Holiness

Augustinian Recollect family 'concludes' Year of Holiness

BY FRAY ONZ ANTONIO, OAR

Activities for the closing of the Year of Holiness began Sunday, November 12, with a concelebrated mass at the Our Lady of Consolation Parish church. The main celebrant, Fray Lauro V. Larlar, OAR, Prior of Recoletos Formation Center, gave a brilliant homily using the notion of Pope emeritus Benedict XVI as the springboard for his sharing: "Holiness does not consist in not making mistakes or never sinning. Holiness grows with the capacity for conversion, repentance, willingness to begin again, and above all with the capacity for reconciliation and forgiveness."

Moreover, in consonance with the Prior General's intent, the main celebrant exhorted all the religious and the faithful "to aspire for holiness and offer them the example of those brothers of ours who are recognized by the Church as saints or venerable for martyrdom or for their virtue in the surrender of their lives." The Apostolic Penitentiary granted the plenary indulgence for this feast.

On Monday, November 13, Feast of the Saints of the Order, the Augustinian Recollect Family once again gathered at the Bulwagang Rekoletto for the talks given by Fray Manny Bolilia, OAR, (Year of Holiness and Beyond: An Assessment) and Fray Hubert Decena, OAR (A Witness





to the Life of Fray Mariano Gazpio on the Road to Holiness). A compilation of devotional prayer materials was also presented to the audience by Fray Leander Barrot, OAR, Director of the RST Research Department. The program ended with a message from Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, prior provincial.

This was followed by a Eucharistic celebration presided by Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, Prior Provincial. In his homily, he reiterated the intent of the

celebration of The Year of Holiness: “to revive the call to holiness and to open ourselves to the action of the Spirit, who renews our hearts without ceasing . . .” A plenary indulgence was granted by the Apostolic Penitentiary for this feast.

The day’s activities ended with a dinner. While partaking of the common meal, participants had the opportunity to share concerns and ideas on a) discipline needed for growth in the Life of Prayer of the Augustinian

Recollects, and b) on the theme: “Let us be One Heart in Solidarity with and for the Poor.” Shared ideas will be presented as “ponencias” for the 7th Provincial Chapter.

While there were talks and activities throughout the closing of the Year of Holiness, those who attended would agree that the highlight was the opportunity to renew our commitment to «reaffirm our charismatic identity, spirituality, and service to the Church.»

RO





Bishop of Chalan Kanoa with ordained Recollect priests and deacons

Bishop of Chalan Kanoa presides over the ordination of Recollect priests and deacons

BY FRAY ONZ ANTONIO, OAR

On Saturday, September 30, at Our Lady of Consolation Parish Church, Quezon City, three deacons and 6 solemn professed Augustinian Recollects were ordained to the priesthood and diaconate, respectively. The main celebrant and ordaining prelate, Most Rev. Ryan P. Jimenez, D.D, Bishop of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa, Northern Mariana Island, was joined by Recollect priests from the different OAR houses as concelebrants. The RFC Choir filled the church with stirring, solemn music.

His Excellency Bishop Jimenez shared with the congregation and the ordinands his splendid homily centered on three points regarding discipleship:

Discipleship is not about authority but a humble submission to the will of the Father and modelled after the humble Christ.

It is following Christ in service especially to those who need the comforting love of God. He gave as

an example the Recollect priests assigned to his diocese—they remain as models of service and collaborators.

Disciples should accept suffering as part and parcel of discipleship. He cites Isaiah 53 as a model—the Suffering Servant to the nation of Israel who silently endured unimaginable suffering at the hands of its gentile oppressors. As disciples we are to follow Christ even up to the cross.

The bishop concludes his sharing by giving the ordinands the assurance of God's constant help . . . "Sa lahat ng oras, may AWA ang DIYOS!"

Fray Jose Ernil Almayo, OAR, Provincial Secretary, addressed the congregation before the culmination of the Ordination Mass, announcing the assignments of the newly ordained priests. **RD**



Fray DC and Fray Emmie during the Thanksgiving mass

The months of September and October are special for Fray Emeterio Buñao, OAR and Fray Hubert Decena, OAR, as they celebrate the 50th anniversary of their priestly ordination.

At some stage of their Augustinian Recollect lives, Frs. Bunao and Decena have been teachers, formators, and school/seminary administrators. And joyfully, still they continue to offer many wonderful and diverse gifts to the Order and the Church. The long labor and love of Frs. Buñao and Decena produced about 86% of the Recollect priests, not counting the thousands of friends, families and many others whose lives they blessed and in some ways shaped through their ministry.

On October 7, Saturday, at the Our Lady of Consolation Parish Church in Quezon City, a thanksgiving mass was offered for the two jubilarians, and to remember as well their friends, their families and the many who, in some ways, have shaped and blessed them.

Fr. Provincial, Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, gave the homily at the Eucharistic celebration. He humorously remarked on how Fray Buñao and Fray Decena have in many different ways shared their lives meaningfully with people—in the schools and in parish communities, and in the seminaries. But the preacher remembers most the jubilarians for their work in the area of formation. He noted that he had learned (and surely,

OAR Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno pays tribute to Golden Jubilarians

BY FRAY ONZ ANTONIO, OAR



the rest of the priests who once were under their care) a great deal from these two Recollect confreres/jubilarians about generosity, love for work, discipline tempered with affection and search for God. Both are men for friendship and this is so because their deepest relationship in this world is based on their friendship with Jesus. They remain to be authentic models of religious life.

Right after the thanksgiving mass was a fellowship at Bulwagang Recoletos where visitors and well-wishers were entertained by numbers depicting the life and significant events in the life of the golden jubilarians. It was an afternoon of laughter and joy which climaxed with the thanksgiving messages by the golden jubilarians.

Fray Buñao and Fray Decena: made to last forever in the lives and hearts of people they touched as priests and religious . . . congratulations! **RD**





Most. Rev. Reynaldo G. Evangelista, D.D., Bishop of Imus (center) during the Eucharistic Celebration in honor of St. Ezekiel Moreno (Photo by: Carla Mae T. Lat)

Cavite holds Recoletos 400 closing activities

BY RHEYMARD G. DONEZA

Bacoor City, CAVITE--The closing activities of the OAR 400 in this Province was held last August 19, 2017 at the St. Michael the Archangel Parish (SMAP), Bacoor City, Cavite with the theme: OAR 400: "400 years of Continuing Presence of the Recollects in Cavite."

More than 50 vehicles registered and participated in the motorcade, which started 6:00AM from San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite Cañacao Campus to Eternity Memorial Garden in Bacoor. An opening liturgy led by Fray Samuel L. Eyas, OAR, VP Religious Affairs of SSC-RdC marked the start of the festive karakol.

The street of Gen. Evangelista was enlivened by the karakol after the motorcade. The whole Sebastianian Community and the Parishioners of St. Michael the Archangel joyfully danced showing their devotion to St Ezekiel Moreno and love for God. Street watchers joined in as the parade move its way towards St. Michael the Archangel Parish.

Most Rev. Reynaldo G. Evangelista, D.D., Bishop of Imus presided the Eucharistic Celebration held after the karakol. Concelebrants were the Diocesan and Recollect Priests, and His Excellency Most. Rev. Manuel C. Sobreviñas, D.D., Bishop-Emeritus of Imus. "I hope that the presence of the Recollects does not end here, I know that the Recollects' presence will be continuously felt here in Cavite" said Most Rev. Evangelista. Fray Emilio A. Quilatan, OAR, RST Dean, explained why Bacoor City was the best venue to conclude the celebration. But for Rev. Fr. Oliver Genuino, Parish Priest of (SMAP) "I am being followed by St. Ezekiel Moreno, when the celebration kicked-off in 2015 at St.

Mary Magdalene Parish in Amadeo, I was the Parish Priest there. Now, the closing was held here where I am the Parish Priest again. Maybe St. Ezekiel wants me to do something," said Fr. Genuino. The mass was graced by the presence of Mr. Ramon Moreno, one of the descendants of St. Ezekiel Moreno and Hon. Sen. Cynthia Villar who built the Santuario de San Ezekiel Moreno in Las Piñas, together with the Villar family.

Fray Cristituto A. Palomar, OAR, SSC-RdC President, acknowledged all the people involved in the celebration while Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno officially declared the closing of the celebration. **RO**



Miss Earth 2017 Candidates visit SSC-RdC

BY RHEYMARD DONEZA

CAVITE CITY - Miss Earth 2017 Candidates visited the Cañacao and main campuses of San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite (SSCRdC) last October 12, 2017. Miss Elian Quity (Israel), Miss Abby Sturgin (New Zealand), Miss Paweensuda Drouin (Thailand), and Miss Nabirye Josephine Mutesi (Uganda) came together with Miss Earth Philippines Water 2017, Jessica Marasigan.

The students of the Basic Education Department, together with Fray James Dexter R. Tanquis, OAR, Basic Education Director, Faculty and Staff, welcomed the candidates at the Cañacao Campus. The Miss Earth Candidates had a dating game where they asked environmental awareness related questions. The winner had the chance to have a selfie picture with the candidates. Afterwards, the candidates proceeded to the ribbon cutting ceremony of the Miss Earth Eco Walk where they planted ornamental plants as a symbol of the commitment of SSC-RdC and Miss Earth to taking care of the environment.

At around 11:30 AM, the candidates went to the Main Campus for a courtesy call with Fray Cristituto

A. Palomar, OAR, President, together with the other Religious and Lay Administrators of the school. During the courtesy call, Fray Palomar cited the similarities and dedication of the both SSC-RdC and Miss Earth in promoting environmental awareness. The candidates also visited the SSC-RdC garden and looked at the trees that were planted a year ago by Miss Palestine, Miss Denmark, Miss Lebanon, Miss Belize, Miss Hungary, Miss Nepal and Miss Mauritius. "We are not just faces, we work really hard, and we want people to learn from us and we want to be the best role models as we can," said Miss New Zealand.

SSC-RdC will be providing the software and computers that will

be used for the coronation night on November 4, 2017 at the Mall of Asia Arena, Pasay City. The software was developed by the ICT Office. SSC-RdC will also award a scholarship grant to a nominee of Carousel Productions. A representative from SSC-RdC will also be a judge in the evening gown competition on October 26, 2017 at Versailles Palace, Alabang.

The candidates enjoyed their visit especially the tree planting activity. Meanwhile Miss New Zealand and Miss Thailand enjoyed their first bite of banana-que, bananas (saba) fried and coated with brown sugar. "I have a sweet tooth," said Miss Thailand, "Me too!," seconded Miss New Zealand. **RD**

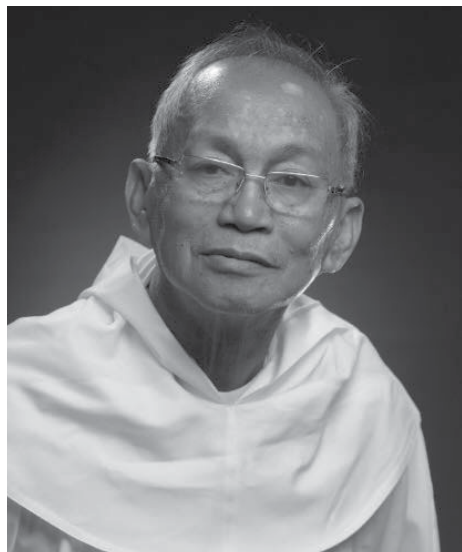


Miss Earth Candidates with Fray James Dexter R. Tanquis during the inauguration of the Cañacao Campus Miss Earth Eco Walk



Fray Pedro “Pete” Escanillas passes away

BY FRAY ABRAHAM B. LATOZA, OAR



On a summer of 2016, at lunch time, the priests recalled the younger years of Fr. Pete. He was tall, handsome, and athletic. He was champion in Archery. He led the sports and athletics of the university. During the 80's, Pete was the heartthrob of this campus. Fray Pete heard the conversation and was grinning. It could be noticed from his skinny face as he munched his soft diet. “Is it true Father? I asked. “Yes, but now I’m the kidney-throb.” The entire refectory collapsed with laughter.

“When I was in Bronx, in our parish there, a huge African-American man just got in the office who attempted to threaten everybody. He was from the neighborhood and looks unstoppable. I came closer to him to inquire and to pacify him. When he seemed to be out of control, I hit him on his neck with the back of my palm. He fell. And then we called the police. That was the last resort I could think of,” Fray Pete narrated to us.

Pedro Abapo Escanillas was born in San Jose, Antique. He made his Simple Profession on September 3, 1969 in Monteagudo, Navarra, Spain. He was ordained priest in Marcilla, Navarra, Spain in July 15, 1973. From then he was sent to San Carlos City, his first assignment, and then before the year ended, he was sent to Cebu City. The following year, he was assigned in Manila for two years. In 1976, he was transferred to UNO-R Bacolod for three consecutive

terms until 1985. From 1985 he was in Bronx, New York, USA until 1995. From 1995, he was the parish priest of Our Lady of Consolation in Mira-Nila, Quezon City, he stayed there for ten years. It was in 2004 when he moved to San Carlos City, the second time. From San Carlos he was sent to Talisay, Negros, Occidental as Prior during the time which he frequented the hospital battling heart ailment. In 2012, he was suffering from acute diabetes, had his toe removed. He had mild stroke and recovered. He fell ill again and again and twice a week, his nurse took him to his dialysis at Riverside Hospital. UNO-R Bacolod is his last religious assignment as Director of Scholarship.

At 3:36 AM today, August 9, 2017 Fr. Pete passed away due to brainstem failure secondary to cerebrovascular accident and multi organ failure at the Riverside Medical Center. He was 69 years old. His interment was on

August 12, after the 8:00 AM funeral mass at UNO-R Oratory.

Fray Pete lived a very “colorful life” as noted by a fellow religious, (at his age, he was still fascinated with fireworks). Colorful life does not necessarily mean ostentations or perhaps claim to power or most likely as others might describe that which whiskey brings color to life.

Being able to live the remaining days, of confinement, of simplicity, of mostly in silence for many months and die for it is enough to mean colorful life. God, in His mercy has given him final rest on this Year of Holiness of the Order.

He has helped a lot of people. He has touched hearts in his missions. His merits and demerits, we leave it to God.

Rest in Peace, Fray Pete. **RD**



Fray Pete laid to rest

BY CARLOS LEGASPI

BACOLOD CITY - At 3:36 a.m. of August 09, 2017, Fray Pedro Abapo Escanillas, OAR passed away due to brainstem failure secondary to cerebrovascular accident and multi-organ failure at the Dr. Pablo Torre Memorial Hospital. He was 69 years old.

On August 12, he was laid to rest at the Bacolod Memorial Park after the 8:00 a.m. Concelebrated Funeral Mass at the Oratory of San Nicholas de Tolentino. Fray Dionisio Selma, OAR, Prior Provincial, led 34 priests during the concelebrated funeral mass. He was joined by Bacolod House Prior Fray William Villaflor, OAR; Vice Prior Fray Ronel Gealon, OAR; UNO-R President Fray Eduardo Celiz, Jr., OAR; and Fray Escanillas' classmate Fray Hernando Coja, OAR at the Main Altar.

During the homily, Fray Selma read the letter from Rev. Fr. Miguel Miru, OAR, Prior General, sending his condolences and sympathies to the OAR Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno for the demise of Fray Pete. Fr.

Provincial then hinted that there is an expression of joy among the OAR priests because of the faith in the resurrection. "Our faith in Jesus will sustain us, and we only die in body," he added. Fray Selma shared that death has three effects: magnifying, magnetic, and magnanimous effects.

The magnifying effects of death are found in the good deeds of the person which are said during his death. "We often hear the goodness of the person magnified as he lays on the tomb," Fray Selma said. The magnetic effect is that death brings everyone together while the magnanimous effect is in the reminder that death is a great equalizer.

The Prior Provincial ended his

sharing with a reminder that God should always be in control of our lives. Before the end of the Mass, Fray Villaflor read the Protocol from the Prior Provincial about the demise and the life of Fr. Pete.

A tribute was prepared by the UNO-R community for Fray Pete. The tribute was offered by the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity, the Scholarships Office with the READS scholars, and by a member of the family.

Despite the heavy downpour, Fray Escanillas was laid to his resting place after the burial rites at the Bacolod Memorial Park in Alijis, Bacolod City.

RD



Six Augustinian Recollect friars make solemn profession of vows

BY FRAY EMIL A. QUILATAN, OAR

Mira-Nila Homes, Quezon City – August 28, 2017 (Monday) After four years of formation at the Recoletos Formation Center and careful evaluation six Augustinian Recollect friars made their solemn profession of vows with God’s mercy and with the support of the Augustinian Recollect family. These friars were:

Fray Paul S. Demillones, OAR

Fray Robin Ross S. Plata, OAR

Fray Niel Ryan E. Jarumay, OAR

Fray Elpedio N. Sarita, Jr., OAR

Fray Keneth B. Pahamutang, OAR

Fray Kenneth S. Caligdong, OAR



According to Canon Law, “by religious profession, members assume the observance of the three evangelical counsels [chastity, poverty and obedience] by public vow, are consecrated to God through the ministry of the Church, and are incorporated into the institute with the rights and duties defined by law” (CIC, n. 654; OAR Consts., n. 35). The above mentioned friars have been members of the Order of Augustinian Recollects of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno with simple vows which they renewed every year. With the solemn profession of vows they are now perpetual

members of the Order.

The celebration began with the Holy Mass at 9:00 AM and it was held at the parish church of Our Lady of Consolation, Mira-Nila Homes, Quezon City. The Holy Mass was presided by Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, prior provincial. Together with him at the main altar were Fray Lauro V. Larlar, OAR, local prior of RFC, and Fray Kenneth Joseph Onda, OAR, Master of the Professed. More than forty priests who represented the different OAR communities in the province joined in the solemn liturgy as concelebrants. Fray “Paco” Legarra,

OAR, of the province of St. Nicholas of Tolentine who happened to be visiting the country was also present at the celebration. Fray Jose Fortunato “Larry” J. Garces, OAR, served as the liturgist for the occasion.

Before the final blessing, Fray Paul Demillones, OAR, spoke in behalf of his batch words of acknowledgements and gratitude. After the final blessing that was pronounced by the prior provincial, group picture taking took place in the church then followed by the reception at the Bulwagan Recoletos Atrium. **RO**



(Photo by Fray Louie F. Gabinete, OAR)

Fray Rafael Cabarles celebrates Golden Jubilee

BY FRAY ABRAHAM B. LATOZA, OAR

SAN CARLOS CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL-- "I will remain faithful till the end of my life," says Fray Rafael a.k.a. "Caba" Cabarles, the man of the day with flashy vestment, gleaming with a smile on his face for a Golden Jubilee in Religious Profession, renewed his vows before the altar in the presence of the Prior Provincial Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, at the chapel of the Santo Tomas De Villanueva-Recoletos.

Rafael Estandarte Cabarles, is a full-blooded Negrense born on October 24, 1941 in the town of Talisay, the Sugar Capital of Negros Occidental southwest Philippines. He was educated in Dos Hermanas, a place next to his hometown.

At the age of twenty six, he made his Simple Profession to the Religious Life in Monteagudo, Navarra, Spain. During the time, Filipino Recollect seminarians profess the vows and receive ordination in a Hispanic soil for there was no available team of Formators, no established or at least Pontifically affiliated Augustinian Recollect Formation house in the Philippines. Candidates to the priesthood should carry on in their

chosen vocation, relying of course on the will of God to "finish the race, and keep their faith," as they become new breed of missionaries and ministers of the Sacraments.

Fray "Caba" professed his Solemn Vows on October 11, 1970 in northern part of Spain, in a well-known Medieval Vasque Kingdom of Navarra.

"We are first religious," says Fray Rafael in one of his short lectures.

The following year, on the 19th of March 1971, Solemnity of St. Joseph, Fray Rafael Cabarles received his Diaconal Ordination in Marcilla.

Three months later, by the grace and mercy of the Lord, he was Ordained Priest in the same formation

house of the Recollects in Marcilla, Navarra, Spain.

After his Sacerdotal Ordination, he returned to the country for his first assignment in Colegio de Santo Tomas de Villanueva (Minor Seminary), San Carlos, Negros Occidental. He was assigned as the Prefect of Discipline for the young seminarians. His former students are now Priors and school administrators namely, Fray Jorge Peligro, Fray William Villaflor, Fray Manuel Lipardo, Fray Eduardo Celiz, among others.

Leadership

High strung, persistent and skilled manager, Fray Cabarles has been proven to be unrelenting.



featured news

In Cebu, the University of San Jose Recoletos, then Colegio de San Jose-Recoletos, he was assigned as President from 1979 to 1987. He was the main proponent, and the success was attributed to him in raising the status of the Colegio into a University. On September 21, 1984, CSJ-R attained university status.

"We come and go," he normally says when a new assignment or patente is received. After his very productive leadership and achievements in Cebu, Fray Cabarles was sent back to San Carlos on a summer of 1988. There, as he was fascinated with craftsmanship, got interested with history. He started writing. Some of his works published in the magazine. He composed a poem in honor of his beloved saint, Ezekiel Moreno.

From San Carlos, he was given the new mission field in Valencia, Negros Oriental from 1994 to 2003. And from 2003 to date, he is in Colegio de Sto. Tomas De Villanueva- Recoletos, San Carlos City, Negros Occidental.

Legacy

This Jubilarian from Talisay is known for his works, his legacy and the Stations of the Cross sculpsures. He made one in the mountain of Caidiocan, Valencia, Negros Oriental. Today, that place is a popularly

known venue for Lenten sacrifices and meditation. The latest is in the Monteagudo (Hill), San Carlos City. The stiff location and rugged terrain do not only bring out the best scenery, overlooking San Carlos City and Sipaway Island but also make the gasping and panting to the last Station a memorable phenomenon. The Monteagudo Hermitage has a Chapel carved on the mountain. This requires an expert to do it. But Fray Cabarles designed, engineered and completed it, phase by phase, with limited resources on hand. It has a water system, (catch basin) and a function hall. It welcomes everybody who needs a day of recollection. The lush green fruits trees, vegetables, flowers, trees, and herbs with medicinal value which are planted around the area reshape and beautify the landscape. Domesticated fowls are patrolling the area.

Enamored with Hispanic Culture

In the Solemn Liturgy, the choir sung some Spanish songs the Piscador de Hombres (fishers of men). The Collect, Preface and Post Communion Prayer were in Spanish version. Te Deum was also sung which for the Churchmen aside from being mesmerized, it was a pretty Gregorian rendition that went well with the incense, silence and an edifying bliss. To the young people

the Latin chants and rhythm could draw their attention accentuating the consciousness to the lost Catholic tradition.

Fray Cabarles has all of these in his mind and heart. Without a doubt, the Hispanic culture runs through his vein. The choir is under his tutelage. In doing that it means, he knows the Gregorian chant. To keep all that, up to this day, exactly fifty years ago is nothing but exemplary.

In his homily, during the Mass on August 26, 2017, he underscored his struggles as priest and religious; thankful to the divine Providence and guidance of the Lord. His chosen theme The Lord is my Shepherd incapsulates the secret of his perseverance.

Looking at the video presentation, Fray Rafael's early days seemed very optimistic. His black eyeball is sharp. His thick black hair combed sideways. The exciting and attractive quality of his youth shows reluctance to the word surrender. Now seventy-five years old, and skin head, imbued with virtue and sagacity, his milestone achieved; the Augustinian Recollect spirit, his restless heart is still hopeful to new challenges.

Congratulations Fray Cabarles!

Adelante! **RO**



Fray Rafael Cabarles with concelebrants



Newly professed religious with Fr. Provincial giving them reminders as they get into the religious life

Eleven make simple profession of vows

BY BRO. JHOBEN MANALO RODRIGUEZ

ANTIPOLO CITY—Having completed the mandatory one-year novitiate and passed the evaluation of the Chapter of Formation, eleven novices pronounced their simple profession of the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience on July 1, 2017.

The newly professed friars and members of the Order of Augustinian Recollects are: Fray Jay Jasper P. Jamelo of E.B. Magalona, Negros Occidental; Fray Jovanie H. Seismundo of Dagohoy, Bohol; Fray Joshua F. Olaivar of Jagna, Bohol; Fray Leonardo I. Queaño II of Brooke's Point, Palawan; Fray Ricky John A. Austria of Tiwi, Albay; Fray Ivan C. Cuison of Baguio City, Fray Jhyryx Vincent F. Gamulo of Bayawan City, Negros Oriental; Fray Ivan Rhey G. Mislant of Inayawan, Cebu City; Fray Jazzy Jeff V. Montañez of Jagna, Bohol; Fray James Erol P. Gatinao of Narra, Palawan; and Fray Ralph Andrew R. Cepe of Valencia, Negros Oriental.

Integrated within the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the rite of simple profession was officiated by Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, on behalf of the Prior General in Rome.

Fray Selma presided over the holy mass, concelebrated by around 20 Recollect priests, and gave his homily stuffed with reminders on the current demands and relevance of consecrated life. At one point he recalled an author who asked God not for many religious who are not good, but only for a few but good religious. Contrary to the author's view, he said: "My desire is even to have more, more religious who are good enough to work in the vineyard of the Lord."

He particularly dwelt on the chapter two of the OAR Constitutions where it said the profession of the evangelical counsels is the response to the love of Christ virgin, poor, and obedient unto death.

"It is a more unimpeded enlistment in his ranks, and a fuller configuration to Him. It is not an obstacle to personal development but rather, by its nature, it greatly favors both individual person

and the Earthly City and 'displays to everyone the heavenly riches as they present even in this life,' the same paragraph (33) continued.

More than five hundred visitors attended, including the Augustinian Recollect religious Brothers and Sisters, Secular Augustinian Recollects, Recollect Augustinian Youth, other religious congregations, family members, relatives, benefactors, and friends of the newly professed friars, coming from different part of the country.

Fray James Erol P. Gatinao delivered the speech of thanks on behalf of his batch.

The Novice Master, Fray Leopoldo V. Estioko OAR, in one of the conversations, expressed that during the speech he felt some mixed feelings: "I am grateful for the company of eleven, yet 'emotional' because of parting time." **RD**



*Fray Ronel with the children
at RESOURCE UCDO*

SEMDCC holds 19th Closing and Recognition Exercises

BY ELMEEER MEEYNARD CALIMPOS

Bacolod City—The St. Ezekiel Moreno Day Care Center (SEMDCC) held its 19th Closing and Recognition Exercises, March 21, 2017 at the Recoletos Social Outreach Center (RESOURCE), Brgy. Handumanan, Bacolod City. The rites was held at the Our Lady of Handumanan Multi-Purpose Hall.

Forty (40) Kindergarten and twenty –eight(28)nursery pupils, coming from RESOURCE and neighboring areas, were “moved-up” . The ceremonies started with a Thanksgiving Mass in the morning officiated by Fray Ronel Gealon, OAR, President of RESOURCE –Handumanan Foundation, Inc. The Closing and Recognition rites will be in the afternoon.

SEMDC is a joint project of RESOURCE and the Department of Social Services and Development (DSSD) – Bacolod. RESOURCE provides the venue while DSSD-Bacolod provides learning facilitators.

Expected to attend the rites are Honorable Bacolod City Mayor Evelio Leonardia; Bacolod City Councilors: Honorable Em Ang, Chairperson of the City Committee on Social Services and Development and Honorable Cindy Rojas, Chairperson of Committee on Family and childcare Development. **RO**



Dasmariñas City, Cavite, celebrates its 150th Foundation Anniversary

BY FRAY EMIL A. QUILATAN, OAR

DASMARIÑAS CITY – July 5, 2017. Located in the commercial district of Cavite Province, Dasmariñas City celebrates the 150th foundation of its city and parish.

The celebration of the Holy Mass started at 5:00 PM with his Eminence Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle, DD, as main celebrant and homilist. Together with him were Bishop Pedro Arigo, DD, Bishop Emeritus of the Vicariate of Puerto Princesa, Bishop Manuel Sobreviñas, DD, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Imus, and Very Rev. Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, prior provincial of the Augustinian Recollect Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, and a good number of concelebrating priests. Present were various parish organizations and religious congregations. Government officials graced also the occasion.

During the Spanish colonial period, the city of Dasmariñas formerly belonged to the Augustinian Recollect Hacienda known as “Hacienda de San Juan Bautista de Imus” and it was called Perez-Dasmariñas. The inhabitants of the town were tenants of the Imus Hacienda.

Pérez-Dasmariñas originated from the mother town, Imus. In 1866, a group of nipa houses belonging to the barrios of Imus – Malagasag, Salitrán, Salacay, Paliparan, Malinta and Nancaan – were relocated and regrouped in a reducción (settlement) in barrio Tampus. This barrio was selected as the original site of the town of Pérez-Dasmariñas. It was here that the relocated residents elected their own gobernadorcillo and other local officials. When the physical organization of the residents was accomplished, the settlement was elevated to a civil town in 1867. The town was named after the Gomez Pérez Dasmariñas, governor-general of the Philippines (a. 1590-1593). That same year, i.e., 1867, the town became a canonical parish under the pastoral care of the Augustinian Recollects. The parish church and convent were constructed of stones and bricks, and the town's patroness is La Inmaculada Concepción. **RD**



Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, prior provincial, joins his Eminence Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle, DD, and other bishops in the concelebrated mass.



ARCORES-Philippines organizes ECO-Tabang for earthquake victims

BY FRAY TAGOY JAKOALEM, OAR

An earthquake with a 6.5 magnitude struck the island of Leyte last July 7, 2017. Many houses in Ormoc City and Kananga town were badly damaged by the tremors, and of the succeeding aftershocks. The Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno through the Commission on Social and Ecological Concerns - Recoletos organized an immediate relief response to the affected families; the commission started to adapt the name ARCORES (Augustinian Recollect Solidarity network - Philippines) to align the Order's call for a unified identity in our social outreach efforts globally.

For this effort on earthquake relief drive called "Eco-Tabang" the Province released the amount of Php 150,000.00 from the heartanonymous fund. Eco-Tabang ('eco-help' or 'eco-outreach) is an eco-sustainable outreach of ARCORES (Augustinian Recollect Solidarity network - Philippines) HEARTanonymous & USJ-R Infecop in partnership with Sustainable Energy and Enterprise Development for Communities, Greenpeace Philippines & The Climate Reality Project Philippines.

On July 12, 2017, the ARCORES team visited the ground zero of the earthquake in Barangay Lake Danao, Ormoc City on whose chapel is dedicated to St. Ezekiel Moreno, distributing 120 solar lamps, banig (sleeping mats) and recycled tarpaulins to the 87 affected families. **RD**



USJ-R, RCI hold 1st Recoletos Film Festival

BY IOANNES P. ARONG

CEBU CITY--As Josenian filmmakers gain recognitions in film festivals outside the campus, the University of San Jose-Recoletos administrators thought it was about time to give them an opportunity to showcase their works in their home turf.



Fray Boyax congratulates special citation awardees of the 1st Recoletos Film Festival

That is why USJ-R, through the Department of Journalism and Communication (DJC), held the first ever Recoletos Film Festival in partnership with the Recoletos Communications Inc. (RCI) of the Order of Augustinian Recollects (OAR), last March 26, 2017.

“Let us consider this Recoletos Film Festival as a showcase for both arts and faith,” said Prior Provincial Fray Dionisio Selma, OAR in his speech during the program held at the SM Seaside City Cebu Mountain Wing Atrium.

RCI is the agent of evangelization and social transformation of the Order using the new media.

Dr. Nestor Ramirez, DJC chairman, said the department collaborated with Fray Reynaldo “Boyax” Jaranilla, OAR, RCI president, to be able to put up a

film festival for Josenians filmmakers as some of them are already making a name for themselves in local film fests.

Dr. Ramirez was referring to the recent exploits of Josenian filmmakers in this year’s Sinulog Film Festival where the best film and second best film awards were bagged by Josenians.

“Portal 40” directed by Josenian instructor Philip Lapinid IV won the festival’s top prize. Lapinid also won best director.

Meanwhile, “Sugilanon ni Lukas” by Josenian student filmmaker Niño Justin Tecson won second best film. Tecson’s other short film, “No Seguir”, bested 200 other entries to win the C1 Minute Top Student Film Award of Cinema One Originals film fest in Nov. 2016.

1st Recoletos Film Festival

The maiden edition of the Recoletos Film Festival went nationwide in scope as it attracted 29 short film entries from all over the country, said event organizers.

Mark Q. Lifana, a Broadcast Communication graduate of Dumaguete City’s Foundation University, bagged home the top prize as his entry “Bugas” (rice) won the best film award.

The film, which also won best editing, showcased the ironic truth in the life of a farmer who provides rice for the people but could not even provide for his own family.

Fr. Jaranilla said, “filmmaking is probably one of the best venues we have to pursue our work of new evangelization.”

“The festival went beyond our expectation than simply sounding off our eagerness to prepare Recoletos constituents in harnessing their talents in filmmaking,” he said.

Best Film: “Bugas” written and directed by Mark Lifana of Foundation University, Dumaguete City

Best Director: Kurt Fick for his short film “Piyong”

Best Cinematography: Earl Yap for “Experimental forest”, University of San Carlos

Best Musical Score and Sound Design: “Experimental forest”, University of San Carlos

Best Screenplay: “Sugilanon ni Lukas”, USJ-R

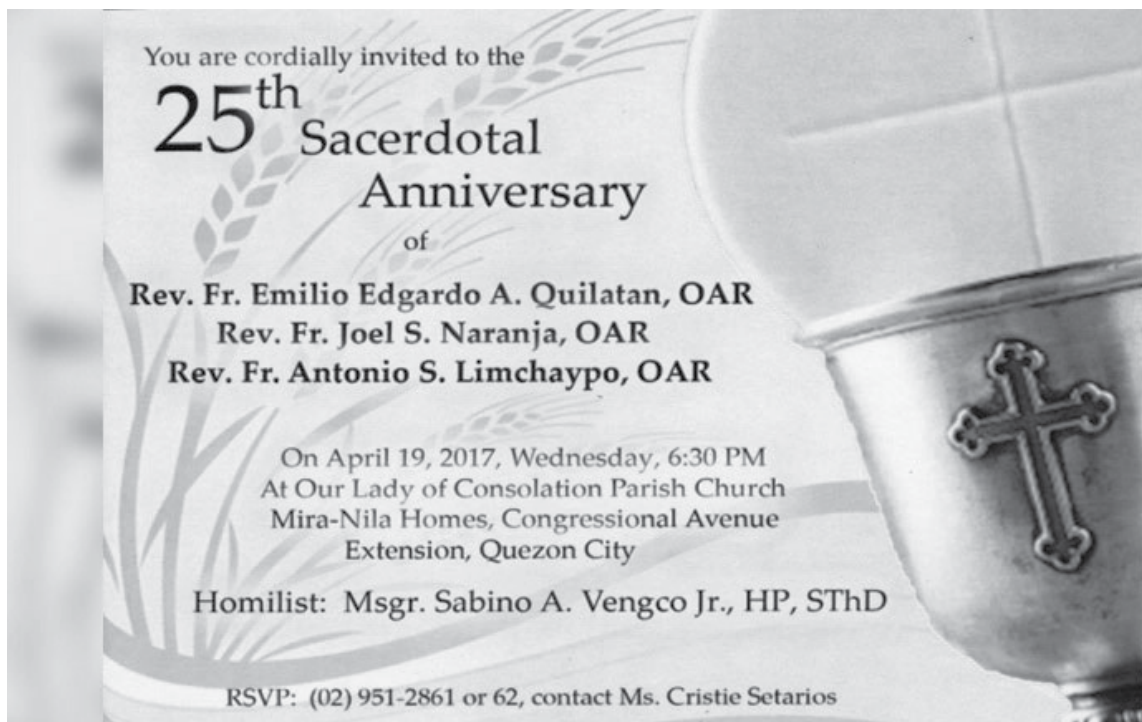
Best Actor: Dwight Devora of “Sugilanon ni Lukas”, USJ-R

Best Actress: Ashly Love Marzon of “Eyeglasses”, USJ-R

Best Editing: “Bugas”, Foundation University of Dumaguete City

Best Production Design: “Pochero”, USJ-R

Special Citation Award: “Memoria” of University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos **RO**




Twenty-five years later, three Augustinian Recollect friars thank God for the Gift of the Priesthood

BY FRAY EMIL A. QUILATAN, OAR

MIRA-NILA HOMES, QUEZON CITY — April 3, 2017 (Monday) Fray Emilio Edgardo A. Quilatan, OAR, Fray Joel S. Naranja, OAR, and Fray Antonio S. Limchaypo, OAR received the Sacred Order of Priesthood twenty-five years ago. They were ordained on April 19, 1992, Easter Sunday, at Our Lady of Consolation Parish Church, Mira-Nila Homes, Quezon City. The late Auxiliary Bishop of Manila, His Excellency Leoncio Lat, DD, was the ordaining prelate.

On April 19, 2017, Easter Wednesday, exactly twenty-five years after, Fray Quilatan, Fray Naranja, and Fray Limchaypo

will come back to Our Lady of Consolation Parish Church to celebrate Holy Mass at 6:30 PM. The jubilarians are inviting their confreres, relatives, benefactors and friends to share their joy and gratitude to God on this momentous celebration. Laus Deo! 

Schedule of Thanksgiving Masses

Fray Emilio Edgardo A. Quilatan, OAR – April 22, 2017, Saturday, 10:00 AM, San Roque Parish Church, Cavite City

Fray Antonio S. Limchaypo, OAR – April 29, 2017, Saturday, 5:30 PM, San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish Church, Talisay City, Negros Occidental

Fray Joel S. Narnaja, OAR – May 1, 2017, Monday, 4:30 PM, San Miguel Parish Church, San Miguel, Iloilo



Photo by Fray Albert Pellazar, OAR

MOA Signing between Recoletos and Diocese of Tandag

BY FRAY ERNIL F. ALMAYO, OAR

PROVINCIALATE—Last July 7, 2017, Most Rev. Nereo Odchimar, D.D., of the Diocese of Tandag and Fray Dionisio Selma OAR representing the Recollect Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno signed a Memorandum of Agreement for a pastoral ministry. This ministry entrusted to the Recoletos covers “the full pastoral charge of the Quasi Parish of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel” in Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur.

The road that led to this signing formally started when in September 2016, Bishop Odchimar wrote to Fray Selma, prior provincial, inviting the Recoletos to work in his diocese.

Fray Selma who was to leave for Rome to participate in the 55th General Chapter replied, in his September 30, 2016 letter, thanking the bishop “for remembering the missionary beginnings and efforts of our predecessors” and “for inviting us to collaborate with you”.

A week after, on October 6-7, Fray Edgar Tubio, president of the Secretariat of Ministerial and Mission Apostolate, together with two confreres in the Commission on Communications, Frays Jose Ernil Almayo and Reynaldo Jaranilla, made a courtesy call on the bishop and an ocular visit to the proposed portion to be given to the Recoletos. Overlooking the Pacific Ocean to the east and the forested hills and green pastures as one turns around 360 degrees, the site where soon to rise the parish church is elevated and around two hundred meters away from the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel chapel.

“You are number 1 in our priority,” the soft-spoken bishop, a former president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), told the visiting Recollects. “This is our token of gratitude to the Recoletos missionaries who came first here in our place,” Bishop Odchimar, himself a native of Surigao, added with a grateful smile. **RD**



The Recolects arrived in the northeastern part of Mindanao, including Agusan and Surigao in 1622. (Hence, five years from now means a huge celebration of the 4th centenary of that arrival.)

The St. Augustine Parish, which coincides with the entire coastal town of Hinatuan, which is around 145 kilometers from the capital, Tandag, is to be partitioned in such a way that the areas from the town proper all the way down south shall remain under the matrix parish while the new ecclesiastical territory shall include the remaining areas all the way up north. In this new parish belongs the Enchanted River, the now-becoming famous tourist destination.

According to a website, Hinatuan is home to around 40,000 inhabitants, 80% of whom are Catholics distributed in 64 chapels.

Due to transition period in the Generalate right after the month-long Chapter in Rome, the Prior Provincial wrote again to Tandag bishop on November 8 asking for an extension of the date to finalize the decision.

The Prior Provincial in consultation with his councilors during the council meeting on February 16, 2017, accepted the offer of Tandag and initially named three friars to compose the Recolect community. On March

10, a letter addressed to the re-elected Prior General, Fray Miguel Miró was sent asking for confirmation of the recommendations relative to the pastoral apostolate in Tandag which, together with other “local” missions in Palawan and Tambo in Ayungon, Negros Oriental, could be considered “as jump-off stations for foreign missions” such as Sierra Leone or other Asian nations.

On March 15, 2017, the Prior General in his Prot. CG 67/2017 approved “the establishment of a community in the Diocese of Tandag”. It also reminded the officials of the youngest province of the Order to see to it that “this new community will adhere to the Augustinian Recolect charism safeguarding community life and teamwork in the discharge of pastoral services.”

The Provincial Council Meeting last April 8, 2017 finalized the members of the pioneering Recolectos de Tandag community: Fray Albert Pellazar, OAR, Vice-President for Academics of the University of Negros Occidental-Recolectos in Bacolod was appointed local prior and parish priest. Fray Jerome Virtudazo, OAR, assistant prefect of discipline of Casiciaco Recolectos Seminary in Baguio City was named parochial vicar and liturgist. The deacon, Fray Mark Saludes, OAR, who is assigned at the Recolectos

Formation Center was designated local procurator and chronicler.

On July 7, 2017, the day before the start of the three-day 115th Plenary Assembly of the CBCP, Bishop Odchimar visited the Provincial Curia for the first time. Aside from meeting the three friars assigned in his diocese, he inked the bilateral agreement with the Recolectos, with Fray Tubio as witness. Present also during the afternoon informal meeting at the Board Room was the Provincial Secretary who took note of the proceedings.

A canon lawyer by specialization, the bishop said that for a start it will just be a quasi parish. Number 516, paragraph 1 of the Code of Canon Law states that a quasi parish is a definite community of Christian faithful within a particular church which has been entrusted to a priest but due to particular circumstances has not yet been erected as a parish. Not being fully functional as a parish, or not yet self-supporting, could be among the reasons for this status.

Come July 16, 2017, the very first patronal fiesta under the Recolects will take place in the original location of the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel chapel, beside which is the makeshift convent of the first batch of Recolect returnees. **RD**





Rev. Fr. Emilio Quilatan, OAR receiving the City Council's Resolution from Council Members

Mabalacat City, Pampanga recognizes Augustinian Recollects as founders

BY FRAY EMIL A. QUILATAN, OAR

MABALACAT CITY, PAMPANGA—January 31, 2017 (Tuesday) The “Sanguniang Panlungsod” of Mabalacat City officially declared that the Augustinian Recollects were its founders.

Mabalacat City—The “Sanguniang Panlungsod” issued RESOLUTION NUMBER 146 SERIES 2017 Dated January 25, 2017 that officially and publicly declared that the Augustinian Recollects were the founders of the town of Mabalacat (now city) and its parish.

The City Council members gave the documents to Fray Emilio Edgardo A. Quilatan, OAR, representing the Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, prior provincial, on January 31, 2017. This was held in the parish church of Our Lady of Grace during the eighth day of its Novena Mass in preparation for the city's fiesta celebration. Fray Quilatan,

OAR, presided at the Mass. Then the parish pastoral council president, in the name of its parish priest, Msgr. Felicito C. Sison, gave as gift an icon of its patroness to Fr. Quilatan.

Before the final blessing, Fray Quilatan, in behalf of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno and its prior provincial, gave words of gratitude to the city council members and the parish priest.

Historical Note: Mabalacat, Pampanga, was the only town and parish founded by the Augustinian Recollects since the Province of Pampanga during the Spanish

colonial period was under the pastoral administration of the Augustinians. The Augustinian Recollects came first to Mabalacat in the eighteenth century and founded a mission station. According to Fray Ángel Martínez Cuesta, OAR, the Order's official historian, “In 1713, three Augustinian Recollects — Manuel de San Nicolás, Andrés de San Fulgencio and Juan de Santo Tomás de Aquino — evangelized of what is now Patling (now O'Donnel), Bamban, Mabalacat, Dinalupian, Talimarin and Capas” (Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos, Vol. I, p. 597). **RP**



(L-R) Dr. Raul V. Fabella, Don Emeterio Buñao, Fray Dionisio Selma and Prof. Luigi Romanillos

“The Last of the Mohicans” reveals Recoletos’ connection with San Miguel Corp

BY FRAY TOL ALMAYO, OAR

MANILA—Being connected with San Miguel Corp spawned a perception that Recoletos is one of the richest, if not the richest, among religious institutes in the Philippines. True or False?

That one sizzling issue was, for the first time, answered in a forum by a former insider, Fray Emeterio Buñao, OAR, who shared his rare experience as a corporate Board Member of SMC, during his post-birthday party at San Sebastian convent in Manila last March 4, 2017.

Father Buñao was born 79 years ago, on March 3, in Bohol.

As a fitting testament of thanksgiving and celebration for the gift of life, a program was prepared by the community and was dubbed: “A Tribute to the Last of the Mohicans. Rev. Fr. Emeterio D. Buñao, OAR—the Last Recollect Director, SMC Board of Directors, on his 79th Birthday”.

“I was one of the Filipino Recollects to

enter the SMC boardroom, and I was the last Recollect to step out of that same boardroom,” Father Buñao pointed out to justify why he is now being referred to as “The Last of the Mohicans”, from the title of a James Cooper novel about the French and Indian War of 1757.

Quite “fitting” indeed, for this year (come September 24 to be exact), he will be a golden boy as a priest, having been ordained in 1967. And more so because, right after his presbyteral ordination he was assigned here in Recoletos de Manila community.

The program

At 5PM, inside the Little Theatre of San Sebastian College-Recoletos, Manila, the more than 2-hour program

started, with the professed seminarians from the Recoletos Formation Center leading the singing of the Our Father.

Fray René Paglinawan, OAR, local prior, welcomed the “party-goers” who were mainly members of the Recoletos Family and close friends of the birthday celebrator.

Either as appetizer or backgrounder, a “Thumbnail History of the Procuración General OAR and San Miguel Corporation” was given through a powerpoint presentation by Prof. Emmanuel Luis Romanillos, a ForSOAR (Former Seminarian of the OAR) and a Church historian.

Then, the main dish, the Pièce de Résistance, by Fray Buñao himself who was baptized with the epithet: “The Last



of the Mohicans”.

The intermission number rendered by the prenovices and novices of Antipolo was a good break from a very engaging topic which previously appeared opaque particularly to the younger generations of Recollects.

Raul Fabella, PhD, a ForSOAR and a national scientist and University of the Philippines Professor Emeritus, gave his reaction from the Economist’s Viewpoint.

Curious questions and incisive insights emerged during the open forum.

Vespers and community singing of the birthday song followed, then, dinner.

The engagement

Wasn’t this occasion a perfect timing so that Fray Buñao could share the personal side of this untold story about the Recoletos-SMC connection in a venue or place where it had all began for him five decades back?

The then 29-year old religious admitted to having been caught flatfooted, when one day in 1968, the erstwhile Vicar Provincial, Fray Pedro Peña instructed him “to prepare to be one of the Board of Directors of San Miguel Corporation”.

Dictated by the prevailing corporate directorship policy in which any corporation doing business in the country must be controlled by at least sixty percent Filipino citizens, SMC had to make necessary adjustments since an overwhelming majority were either Spaniards or Americans.

Consequently, the then Spanish-dominated Province of St. Nicholas had to decide who among the Filipino religious would be qualified and appointed to sit in the Board.

In the words of Fray Buñao, “two niños bonitos” were picked out: Fray Emilio Larlar and himself. He added: “It just happened that we were in the right place and at the right time. Fray Larlar was assigned in [San Sebastian] Cavite while I was in San Sebastian Manila. For that matter, it was handy for us to drive

to our Makati appointments whenever a board meeting was scheduled.”

One thing unforgettable, according to him, was when the other board members, since day one of their reporting, addressed him as “Don Emeterio”.

“The title sounded funny to me, but there was no backing out,” he related.

Unlike him, Don Emilio Larlar did not stay long in the Board. He voluntarily resigned after 3 or 4 years. He relinquished his seat to Don Walthrode Conde who would also, after 2 or 3 years, leave the corporate world.

Don Emeterio’s stint in SMC lasted for eleven years, from 1968 to 1979.

The nine questions

In an attempt to give an overview of the Recoletos’ entrance in and departure from SMC, Don Emeterio, the last Recollect Director of the said corporation, followed a set of nine questions, as if it were a comprehensive oral examination in Business Management.

One, when did you join the Board of San Miguel Corporation, and how long did you stay?

Two, what were the circumstances that led to your being a Board Member? Who were the persons involved? What circumstances led to your ceasing to be a Board Member? Who were the persons involved?

Three, how, to your knowledge, did the Order get involved with San Miguel? Who are your sources regarding this information?

Four, what do you remember from the board meetings? How was Andres Soriano Jr. as President? What was the participation of Ayala?

Five, how did Danding Cojuangco come into the picture?

Six, how did you receive compensation as a Board Member? Was it a monthly salary or annual salary?

Seven, what management lessons did you learn at San Miguel? What was the venue of the Board Meetings? How

long did they last? What preparation did you have before each meeting? What were your feelings as you rubbed elbows with these people? What was your role?

Eight, explain the expansion of San Miguel and how the Recollects were “left out” while other parties bought more shares?

And, nine, what do you remember about the relationships with the Marcoses?

The genesis

Prof. Romanillos’ backgrounder could somehow quench the thirst of those who long to know how the business love story between the Recoletos and SMC began. There might still be some gray areas; nevertheless, the initial input of this current President of the Academia Filipina de la Lengua Española already supplies the major landmarks of this interesting journey.

The Recoletos, through its Procurador General de Manila at that time, also got involved in “temporal goods” for the sustenance of convents and seminaries, in particular, and in the service of evangelization, in general.

Father Juan Labarga, OAR, Procurador General from 1912 to 1919, “patiently laid the foundations for the economic development and growth of the Procuración General de Manila”. Two major business ventures were entered into during his term: the investment in the first cement factory in the Philippines which later became Rizal Cement based in Binangonan, Rizal, and the establishment, through a bilateral agreement with Don Enrique Maria Barreto de Ycaza, of the second brewery—Oriental Brewery—in the country.

Don Enrique founded the first Philippine brewery—Fábrica de Cerveza de San Miguel—on September 29, 1890. When he left for Spain, he sold his shares in 1895 to his partner Don Pedro Pablo Roxas, the maternal grandfather of Don Andrés Soriano.

Decades later, after his return from Spain, Señor Barreto set up the Oriental Brewery with Father Labarga.



Both equally shared in the purchase of a machinery in Hong Kong which was installed at a land parcel in Aviles [Jose P. Laurel Street today] in Manila. While the latter was the company president, the former was technical director or manager.

In 1913, Oriental Brewery started putting its products in the market. But the trend did not prove much economic success especially with its stiff competition with those of San Miguel.

The serious conflict between those two prime movers of Oriental Brewery was an added factor that led to a new path—"Barreto divested himself of all his shares in Oriental Brewery in exchange for the complete control and ownership of the cement factory" and "the pact between two breweries".

The pact

At this time, the business strategy of then 21-year old Don Andrés Soriano y Roxas (1898-1964) conspired with the signs of the times. "He was totally convinced of the convenience of eliminating every competition in the beer market," Prof. Romanillos stressed, paraphrasing the words of Father Simeón Asensio, OAR, who would later become Procurador General from 1945-1970 and from whom many things about this "business love story" were culled.

Through the mediation of Jesuit Fr. Joaquín Villalonga, Don Andrés Soriano commenced negotiations with the owner of Oriental Brewery, the Procuración General de Manila.

"As a result of these negotiations, Oriental Brewery would transfer all its rights to San Miguel; San Miguel in return would transfer to the owner of Oriental Brewery an amount equal to the capital of its shares it owned in Oriental Brewery," Prof. Romanillos said.

This historic event took place in August of 1919.

The initial agreement as to the share of the beer market was: the Oriental Brewery had the right to one-third of the market and the San Miguel Brewery to two-thirds.

"Apparently," Prof. Romanillos observed, "this arrangement was not completely satisfactory, especially for the Procuración General de Manila." Why?

The Province of San Nicolas de Tolentino was in terrible economic crisis for some years already. In 1917, large portions of the land properties of San Sebastian in Manila and the 6,000 sq. m. out of the one-hectare land occupied by the Immaculate Conception convent of Cebu were sold. In the latter, only 4,000 sq. m. remained, where USJ-R stands now.

Nonetheless, the said business transaction

"would go down in history as the most transcendental and most significant, not much on account of the amount involved but to the importance this deal would entail in the future of the Augustinian Recollect Order and San Miguel," Prof. Romanillos remarked.

"From that day onwards, ... the economic trend would be all uphill, moving upward for a very long time."

The exit

Although Fray Buñao, or Don Emeterio, mistook 1890 as the year of tie-up between the Recoletos and San Miguel, his personal experiences as an insider in the top echelon of the company can never be less than credible and beneficial for his ministry.

He was convinced that "my presence as an SMC director added an ecclesial dimension to the corporation. I used to lead the prayers at the start of the board meetings. When an officer of the company passes away, they would usually call on me to lead the Responsorio for the dead."

"The monthly meetings I used to attend... became a kind of classroom that prepared me on how to handle the affairs of the Recollect seminaries and schools," he averred.

Fray Buñao has been, for many years, a formator in the philosophy seminary in Baguio City and in the novitiate and theologate in Quezon City. He was also assigned in the Recollect schools holding various capacities, notably as President of the University of San Jose-Recoletos in Cebu City and of the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos in Bacolod.

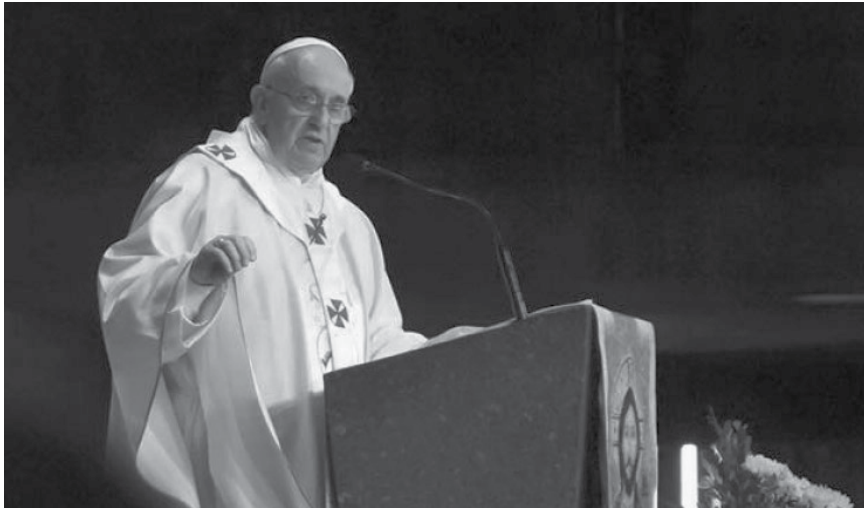
As to the departure of the Recoletos from San Miguel Corporation, Don Emeterio noted that when San Miguel went for intensive business expansion, it needed a good amount of working capital. "Sometimes, it turned to the stockholders for additional investments."

"I remembered that the Recolects were invited to invest more in the projects of the company, but the Order used to waive its right of the Stock Option."

"In reality," he continued "it was an opportunity lost for the Recolects. Business communities were convinced that SMC was a bedrock for investments."

But, then, again, the bedrock of the Order's primary goal shone through, as Father Buñao himself recalled: "The Recollect's major concern was the evangelization of the people, not the building of a business empire."

When the last of the Mohicans "resigned" in 1979, thus ended the direct line that had linked the Recoletos with San Miguel for six decades long. **RD**



Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for 51st World Communications Day

“Fear not, for I am with you” (Is 43:5)

Communicating Hope and Trust in our Time

Access to the media – thanks to technological progress – makes it possible for countless people to share news instantly and spread it widely. That news may be good or bad, true or false. The early Christians compared the human mind to a constantly grinding millstone; it is up to the miller to determine what it will grind: good wheat or worthless weeds. Our minds are always “grinding”, but it is up to us to choose what to feed them (cf. SAINT JOHN CASSIAN, Epistle to Leontius).

I wish to address this message to all those who, whether in their professional work or personal relationships, are like that mill, daily “grinding out” information with the aim of providing rich fare for those with whom they communicate. I would like to encourage everyone to engage in constructive forms of communication that reject prejudice towards others and foster a culture of encounter, helping all of us to view the world around us with realism and trust.

I am convinced that we have to break the vicious circle of anxiety and stem the spiral of fear resulting from a constant focus on “bad news” (wars, terrorism, scandals and all sorts of human failure). This has nothing to do with spreading misinformation that would ignore the tragedy of human suffering, nor is it about a naive optimism blind to the scandal of evil. Rather, I propose that all of us work at overcoming

that feeling of growing discontent and resignation that can at times generate apathy, fear or the idea that evil has no limits. Moreover, in a communications industry which thinks that good news does not sell, and where the tragedy of human suffering and the mystery of evil easily turn into entertainment, there is always the temptation that our consciences can be dulled or slip into pessimism.

I would like, then, to contribute to the search for an open and creative style of communication that never seeks to glamourize evil but instead to concentrate on solutions and to inspire a positive and responsible approach on the part of its recipients. I ask everyone to offer the people of our time storylines that are at heart “good news”.

Good news

Life is not simply a bare succession of events, but a history, a story waiting to be told through the choice of an interpretative lens that can select and gather the most relevant data. In and of itself, reality has no one clear meaning. Everything depends on the way we look at things, on the lens we use to view them. If we change that lens, reality itself appears different. So how can we begin to “read” reality through the right lens?

For us Christians, that lens can only be the good news, beginning with the Good News par excellence:



“the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God” (Mk 1:1). With these words, Saint Mark opens his Gospel not by relating “good news” about Jesus, but rather the good news that is Jesus himself. Indeed, reading the pages of his Gospel, we learn that its title corresponds to its content and, above all else, this content is the very person of Jesus.

This good news – Jesus himself – is not good because it has nothing to do with suffering, but rather because suffering itself becomes part of a bigger picture. It is seen as an integral part of Jesus’ love for the Father and for all mankind. In Christ, God has shown his solidarity with every human situation. He has told us that we are not alone, for we have a Father who is constantly mindful of his children. “Fear not, for I am with you” (Is 43:5): these are the comforting words of a God who is immersed in the history of his people. In his beloved Son, this divine promise – “I am with you” – embraces all our weakness, even to dying our death. In Christ, even darkness and death become a point of encounter with Light and Life. Hope is born, a hope accessible to everyone, at the very crossroads where life meets the bitterness of failure. That hope does not disappoint, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts (cf. Rom 5:5) and makes new life blossom, like a shoot that springs up from the fallen seed. Seen in this light, every new tragedy that occurs in the world’s history can also become a setting for good news, inasmuch as love can find a way to draw near and to raise up sympathetic hearts, resolute faces and hands ready to build anew.

Confidence in the seed of the Kingdom

To introduce his disciples and the crowds to this Gospel mindset and to give them the right “lens” needed to see and embrace the love that dies and rises, Jesus uses parables. He frequently compares the Kingdom of God to a seed that releases its potential for life precisely when it falls to the earth and dies (cf. Mk 4:1-34). This use of images and metaphors to convey the quiet power of the Kingdom does not detract from its importance and urgency; rather, it is a merciful way of making space for the listener to freely accept and appropriate that power. It is also a most effective way to express the immense dignity of the Paschal mystery, leaving it to images, rather than concepts, to communicate the paradoxical beauty of new life in Christ. In that life, hardship and the cross do not obstruct, but bring about God’s salvation; weakness proves stronger than any human power; and failure can be the prelude to the fulfilment of all things in love. This is how hope in the Kingdom of God matures

and deepens: it is “as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow” (Mk 4:26-27).

The Kingdom of God is already present in our midst, like a seed that is easily overlooked, yet silently takes root. Those to whom the Holy Spirit grants keen vision can see it blossoming. They do not let themselves be robbed of the joy of the Kingdom by the weeds that spring up all about.

The horizons of the Spirit

Our hope based on the good news which is Jesus himself makes us lift up our eyes to contemplate the Lord in the liturgical celebration of the Ascension. Even though the Lord may now appear more distant, the horizons of hope expand all the more. In Christ, who brings our human nature to heaven, every man and woman can now freely “enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh” (Heb 10:19-20). By “the power of the Holy Spirit” we can be witnesses and “communicators” of a new and redeemed humanity “even to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:78).

Confidence in the seed of God’s Kingdom and in the mystery of Easter should also shape the way we communicate. This confidence enables us to carry out our work – in all the different ways that communication takes place nowadays – with the conviction that it is possible to recognize and highlight the good news present in every story and in the face of each person.

Those who, in faith, entrust themselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit come to realize how God is present and at work in every moment of our lives and history, patiently bringing to pass a history of salvation. Hope is the thread with which this sacred history is woven, and its weaver is none other than the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. Hope is the humblest of virtues, for it remains hidden in the recesses of life; yet it is like the yeast that leavens all the dough. We nurture it by reading ever anew the Gospel, “reprinted” in so many editions in the lives of the saints who became icons of God’s love in this world. Today too, the Spirit continues to sow in us a desire for the Kingdom, thanks to all those who, drawing inspiration from the Good News amid the dramatic events of our time, shine like beacons in the darkness of this world, shedding light along the way and opening ever new paths of confidence and hope.

From the Vatican, 24 January 2017

Francis



PROVINCE OF ST. EZEKIEL MORENO
ORDER OF AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS

Prot. No. 0087/17

31 July 2017

TO ALL RELIGIOUS OF THE PROVINCE OF ST. EZEKIEL MORENO

"If it's not to be a saint,
why else would I want to live?"¹

We now stand at the threshold of August. Later, we shall be celebrating the **Augustinian feasts and solemnities** interspersed within the month. Once again, in a special way, let us take a look at our spiritual moorings: in our "forma de vivir" as consecrated persons and in our "modo de administrar" as "prophets who build up fraternal communities that promote communion and announce the Gospel"² in the mission areas we are assigned. But what are these, in the first place, if they are not essentially linked to our ultimate goal? Why else would we want to live and work if, at the end of the day, it is not about reaching heaven?

Occasioned by the **OAR Year of Holiness**, those celebrations also summon us to also give importance to some inspiring aspects in the biography of our Augustinian Recollect saints "who have left behind eloquent testimonies of holiness and have undertaken particularly generous and demanding works of evangelization and service."³ Our main purpose is "to revive the call to holiness and to be open to the action of the Spirit, which never ceases to renew our hearts and fills them with the joy of the Gospel."⁴

*Father who art Holy, all our hope rests in Your great mercy. We give
You thanks and we bless Your name.*

These are the opening lines of our Prayer for the Year of Holiness. Like the prayer Jesus taught us, there is acknowledgment here of the Father as the fount of holiness and mercy, which, in a word, affirms that our God is love. Our human response is a humble rendition of hoping, thanksgiving, and blessing, which, in a word, is an act of worship.

With deep faith and unremitting courage comparable to those of the centurion who admitted his unworthiness to welcome the Lord under his roof,⁵ our journey to be holy as the Father is holy⁶ must, by all means, continue. On the one hand, we are aware of our human condition, as St. Augustine expressed it perfectly: "Our heart is unquiet until it rests in You."⁷ We purposely choose this translation which replaced

¹ Angel Martínez Cuesta, Jenaro Fernandez. *If it's not to be a saint, why else would I want to live?* Granada 2009, p. 218, cited by Fr. Miguel Miró, Prot. CG 13/2017 (February 2, 2107).

² *Life and Mission Project of the Order 2016-2011, "Presentation", p. 8.*

³ *Vita consecrata*, 35.

⁴ Fr. Miguel Miró, Prot. CG 13/2017 (February 2, 2107).

⁵ Cf. Mt. 8:8

⁶ Cf. 1 Pet. 1:16

⁷ "inquietum cor nostrum donec requiescat in te" (emphasis, ours). *Confessions 1.1.1*, Eng. trans. by Maria Boulding, OSB (New York: New City Press, 1998).



“restless” with “unquiet” to underscore the etymological scope of and affinity between “inquietum” and “requiescat”. Although both are derived from the Latin “quies” (“quiet”), Augustine wanted us to see that “this initial disquiet is answered by the adumbration of eternal rest.”⁸

But, on the other hand, we firmly believe in the kind of God we have, whose “nomen misericordiae”, being accessible to all, manifests his loving, abiding, and forgiving presence⁹: “If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would survive? But with you is found forgiveness: for this we revere you.”¹⁰ And as Pope Francis reminds us: “Forgiveness is the most visible sign of the Father’s love”¹¹; “Mercy is this concrete action of love that, by forgiving, transforms and changes our lives.”¹²

*May Your Spirit open our hearts to conversion; a
conversion that unites us to Jesus, that transforms
our ways of thinking and living.*

The Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, is the main protagonist in the drama of coming back home to the embrace of the merciful Father. He initiates and sustains. Hence, everything is grace from the first moment of conversion. Yet equally decisive is man’s exercise of freedom to cooperate. In this regard, we again remember St. Augustine, saying: “The God, who created you without you, will not save you without you.”¹³ What a confluence of two allied forces—that of divine superintendence and that of human freedom! This vivifying encounter further yields unitive and transformative effects: we are intimately joined with Christ and oriented to live according to the Spirit.¹⁴

In concrete terms, we call to mind St. Ezekiel’s three “magic” words: “Jesus and I”. According to Prof. Romanillos: “These words meant union with Jesus in the things he [Ezekiel] did. His then was a spirituality that embodied complete union with Jesus, even in the commonplace things he was doing.”¹⁵ If we transport this challenge to our situation, it must be “Jesus and I” not only in ministering the sacraments or fulfilling a group work, but also, for instance, in picking up a litter and putting it in a trash bin, or completing one’s task even if nobody notices it.

*Grant us the grace of being creators of communion,
that we may be transmitters of Your peace in Your Church and in the world.*

Pope Francis has identified one specific role the Augustinian Recollects have to play in the Church today: to be “creators of communion.”¹⁶ He added: “With our presence in the midst of the world, we are called to create a society capable of recognizing the dignity of each person and of sharing the gift that each one is for the other.” This is a clarion call to go back to the rudiments of Christian morality and Christian anthropology. But how can we respond to that in our school apostolate? Do our “Tatak-Rekoleto Attributes” prepare all our stakeholders to be creators of communion and transmitters of peace? What about in the context of our parishes and mission areas?

If we review the teachings of our father, St. Augustine, we can draw lessons from his concept of peace which is an important ingredient for communion. He said that in this world of multiplicity, we must

⁸ James J. O’Donnell, *Augustine. Confessions. Volume II: Commentary Books 1-7* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 13.

⁹ Virgilio Pacioni, “La doble noción de Dios: ‘nomen aeternitatis’ y ‘nomen misericordiae’”, *Avvgstinvs* (Madrid, Julio-Diciembre 2016), p. 391.

¹⁰ Ps. 130: 3-4

¹¹ *Misericordia et misera*, 2b.

¹² *Misericordia et misera*, 2d.

¹³ *Sermon 169.13*

¹⁴ Cf. *Catechism for Filipino Catholics [CFC]*, 1307-1321.

¹⁵ Emmanuel Luis Romanillos, *Life and Spirituality of Saint Ezekiel Moreno. Parish Priest of Las Piñas (1876-1879)*, p. 35.

¹⁶ Pope Francis, *Address to the Participants of the 55th General Chapter of the Order of Augustinian Recollects* (Clementine Hall of the Vatican Apostolic Palace, October 20, 2016).



aspire for “tranquility of order” (or “tranquilitas ordinis”), where each one has its proper place.¹⁷ For us, human beings, let us aspire for concord or oneness of heart rooted in the love of authentic friendship.¹⁸ But then again, we, Augustinian Recollect friars, must be at the forefront of this advocacy. Let us intensify, therefore, our own experience inside our respective community: “to live harmoniously in the house and to have one soul and one heart intent upon God.”¹⁹ For as we have learned in our philosophy: *nemo dat quod non habet*. We can only build something out of the “materials” that we have at hand.

*Make us responsive to the needs of those who live without faith;
May we be close to those who suffer and to the poor.*

The needy are those who are located at the “periphery” of our society and, yes, also of our hearts. And to name a few, they are those “who live without faith”, “those who suffer”, and “the poor”. But periphery here is not just geographical but also existential; it is not just “a metaphor of social marginality” but also, in a broader context, about relation between religions and globalization whereby some sectors lie at the “edge” of new information and communication technologies, processes of political and institutional integration, shared cultural patterns, and transnational phenomena and organizations.²⁰

These are issues in the big scale. However, we can opt to start reflecting on that which is very close to us: the experience of St. Monnica, better known as the patroness of mothers. We know how her patience and prayers helped awaken her husband, Patricius, and son, Augustine, from deep spiritual slumber. According to Peter Brown: “Patricius was unfaithful to her: she again waited, in silence, until, sure enough, he became a Christian.”²¹ Augustine, for his part, held on to the lessons of Christianity his mother taught him—“with her feminine ways, her masculine faith, the peace of her age, her motherly love and all her Christian devotion.”²² Monnica, therefore, was responsive in her own way to the needs of her loved ones who, at those times before conversion, were at the “existential periphery”, in dire need of a good Samaritan to bring them to the inn of Christian renewal.

*Give us humility and openness to follow Jesus.
May He fill our life with hope, may he fill us with love for You.*

Humility holds the key to holiness. Even docility and availability must be securely fastened to this elusive virtue. And it is interesting to note how martyrdom is associated with humility, in the light of Mt. 20: 17-28 which narrates the request of the mother of Zebedee’s sons. As an antidote to self-exaltation, Jesus presented the alternative: the lowering of oneself through service just as “the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”²³

Let us take, then, this opportunity to recount the story of martyrdom of the Augustinian monks in Gafsa, Tunisia in the late 5th century. At the order of King Hunneric, the monastery headed by abbot Liberatus was not spared from massacre. Also killed “in odium fidei” were his confreres: Boniface (deacon), Servus and Rusticus (subdeacons), and the other monks Rogatus, Septimus, and Maximus. A stirring part of the account, focusing on Maximus, probably the youngest in the group, goes:

“You are only a child,” they [the persecutors] urged him. “Why should you be in such a hurry to die? Let the others go, they are mad. But you take our advice, and you will save your

¹⁷ *City of God*, 19.13.1

¹⁸ Donald Burt, OSA, “Peace” in *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Michigan & Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), p. 629.

¹⁹ *Rule* 1.2

²⁰ Pasquale Ferrara, “The Concept of Periphery in Pope Francis’ Discourse: A Religious Alternative to Globalization?” *Religions* 6 (2015), pp. 42-57; doi:10.3390/rel6010042.

²¹ Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo. A Biography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), p. 19.

²² *Conf.* 9.4.8

²³ *Mt.* 20:28



life and get a position in the palace of our great king.” But Maximus, though a boy in years, answered with maturity worthy of old age: “No one shall separate me from my holy father Liberatus and from my brethren who brought me up in the monastery. I lived with them in the fear of God and I desire to accept suffering with them the glory which is to come. Do not suppose that you can seduce me because of my youth; the Lord has willed to gather the seven of us together, and he will be pleased to crown us all together in one martyrdom.”²⁴

When we shall celebrate the feast of these martyrs on August 26, let us also recall the new path that resembles that of martyrdom: the offering of one’s life as an “heroic act of charity”.²⁵

*Father, instill in us Your Spirit
so that we respond with joy to Your call to holiness.*

We continue to ask the merciful Father to send us his Spirit from whom joy, among his many fruits, emanates.²⁶ This joy will transform us into new wineskins of God’s love to the world. It will keep us focused on our dream to become saints, and “be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient”.²⁷

Brothers, let us find time to go back to the stories of our saints especially during this month of August. Let us be inspired by how they were able to surmount all sorts of difficulties. Let us be edified by God’s faithful love to man. And let us be moved to follow the path to sanctity.

In closing, let us drill in our minds this wisdom: “The perfection of the traveler is to know that one has not yet reached what one is aiming at; travelers, after all, know how much distance they’ve covered, how much still remains for them.”²⁸

May God shower his abundant blessings to us all. HAPPY FIESTA TO EVERYONE.

Fray Jose Ernil F. Almayo, OAR
Provincial Secretary



In St. Ezekiel Moreno,

Fray Dfonisio Q. Selma, OAR
Prior Provincial

²⁴ “From the account of the Martyrdom of Seven Monks by an unknown author,” CSEL. 7, Vindobonae 1881, pp. 108-114, at Proper Offices. *The Augustinian Saints and Blesseds. Liturgy of the Hours* (Rome 2013), p. 238.

²⁵ Cf. Pope Francis, Apostolic Letter issued *Motu Proprio*, *Maiores hac delictionem* (July 11, 2017)

²⁶ Cf. Gal. 5:22; CFC 1339

²⁷ 2 Tim 4:2

²⁸ St. Augustine, Sermon 306/B



ORDO AUGUSTINIANORUM RECOLLECTORUM
GENERALATUS

Viale dell'Astronomia, 27 - 00144 ROMA
Tel. 06 592 65 34 – Fax 06 592 08 87
curiageneral@agustinosrecoletos.com



Called to be saints

Prot. CG. 13/2017

TO ALL THE RELIGIOUS OF THE ORDER

Dear brothers and sisters:

*The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.*¹ It is the Spirit that unites us to Christ, and in him it is that we become sons and daughters of the Father and members of the Church. All Christians are called to holiness, to live fully in charity,² according to one's own vocation and the gift received from that same Spirit, which brings about the Church's communion in the diversity of vocations, charisms, and ministries.³ Each individual, whatever their situation in life, is called to encounter Christ and to live out their vocation and their mission with gratitude and with joy.⁴

All of us sons and daughters of the Church, called by the Father to "listen" to Christ, ought to feel *a profound demand to conversion and holiness*, especially those in the consecrated life. We have been called to a prophetic life, moving from the holiness transmitted through the sacraments to the holiness of everyday life.⁵

1. Called to holiness

Consecrated as we are by the profession of the evangelical counsels, each one of us is called to live in holiness within the Church, with fidelity to the charism we have received, through the coherence of our lives, an openness for evangelization, and at the service of the poorest.

¹ Cf. Romans 5,5.

² Cf. 1Th 4,3; Eph 1,4; LG 39

³ Cf. LG32

⁴ Cf. VC 31

⁵ Cf. VC 33, 35



“It is not by chance that there have been so many consecrated persons down the centuries who have left behind eloquent testimonies of holiness and have undertaken particularly generous and demanding works of evangelization and service.”⁶ We Augustinian Recollects wish to revitalize the Order, and to this end each one of us has to feel called personally to holiness, a holiness that is personal as well as communitarian and pastoral, so as to respond in our days in the same way our holy ones did in their own times. This means replicating the audacious and creative holiness of our brothers in response to the signs of our own times.⁷ Fr Jenaro Fernandez, whose cause of beatification is going forward, was right to say: “if it’s not to be a saint, why else would I want to live?”⁸ This call reaches out to the whole Augustinian Recollect family, in which abundant witnesses of holiness have arisen.

2. Everyday life

“This invitation is first of all a call to perseverance on the path of holiness in the midst of the material and spiritual difficulties of daily life.”⁹ The fraternal life of each community is a schoolroom for whoever truly wants to be holy, since it is there that he has to commit himself and journey with the brothers whom the Lord has put at his side.

Holiness is always born from the personal and communitarian encounter with Jesus, and this encounter is forged in prayer; without prayer we cannot be saints. From the encounter with Jesus flows the gift of the Holy Spirit, which enables us to live according to God’s will, to regard the community with eyes of faith, and lets the Kingdom fill us with excitement. All that we do and say must every day be nourished by listening to the Word, celebrating the Eucharist, and with the Liturgy of the Hours. Is it not so that laziness and letting things slip in our prayer life are among the principal causes of our apathy and disillusionment?

We have to set out resolutely on the path of holiness: “The Lord, who created you without you, will not save you without you.”¹⁰ Pope Francis suggests to us four words for achieving holiness in everyday life: courage, hope, grace, and conversion. “Holiness is a pathway for going forward, towards the horizon, with courage, with hope, open to grace and full of little conversions.”¹¹

Holiness “is also a call to pursue competence in personal work and to develop a dynamic fidelity to their mission, adapting forms, if need be, to new situations and different needs, in complete openness to God’s inspiration and to the Church’s discernment. But all must be fully convinced that the quest for ever greater conformity to the Lord is the guarantee of any renewal which seeks to remain faithful to an Institute’s original inspiration.”¹²

3. Holiness during formation and in pastoral work

Looking at initial and ongoing formation as being a question of holiness is to enter into the dynamism of the Spirit, which unites us to Christ, renews our hearts, and moves us to grow both humanly and spiritually. Properly understood, formation includes the whole person, and looks to a path of gradual

⁶ VC 35

⁷ Cf. VC 37

⁸ Cf. ANGEL MARTINEZ CUESTA, *Jenaro Fernandez. If it’s not to be a saint, why else would I want to live?* Granada 2009, p. 218.

⁹ VC 37

¹⁰ Sermon 169, 13

¹¹ Pope Francis, *Homily in Santa Marta, 24th May 2016* Pope Francis, *Homily in Santa Marta, 24th May 2016*

¹² VC 37



assimilation to Christ's own sentiments. It is a way of humility that leads us to uncover our wounds to the Lord: a worldly spirit that sinks itself in mediocrity, the perfectionism that embitters the spirit and the individualism that encloses us in solipsism.

Some years ago, at the beginning of the Millennium, St John Paul II pointed out the pastoral power of holiness: "First of all, I have no hesitation in saying that all pastoral initiatives must be set in relation to *holiness*."¹³ We may ask ourselves: is holiness something that can be "programmed"? What does this word mean when seen from the perspective of a pastoral plan? The same St John Paul gives us the answer: "to place pastoral planning under the heading of holiness is a choice filled with consequences. It implies the conviction that, since Baptism is a true entry into the holiness of God through incorporation into Christ and the indwelling of his Spirit, it would be a contradiction to settle for a life of mediocrity, marked by a minimalist ethic and a shallow religiosity. To ask catechumens: 'Do you wish to receive Baptism?' means at the same time to ask them: 'Do you wish to become holy?' It means to set before them the radical nature of the Sermon on the Mount: 'Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect' (Mt 5:48). As the Council itself explained, this ideal of perfection must not be misunderstood as if it involved some kind of extraordinary existence, possible only for a few 'uncommon heroes' of holiness. The ways of holiness are many, according to the vocation of each individual."^{14 15}

4. Year of holiness

Given that this year coincides with various anniversaries recalling the holiness of our brothers and sisters, the 55th General Chapter wanted to dedicate a year to this holiness. It felt that such an initiative would promote the revitalization of the Order and contribute to opening up the Augustinian Recollect charism as a proven and secure way for becoming saints.¹⁵ The intention, therefore, is to revive the call to holiness and to be open to the action of the Spirit, which never ceases to renew our hearts and fills them with the joy of the Gospel.

In proclaiming the holiness of our brothers and sisters, the Church guarantees that our particular way of following Jesus Christ and of conforming ourselves to him is a valid path for carrying out God's plan for each one of us.

The principal anniversaries which can be highlighted are as follows:

- 150 years since the beatification of Francisco de Jesús and Vicente de San Antonio, together with three religious brothers, their Japanese catechists, all of them martyrs of Japan.
- 75 years since the death of the Servant of God, Bishop Ignacio Martínez, apostolic administrator of Labrea.
- 50 years since the death of Blessed Maria de San José, foundress of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters of the Heart of Jesus.
- 30 years since the canonization of St Magdalene of Nagasaki, the Augustinian Recollect tertiary.
- 25 years since the canonization of St Ezequiel Moreno, Bishop of Pasto.

In addition, during 2017 the "*positio*" of the Servant of God Fr Jenaro Fernández Echeverría will be presented to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. We also hope that during the year the commission of theologians appointed by the Congregation will approve the heroic virtues of Mother Mariana de San

¹³ NMI 30

¹⁴ NMI 31

¹⁵ 55th OAR General Chapter, Life and mission project, Decisions, C.5



José, foundress of the Augustinian Recollect nuns.

Following its approval by the General Council at its meeting on 13th January this year, **I proclaim the Year of Holiness for the entire Order**. The year will run from the 5th March, the first Sunday of Lent, through to the 13th November, day of All the Saints of the Order.

Each religious, each community, every country and each province is to undertake initiatives that help both ourselves and the Christian faithful to live the vocation to holiness with gratitude and with joy. Holiness is a gift given to us by the Lord when he takes us unto himself and covers us with himself and makes us like him.

4.1 Motto and timetabling

Called to be saints is the chosen motto for this Year of Holiness, which we want to begin at the same time as the liturgical season of Lent. The Word of God and the liturgy of this Lenten season, in particular on Sundays, will help us to go forward on the path we have to follow together, and will encourage us to reflect and pray, focussed on our own conversion and on the universal call to holiness.

We highlight the following significant dates for this Year of Holiness:

- Sunday 5th March, first Sunday of Lent: *Opening of the Year of Holiness in all the communities and ministries of the Order.*
- Monday 20th March: St Joseph, protector of the Order.
- Sunday 7th May, IV Sunday of Easter: *World day of prayer for vocations.*
- Monday 22nd May: St Rita of Cascia.
- Sunday 4th June: Solemnity of Pentecost.
- Sunday 11th June: Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity.
- Thursday 17th August: St Clare of the Cross of Montefalco.
- Saturday 19th August: St Ezequiel Moreno. *25th anniversary of his canonization.*
- Sunday 27th August: St Monica.¹⁶
- Monday 28th August: St Augustine.
- Monday 4th September: Our Lady, Mother of Consolation.
- Sunday 10th September: St Nicholas of Tolentino.¹⁷
- Thursday 28th September: Blessed martyrs of Japan: *150th anniversary of beatification.*
- Tuesday 10th October: St Thomas of Villanova.
- Friday 20th October: St Magdalene of Nagasaki. *30th anniversary of canonization.*
- Sunday 12th November: All the Saints of the Order. *Closure of the Year of Holiness.*¹⁸

¹⁶ As it is a Sunday, this will be celebrated only in those places where the observance has the category of solemnity (parishes which have her as patron saint, and titular parishes and chapels).

¹⁷ As it is a Sunday, this will be celebrated only in those places where the observance has the category of solemnity (parishes which have him as patron saint, and titular parishes and chapels).

¹⁸ Permission will be sought from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments so that this year we may



4.2 Resources for the Year of Holiness

In order to assist with the smooth unfolding of the Year of Holiness, everyone will have access to:

- Liturgical support for the celebrations.
- Short biographies of the saints (the collection “Lámparas ardientes” and “Our Augustinian saints”).
- Pastoral resources: guidelines for catechesis and for the classroom, images, slogans, posters, videos, etc.

All these resources will be made available with digital support on the Order’s web page:

www.agustinosrecoletos.com

5. Yearn to be saints

In this Year of Holiness, I encourage all the brothers and sisters to fix their sight on the One who called us, who himself is Holy and who makes us holy; and to fix it also on the life and example of so many brothers and sisters of the Augustinian Recollect family who knew how to be docile to the grace of holiness and followed that path with generosity. I exhort everyone to a revitalization of the way we live our Augustinian Recollect charism, starting from personal, communitarian, and pastoral conversion, personifying the “prophecy of the everyday” as a means of sanctification.

Let us again set off on the pathway to holiness, seeing the supernatural dynamism that comes from the Spirit in our meetings with the Lord, in listening to the Word, and in the celebration of the liturgy and of the Eucharist. It is time to give first place to the Spirit, who sanctifies us and draws us out of that mediocrity that eats away at our consecrated life.¹⁹ e It is time to awaken in ourselves the yearning for holiness. “The whole life of the good Christian – St Augustine reminds us – is a holy desire. You do not yet see that which you desire, but because of your desire you make yourself able to be satisfied when the moment of seeing does arrive. Brothers, let us therefore desire, since we have yet to be filled to overflowing.”²⁰

PRAYER FOR THE YEAR OF HOLINESS

Father who art Holy,
all our hope rests in your great mercy.
We give you thanks and we bless your name.

May your Spirit open our hearts to conversion;
a conversion that unites us to Jesus,
that transforms our ways of thinking and living.

Grant us the grace of being creators of communion,
that we may be transmitters of your peace

celebrate this in all our ministries with the category of solemnity.

¹⁹ VC 71

²⁰ In Ep.Io.trac. 4,6.



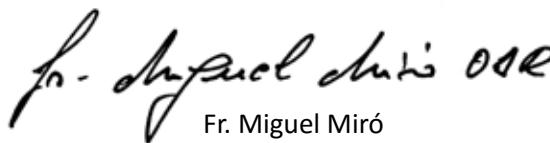
in your Church and in the world.
Make us responsive to the needs of those who live without
faith;
may we be close to those who suffer and to the poor.

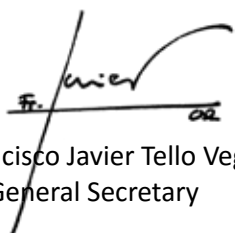
Give us humility and openness to follow Jesus.
May he fill our life with hope,
may he fill us with love for you.
Father, instill in us your Spirit
so that we respond with joy
to your call to holiness. Amen.

I commend all this Year's initiatives to the intercession of Our Lady, Mother of Consolation, to St. Augustine and all the saints of the Order, so that, open to the grace of the Spirit, we may feel called to holiness and announce the Gospel with joy.

This is to be read in community and a record is to be made in the relevant book.

Rome, 2nd February 2017, feast of the Presentation of the Lord


Fr. Miguel Miró
Prior general


Fr. Francisco Javier Tello Vegas
General Secretary





www.agustinosrecoletos.com
curiageneral@oar.it

GENERAL CURIA

Prot. CG 197/2017

TO THE ENTIRE AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECT FAMILY

Dear brothers and sisters:

The Year of Holiness has been a blessing to the Order and to the entire Augustinian Recollect Family. The testimonies of joy, hope, solidarity and communion have been felt in many countries and ministries we are engaged in. The sick brothers speak of holiness, they contemplate the cross with love; the young people who want to give their lives to Christ; those who do not succumb to discouragement but rather emit hope; those who pray and without fear bear witness to their faith; those who are human and welcome everyone with simplicity; those who foster dialogue and forgiveness; those who day to day pray and work with love and joy. The contemplative sisters, who with their prayer, make our mission fruitful, speak of holiness. The Lord has been great with us!

1. CLOSING OF THE YEAR OF HOLINESS

The year of holiness was declared with the desire to “revive the call to holiness and to open ourselves to the action of the Spirit, who renews our hearts without ceasing and fills them with the joy of the Gospel.”¹ Now, at its closing, let us unite our voices and our hearts to give thanks to God and let each of us stand sincerely before the Lord to acknowledge with humility the gifts we have received.

We have all been able to experience, from the youngest to the oldest, the call of the Spirit to rediscover the Augustinian Recollect charism as a gift. Day by day the Spirit awakened in our hearts the desires to live, to love and to proclaim the Kingdom of God.

The Closing of the Year of Holiness will take place on November 13, feast of All Saints of the Order. The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has granted us that this year we can celebrate this feast as solemnity on Sunday, November 12 and that in all our ministries a Mass can be celebrated using the liturgy of the All Saints of the Order.² The Apostolic Penitentiary also grants the plenary indulgence for this feast.³

¹ Prot. CG 13/ 2017.

² CONGREGATIO DE CULTU DIVINO ET DISCIPLINA SACRAMENTORUM, Prot. N. 77/17.

³ PAENITENTIARIA APOSTOLICA, Prot. N. 241/17/l.



I ask the religious who render their service in the ministerial apostolate that on Sunday, November 12, you exhort all the faithful to aspire for holiness and offer them the example of those brothers of ours who are recognized by the Church as saints or venerable for martyrdom or for their virtues in the surrender of their lives. The schools also should have a celebration on November 13 and organize some activities in which the heroics of our saints become known. The Secretariat of Spirituality will offer them resources and supplemental materials for the celebration.

There have been a lot of creative ways of celebrating the closing of this special year coming from various countries. I invite that in the cities or areas in which there are several communities let there be a common celebration on the 13th, aside from the celebration done in their ministries on the 12th.

2. REVITALIZATION PROCESS

This year, following the decisions of the Life and Mission Project of the Order, we have begun the process of union of provinces in order to promote the revitalization of the Order. Revitalization will take place as long as we live the charism we received and respond with holiness and creativity to the call of the Lord. We cannot revitalize the Order if we do not change and if we do not open our hearts to the Spirit of God and the needs of others.

Interprovincial commissions have been convened to prepare their respective life and mission projects and provincial chapters. In this process we may be tempted to think that the problem belongs to the other and that it is the others who have to change and strive. We all have to do our part to be a “living prophecy of communion,” as Pope Francis asked us. The authentic prophet has a profound experience of God and is consistent; his life is consistent with what he says, his words and his life glow with the freedom of the Spirit breaking the barriers that impede the view of the wide horizon and leading towards new shared paths of hope.

3. NEW PROPOSALS

The charism we received is God’s gift to the Church. From all walks of life, the Lord calls us to be Augustinian Recollects, to live in fraternity, to carry out the mission of the Order. Today more than ever we must seek unity and communion, work together from a shared vision and value diversity as a gift.

As a result of this Year of holiness and given the current situation of the Order we must reaffirm our charismatic identity, spirituality and service to the Church. New ideas have opened up our life and mission. With broader outlook and with faith we will have to discern new paths that bring hope.

The Secretariat for Formation and Spirituality sends guides for retreats that we hope arrive promptly to all communities. For its part, the Institute of Spirituality and History, prepares documents for permanent formation according to the motto of each year and offers them on the Web of the Order. The Burning Lamps Collection is also being edited, which presents brief biographies of brothers and sisters of the Augustinian Recollect Family.

The Revitalization Team (ERO) continues to develop materials for spiritual exercises and prayer workshops, provides training courses and facilitates workshops on interiority.



The Centers of Augustinian Recollect Spirituality (CEAR) are formation and spiritual living arms both for the religious and lay people promoting human formation through our charism, deepening our Augustinian Recollect spirituality, accompaniment, social apostolate and formation of leaders.

In order to foster solidarity with the less fortunate in the communities and ministries of the Augustinian Recollect Family, the Social Apostolate Commission is taking steps towards the creation of the Augustinian Recollect Solidarity Network (ARCORES), in order to ensure that in each country there is a team coordinator that facilitates and promotes solidarity initiatives and the search for resources.

The missionary spirit is most manifest in those places where evangelization is most needed. We are grateful for the availability of religious who have volunteered for the new mission in Antilla (Cuba). The Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno has established two communities in poor areas of the Philippines, one in Tandag and one in Pangasinan, and is set to begin its presence in a new country in Asia.

For its part, the General Secretariat of the Apostolate makes its proposals so that in the diversity of social and cultural contexts, our parishes and educational centers become truly evangelizing through our spirituality and fraternal life. The section on educational apostolate with the Institutional Educational Project (PEI) wishes to promote co-responsibility and formation in Augustinian pedagogy and the spirit of the Order among the directors of schools, teachers and pastoral agents.

I make a call to the brothers of the Order and the entire Augustinian Recollect Family to live with renewed hope and to offer generously the gifts we have received, recognizing at all times what the brother offers and truly become creators of communion. We entrust ourselves to the Virgin Mary, Mother of Consolation, to Saint Augustine and to all the Saints of the Order, so that we may be open to the grace of the Spirit and feel called to holiness and proclaim the Gospel with joy.

Please have this read in the community and registered in the corresponding book.

Rome, October 13, 2017.

Fr. Miguel Miró
Prior general

Fr. Francisco Javier Tello Vegas
General Secretary





Miguel Miró, prior general: "The fruit of the Year of Holiness is not being contented with a mediocre life, but being available at all times to give the best."
(13 November 2017 Rome, Italy)

The Fruit of the Year of Holiness

TRANSLATED BY: EMMANUEL LUIS A. ROMANILLOS

Source: <http://www.agustinosrecoletos.org>

Today is the Solemnity of All Saints of the Augustinian Recollect Family, extended to the entire Augustinian Family in the world. It is also the birthday of Saint Augustine of Hippo who was born on 13 November 354, a "young" man who is 1,663 years of age. And today is the closing of the Augustinian Recollect Year of Holiness. We interviewed the Prior General Father Miguel Miró who talked to us about saints, holiness and sanctification.

FR. MIGUEL, WHAT IS HOLINESS?

Holiness is to be united to Jesus and be guided by the Holy Spirit to do what is good. All of us Christians are called to holiness by living our own vocation.

A young boy in a church was asked one day: 'What is a saint?' The boy looked up and, pointing at the stained-glass window above him, replied: 'A saint is someone who allows light of various colors pass through.'

In various ways Saints manifest the living and transforming presence of Christ across the years.

Holiness in this world, however, is not something that is kept in the vault so it will not be stolen from us. Holiness is growing in faith and in love; and that is what the young people in Recollect Augustinian Youth (RAY) are doing by helping one another and by sharing the gifts the Lord gives to them in the group

and by serving those in need.

Holiness is path of love, grace and service. For a young person in Recollect Augustinian Youth (RAY) communities, holiness is following Jesus and living the Gospel with joy and consistency.

Faith is always a meeting with Jesus. To follow Jesus is to accept as one's one the values of the Gospel and to share them with others. If no personal relationship with Jesus exists, we simply



remain in beautiful theories and ideas which do not satisfy our hearts.

In order to know how it feels when you ride a motorcycle, you just don't stare at the motorcycle inside a display window, you have to ride on it and off you go with it. The same thing happens with Jesus; you have to be with Him and open your heart to Him, soon you will realize that holiness is loving so much and doing good to everyone.

Holiness is to be united to Jesus and allow that Holy Spirit to mould our lives. We are made holy through baptism that makes us children of God and members of the Church. However, there is the need to live this everyday and for it to happen it is necessary to grow in faith and in love.

We are pilgrims in this life. The members of the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity (SARF) walk in the road of community in faith by following the Augustinian Recollect spirituality and sharing in the mission of the Order.

This road is a road of holiness. Saint Augustine teaches us to live the Gospel in such a way that we all do it, we all do out of love.

The Church acknowledges the virtues of some men and women who through the centuries have lived their faith in Jesus in a heroic manner and recommends them as models. These are canonized Saints. Yet there is a great number of good persons who reflect Christ in their lives and many of them live with us. They are those who when dealing with them convey peace to us and who live with joy and leave deep inside us the desire to become better persons.

WHY DID YOU DECLARE THE "YEAR OF HOLINESS" WE ARE CLOSING TODAY?

The 55th General Chapter of the Order asked for it on account of the anniversaries of several Saints and Blessed of the Augustinian Recollect Family.

We want to acknowledge their holiness of life with gratitude. Their witness motivates and stimulates us to live the charism with faithfulness and creativity, how they acquired and lived that holiness. The Lord calls us all to be saints in today's world, not in the world of the past. The saints serve us a reference of life, and we ask them to intercede before that Lord for our needs.

We would not be able to reduce all this into just a simple remembrance, but as it is indicated the Year of Holiness logo, we have invited the entire Augustinian Recollect Family to revive the call to holiness and we make the faithful in our ministries to take part of this call. We extend the same invitation to the students and academic communities of our colleges and universities.

It gives me joy to know that some Recollect Augustinian Youth groups of the Order have celebrated in a special way the Year of Holiness. The young people are called to holiness. We know that a sad saint is a poor saint; the young people of Recollect Augustinian Youth convey joy and hope of the Gospel.

Following Jesus in the path of holiness is not being contented with a mediocre life, but being available at all times, with the Lord's help, to give the best of oneself.

Jesus does not take anything from us; on the contrary, He gives His gifts in order for us to face hardships with faith and hope, as the Saints in history had done with success. Jesus wants us to find lasting happiness and joy that surge forth from the bottom of the heart.

The SARF brothers and sisters have shown me in many occasions the good that the SARF has done to them: they love one another, they help one another and, if need there be, they correct one another with simplicity and confidence.

Pope Francis reminded us not long ago that holiness does not consist in wearing the face of a *santa, santita*. Holiness rather consists in that Saints manifest their love in surrender of oneself, in service to others in everyday life.

The hope and joy lived in the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity are diffused in their families and even in parishes. The witness by the Saints stimulates in us the desire to love, as Jesus had loved, even to the point of the surrender of our lives. Life is more than life if understood from the perspective of love and service.

As Saint Augustine says in his Confessions: "Alive shall be my life filled with You." **RO**





COMMISSION ON COMMUNICATIONS- RECOLETOS
Recoletos Communications Office
Provincial Curia, Quezon City

Updated Statistics of the Province

[as of November 18, 2017]					
PROFESSED RELIGIOUS [INITIAL FORMATION]				PROFESSED RELIGIOUS IN PERMANENT FORMATION	
Simple Professed		Solemn Professed		“Religious Brothers”	“Clerical Religious”
Newly professed	Old Timers	Not-yet-Deacons	Deacons	8	135 ^d
11 ^a	17 ^b	0	7 ^c		
28		7		143	
35					
TOTAL NO. OF RELIGIOUS: 178					

NOTES:

^aThose who made their simple profession in SEMONORE Antipolo last July 1, 2017

^bExcluded here is John Carlo Malinao (dispensed: October 2, 2017)

^cIncludes:

- 6 new deacons ordained last September 30, 2017 by Bp. Ryan Jimenez of Chalan Kanoa and are assigned in the following communities for their diaconal exposure:
 - Fray Paul Demillones – Recoletos de Talisay, Negros Occidental
 - Fray Robin Ross Plata – Recoletos de Valencia, Negros Oriental
 - Fray Elpedio Sarita, Jr. – Recoletos de Sierra Leone, West Africa
 - Fray Kenneth Caligdong – Recoletos de Sierra Leone, West Africa
 - Fray Neil Ryan Jarumay – Recoletos de Tondo, Manila
 - Fray Keneth Pahamutang – Recoletos de Manila
- Fray Jovani Tubiona (in irregular situation)

^d Includes:

* *Exclaustration*

- Escabusa (Diocese of Kaohsiung / April 26, 2016 – April 26, 2018)
- Borces (Apostolic Vicariate of Puerto Princesa / October 2, 2017 – October 2, 2018)

^dExcludes:

* *Necrology*

- Fray Pedro Escanillas*: Death on August 9, 2017 in Bacolod, Negros Occidental



RECOLETOS DE PANGASINAN COMMUNITY

Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Pasibi East, Urbiztondo, Pangasinan

(with 11 barangays and 11 chapels, with around 18,000 residents, majority are Catholics.)

LOCAL PRIOR: Fray Amado Emmanuel Bolilia, OAR

PARISH PRIEST: Fray Joseph Cyprian Panaligan, OAR

PROCURATOR: Fray Jayferson Baldevar, OAR

Recent Movements/Turn-overs/Assignments

(covering August 1 – November 16, 2017)

	FROM	TO
Fray John Zachary A. Haguian, OAR	Recoletos de Antipolo	Recoletos de Casian
Fray William P. Cordero Jr., OAR	Recoletos de Casian	Recoletos de Baguio
Fray Domingo E. Saladaga, Jr., OAR	Recoletos de Tondo	Recoletos de Cebu
Fray Mark R. Saludes, OAR	Recoletos de Mira-nila	Recoletos de Hinatuan
Fray Invenzor G. Melgazo, OAR	Recoletos de Mira-nila	Recoletos de Laray
Fray Jayferson A. Baldevar, OAR	Recoletos de Mira-nila	Recoletos de Pangasinan
Fray Ralph Laureen S. Ciceron, OAR	Further studies in Rome	Recoletos de Baguio
Fray Jorge D. Peligro, OAR	Appointed Prior of Recoletos de Tondo	
Fray Amado Emmanuel A. Bolilia, OAR	Appointed Prior and Liturgist of Recoletos de Pangasinan	
Fray Joseph Cyprian J. Panaligan, OAR	Appointed Parish Priest and Chronicler of Recoletos de Pangasinan	
Fray Jayferson A. Baldevar, OAR	Appointed Parochial Vicar and Local Procurator of Recoletos de Pangasinan	
Fray Roland P. Cepe, OAR	Appointed Regional Vocation Promoter – Luzon	
Fray John Paul R. Tanquis, OAR	Appointed Regional Vocation Promoter – Palawan	
Fray Joseph Dexter D. Palagtiosa, OAR	Appointed Regional Vocation Promoter – Visayas	
Fray Francisco Lim Antonio, OAR	Appointed Editor – Research Department of RST	

For the information of the brothers.

Fray Jose Ernil F. Almayo, OAR
Chairman

Commission on Communications-Recoletos

Noted by:

Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR
Prior Provincial



370th Anniversary (1646-2016) of Isabel of Butuan:

Life of a Pioneering Augustinian Recollect Beata or Tertiary in the Philippines¹

BY LUIS DE JESÚS, OAR (1622-1693)²
General Chronicler, Order of Augustinian Recollects

BLAIR & ROBERTSON TRANSLATION

EDITED AND ANNOTATED BY EMMANUEL LUIS A. ROMANILLOS

One of our beatas³ named Isabel passed to the better life this year 1646 in the village of Butuan of the Philippines. We know nothing else about her except that she was converted to the faith by the preaching of Ours⁴ when they entered that province.⁵ The Lord illumined her so that she should leave the darkness of their idolatries, and she was baptized and given the name of Isabel.

She produced great fruit in a short time, for the hand of God is not restricted to time limit. Seeing her so useful in the mysteries of the Catholic religion, our religious sent her to become an assistant⁶ and the spiritual mother of many souls, whom she converted to the faith and catechized thus gaining them for the Church. She was sent to the villages where the devil was waging his fiercest war and deceiving by his tricks, so that she might oppose herself to him by her exemplary life and the gentleness of her instruction.

Isabel established her school in a house in the village to which the young girls resorted. With wonderful eloquence she made them understand that the path of their vain superstitions would lead them astray, and explained the rudiments and principles of the Christian doctrine. At her set hours she went to the church daily, gathered the people and instructed the unlearned,⁷ confirmed the converted, and enlightened the ignorant and that with so much grace and gentleness of words

¹ This is chapter 6 of the second volume of the *Historia general de la Orden de Agustinos descalzos*, to which confrere historians refer simply as *Crónicas*. This is the second of the thirteen volumes of the general history published in Madrid in 1681. This was authored by Father Luis de Jesús. The English translation is titled by the editors as *Recollect Missions, 1646-1648*, in Blair & Robertson [hereinafter B&R], vol. 36, 109-188.

² The Augustinian Recollect chronicler Fr. Luis de Jesús was born in Toledo, Spain, in May 1622. At 16, he pronounced his vows at the convent of Madrid of the Province of Castile. Successively, he became a theology professor in Salamanca, provincial councilor, prior of Valladolid for three terms, prior provincial (1678-1683). After the death of the first general chronicler Fr. Andrés de San Nicolás, Fr. Luis de Jesús was named to take his place. In his *Crónicas*, as the *Historia general de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos* is traditionally known among confrere historians, published in Madrid in 1681, he wrote only about facts and did not engage much in ascetic reflections. His general history abounds in continual expressions of love for the Recollect Order. Fr Luis bewails the pointless dearth of historical sources and the prevailing "neglect of great religious to use the pen and leave news for posterity." At 71, he joined his Maker in June 1693 in Madrid. Cf. Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos, *Augustinian Recollect Chroniclers and Historians* [Unpublished research work], 2-3.

³ Beata or mantelata is a member of the Third Order of Augustinian Recollects. Juridically sanctioned by the superior general or prior provincial, the Third Order was composed of lay men and women who wished to attain Christian perfection according to the spirit of the founder. Today the tertiaries compose the Augustinian Recollect Fraternity, "the members of which, remaining in the world, pursue evangelical perfection, according to the charism of the Order, whilst maintaining their secular identity," cf. Constitutions no. 114 in the Augustinian Recollects. Rule, Constitutions, Additional Code (Rome 2012) page 136. The members of tertiary orders of colonial Philippines daily donned the habit.

⁴ Ours alludes to the chronicler's Augustinian Recollect confreres.

⁵ This refers to present-day Agusan del Norte and Agusan del Sur in northeastern Mindanao.

⁶ Coadjutor is the B&R translation; assistant or collaborator in the mission work of the Augustinian Recollect missionaries is preferable.

⁷ The B&R translation is stupid.



that she seized the hearts of her hearers. To this she joined a modesty and bearing sweetly grave, by which she made great gain among those barbarians.

Since so copious results were experienced through Isabel's work,⁸ both in the reform⁹ of morals and in the many who were converted from their blind paganism, the priests sent her to preach in the streets and open places where the people gathered to hear her—some through curiosity and others carried away by her wonderful grace in speaking. By that means many souls were captured and they begged for baptism, for she was a zealous worker and an apostolic collaborator in that flock of the Lord. She even entered the houses of the obstinate ones who did not go to hear her in the streets. There, with mild discourses and brimming with charity, she softened their hearts and persuaded them to receive the faith.

After some years of employment in that kind of apostolic life her husband died. Upon being freed from the conjugal commitment,¹⁰ she yearned to subject herself to the yoke of religion. Father Jacinto de San Fulgencio,¹¹ at that time vicar provincial of that province, gave her our habit of mantelata or beata. She recognized, as she was very intelligent and experienced in the road to perfection, that her obligations to make herself useful were stricter, that she must live a better life and employ the talent which she had received from God for the benefit of her neighbor, and she did so.

One cannot easily imagine the diligence with which she sought souls and the means that she contrived to draw them out of the darkness of heathendom. What paths did she not take! What hardships did she not suffer! She went from one place to another discussing with the spirit and strength, not of a weak woman, but of a strong man. The Lord whose cause she was advancing aided her; for the solicitation of souls for God is a service much to His satisfaction.

She finally saw all that province of Butuan converted to the faith of Jesus Christ, for which she very joyfully gave thanks. She then retired to give herself to divine contemplation, for she thought that she ought to get ready to leave the world as she had devoted so much time to the welfare of her neighbor.

Isabel of Butuan sought instruction from Sister Clara Calimán¹² (whose life we have written above) and imitated her in her penitences, her fastings and her way of life, so that she became an example of virtues. For long hours did Isabel pray devoutly; she visited the sick; she served them; she exhorted them to repentance for their sins and to bear their sorrows with patience.

She devoted herself so entirely to those works of charity that it seemed best to our fathers (who administered¹³ that district of Agusan) not to allow her respite from them, and that she could [not] live wholly for herself.

The Recollect priests built a hospital for the poor and sent her to care for them. She sought those in need, whom she often carried on her shoulders. So great was her charity. She cared for their souls, causing the sacraments to be administered to them as well as for their bodies, applying to them the needed medicines.

She solicited donations and alms, and she had scheduled the hours for going out to beg for the ailing poor. She did all that with a cheerful and calm countenance, which indicated the love of God burning in her breast.

Her hour came during those occupations and she fell grievously ill. She knew that God was summoning her and she begged for the Sacraments of the Catholic Church. She received the Sacraments with joy.

At last, Isabel of Butuan surrendered her soul to her Lord, leaving, with sorrow for her loss, sure pledges that she has eternal rest.



⁸ Agency is B&R's translation.

⁹ Reformation according to B&R.

¹⁰ The B&R translation is yoke.

¹¹ Fr. Jacinto Claramonte de San Fulgencio was born in Cocentaina in Spanish province of Valencia to Vicente Francisco Claramonte and Isabel Juana Tamarit. He professed in the Augustinian Recollect convent of Valencia in 1614. With eleven confreres he left Cádiz in March 1619 for Mexico. From Acapulco he headed for the Philippines on 4 March 1620 and arrived in Manila five months later on 16 August. When the spiritual administration of Caraga and Butuan in Mindanao was handed over to the Augustinian Recollects in 1622, the first eight missionaries, including Fr. Jacinto, were sent there. He spent ten years in Bacoag, Gigaquit, and Butuan (1629) until he was dispatched to the new mission in Binalbagan in Negros Island in 1632. In 1635, Fr Jacinto was assigned to Tandag in Surigao and in 1638, he was elected provincial counselor in Saint Nicholas Convent in Intramuros, Manila, and concurrently its prior until 1641 when he was chosen as prior of the Immaculate Conception Convent in Cebu City. During his ten-year mission work in Mindanao, he established six convents, three of which were along the banks of the Agusan River, and baptized more than 20,000 natives. During the Caraga Revolt in 1631 he served as military chaplain of the military expedition from Cebu and helped negotiate the pacification of the rebels of Tandag in 1635. Fr Jacinto risked his life in several instances so much that the commander of the military expedition Captain Juan de Chaves lauded him no end for his services. His life was exemplary and so was his death which happened towards 1656 at Saint Nicholas Convent. Cf. Francisco Sádaba, *Catálogo de los religiosos agustinos recoletos de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas desde el año 1606, en que llegó la primer misión a Manila, hasta nuestros días (Madrid 1906) 48-49.*

¹² The life of Clara Calimán is treated in a previous chapter of this *Crónicas*.

¹³ Governed in B&R translation.



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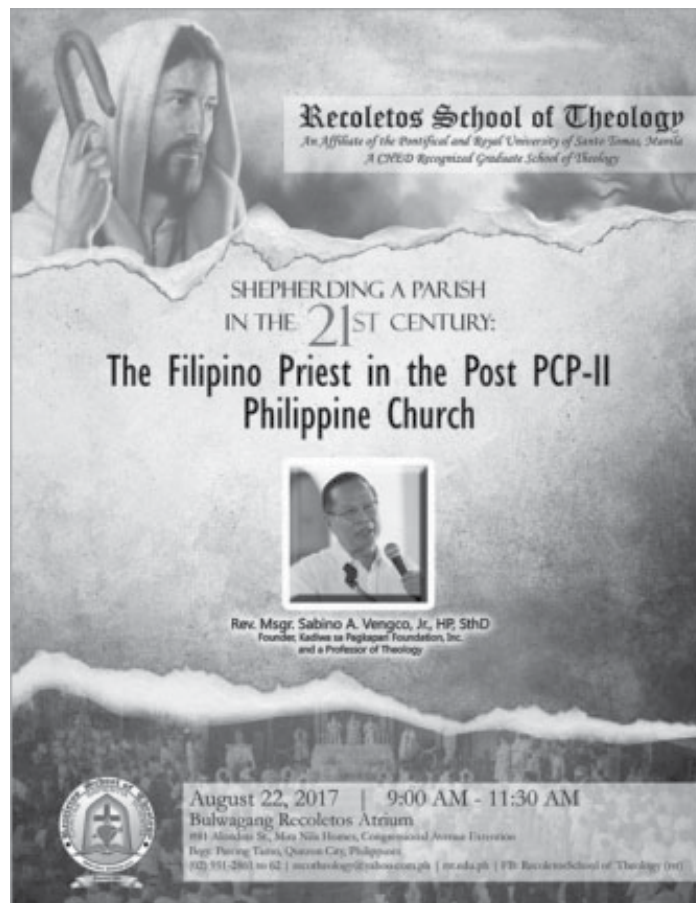
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PROVINCE OF ST. EZEKIEL MORENO
ORDER OF AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS

Prot. No. 0143/17

11 November 2017

TO ALL THE RELIGIOUS OF THE PROVINCE

On the eve of the Closing of the Year of Holiness, we are happy to inform the brothers of the result of the canvass of the delegates to the Seventh Provincial Chapter made by the Provincial Council, in accordance with n. 386 of our Constitutions, in their meeting today.

Of the 145 total number of voters, 142 (or 97.24%) exercised their right to vote. All of the votes were counted as valid.

Here are the names of the Delegates and the Substitutes.

GROUP I – PRIORS OF SEMINARIES (1 Delegate)

Delegate: Fray Bernabe M. Dosdos, OAR

Substitute: Fray Bernard C. Amparado, OAR

GROUP II – PRIORS OF DOMUS FORMATAE (1 Delegate)

Delegate: Fray René F. Paglinawan, OAR

Substitute: Fray William Emilito C. Villaflor, OAR

GROUP III – MINISTERIAL APOSTOLATE (4 Delegates)

Delegates:

- 1. Fray Arnel F. Diaz, OAR**
- 2. Fray Anthony A. Morillo, OAR**
- 3. Fray Joseph Dexter D. Palagtiosa, OAR**
- 4. Fray Henry H. Santiago, OAR**

Substitutes:

1. Fray Jose Fortunato J. Garces, OAR
2. Fray Jose Alden B. Alipin, OAR

GROUP IV – EDUCATIONAL APOSTOLATE (5 Delegates)

Delegates:

- Fray Cristopher C. Maspara, OAR**
Fray Eduardo S. Celiz, Jr., OAR
Fray Don H. Besana, OAR
Fray Nemesio D. Tolentin, OAR
Fray Enrico Peter A. Silab, OAR

Substitutes:

- Fray Joel A. Alve, OAR
 Fray Leo G. Alaras, OAR



GROUP V – RELIGIOUS BROTHERS (2 Delegates)

Delegates:

Fray Jaazeal Estelou D. Jakosalem, OAR

Fray Raymund G. Alcedo, OAR

Substitutes:

Fray Jonathan V. Jamero, OAR

Fray Rey B. Tripulca, OAR

GROUP VI – FORMATION (3 Delegates)

Delegates:

Fray Kenneth Joseph L. Onda, OAR

Fray Leander V. Barrot, OAR

Fray Rommel L. Rubia, OAR

Substitutes:

Fray Joseph Philip I. Trayvilla, OAR

Fray Romeo Ben A. Potencio, Jr., OAR

GROUP VII – MISSION AREAS (1 Delegate each)

SIERRA LEONE

Delegate: Fray Russell C. Lapidez, OAR

Substitute: Fray Dominador D. Mercado, Jr., OAR

TAIWAN

Delegate: Fray Corvin R. Maturan, OAR

Substitute: Fray Giovanni Gil A. Magbojos, OAR

PALAWAN

Delegate: Fray Joel S. Naranja, OAR

Substitute: Fray Charlito A. Orobia, OAR

“If the office of one or more of the delegates should fall vacant outside the appointed time of the Chapter, the substitutes assume the place of the delegates. If these delegates are also impeded, the Prior Provincial, with the consent of the Council will appoint other delegates” (cf. *Add. Code* 461).

We congratulate the elected delegates for the confidence placed on them by the brothers and we wish them an active and fruitful participation in the coming Seventh Provincial Chapter.

Fray Jose Ernil F. Almayo, OAR
Provincial Secretary



In St. Ezekiel Moreno,

Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR
Prior Provincial



Vocation Promoters gather in Cebu

BY FRAY JOVY GALLEG0, OAR

CEBU CITY – The harvest remains great and the Church has all the more in need of workers for the Lord’s vineyard. As a response to this call, the newly appointed National Vocation Director of St. Ezekiel Moreno Province of the Order of Augustinian Recollects, Fray Gideon Antolin Lagrimas, OAR, initiated a one-day seminar-workshop of all the local vocation promoters of the Province.

He invited Rev. Fr. Alfredo Maglangit, Sch.P, National Executive Secretary for Religious Men of the Directors of Vocations in the Philippines of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines as the resource speaker who presented inputs concerning the current trends in ministering and promoting vocation for religious and priestly life and its pastoral care.

During the morning session, Fr. Maglangit gave various programs, materials and means for promoting vocation. One of the means that he greatly emphasized was the possibility of promoting vocation through social media. Inputs regarding the processes and qualifications for accepting aspirants to the seminary were also given emphasizing on the applicant’s family visit by the vocation director as necessary and helpful.

In the afternoon session, the speaker talked about the vocational culture. He said that it is a culture that precedes the vocation promotion where the atmosphere of being missionary, welcoming and generous should be lived out by the members of the community in order to assist people discover their Christian vocation. Likewise, the speaker also enumerated the many factors that affect the vocation promotion. A few of them were when vocation promotion is taken by a few without the involvement of the whole congregation, having no projects for vocation promotion and when the young do not find anymore somebody that inspire or accompany them.

A workshop followed, where the whole group was divided into four small clusters. The task of creating a program of activities for one-

day search-in program, three- day weekend search-in programs, ten month discernment program and one day vocation jamboree was assigned to each smaller group. The presentation of programs of activities with comments and suggestions of the speaker completed the workshop.

The one day seminar was concluded with the election of regional vocation promoters where Fray Roland Cepe, OAR, was elected for the Luzon region, Fray Dexter Palagtiosa, OAR, for Visayas and Fray John Paul Tanquis, OAR, for the province of Palawan.

The meeting was held at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish – Recoletos, Cebu City and attended by 13 vocation promoters and 2 Coristas. The National Vocation Promotion is under the Secretariat of Formation and Vocation Ministry with Fray Ian Anthony Espartero, OAR, as its head.



Fray Larlar opens novena to St. Ezekiel at SEMONORE

BY BRO. JHOBEN M. RODRIGUEZ

ANTIPOLO CITY – “Novena is our response to call to holiness...we journey for nine days to see the beauty of being loved by God,” said Fray Lauro V. Larlar, OAR, the former Prior Provincial, who was the main celebrant and homilist in the opening of Novena Mass in honor of St. Ezekiel last August 10, 2017 here at the St. Ezekiel Moreno Novitiate-Recoletos (SEMONORE).

In his sermon he emphasized the “Love of God based on Sacrifice.” Fray Lauro used as an example the sacrifice of mother and father in giving a glimpse of how God loves each one which he express “authentic love. “God never sees as in categories, but of being a beloved,” he added.

He hailed St. Ezekiel Moreno as a model to each one in

attending to the needs of others of going through sacrifices and being consistent in responding to the love of the Lord.

During the first day of concelebrated novena mass, the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity (SARF)-Antipolo Chapter were present together with other daily mass-goers. **RD**



19 Postulants Receive OAR Habit

BY BRO. IOANNES P. ARONG

BAGUIO CITY - Nineteen third year college seminarians received the habit of the Order of the Augustinian Recollects during the solemn mass presided by Prior Provincial Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, last October 12, feast of the seminary patron Our Lady of the Pillar.

The investiture ceremony, which was held at the seminary chapel, also admitted the 19 seminarians into the postulancy stage of formation which aims to help them gradually transition from the secular to religious life.

"The religious habit is a sign of the seminarians' consecration to God through a life of poverty and simplicity," Fr. Provincial said in his homily, urging them "not to use the habit to boost their personal insecurities."

"We should not see the habit as an opportunity to attract attention or to receive honor from people," he said. "The Church reminds us always to avoid pomposity."

The religious habit, he added, is

also a sign of the Supernatural and Infinite.

"You wearing the religious habit are identified with the Lord," he said. "It's a call and constant reminder, therefore, to behave properly and to remember your identity."

While civilian clothing, he said, could be used to conceal one's identity, the religious habit, on the contrary, reveals it.

He encouraged the new postulants to take care of the habit and cherish it, thinking themselves privileged to be wearing the same habit worn by the first religious and saints of the Order.

Though he said that the habit doesn't make the monk, it is a visible

sign of God.

"People clamor for physical signs that would bring them closer to God," he said. "You wearing the habit are a reminder that God is alive, that He is with his people."

The postulancy, which the seminarian enters after 2 years of aspirancy, precedes the novitiate. It gives them certain experience of religious life, opportunity for a deeper vocational discernment and community integration.

It also aims to give the seminarians the chance to bring to maturity their decision to embrace the religious life according to the character and mission of the Order. **RO**



The 19 new postulants of the Order in a photo opportunity with seminary formators and Fr. Provincial.



Ingenium Series II, at the Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary

BY JOHN AUGUST PAMINTUAN

On 27 May 2017—60 singers from the music classes of the senior high school and college levels of the Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary presented their classroom work in a chorus recital as part of the Ingenium series. They were led by their music teacher, John August Pamintuan.

In its initial version in 2016, the Ingenium (Latin for talent or genius), showcased the music and physical education classes and also included guest performers from a local university in Baguio. This time, guest performers came to visit from the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory. They are acclaimed pianist Prof. Najib Ismail, and soprano Stephanie Anne Aguilar. Tenor John Glenn Gaerlan, also joined the solo performers. Ismail and Gaerlan, incidentally, are alumni of the Hongkong Academy for Performing Arts.

The seminarians prepared for 12 weeks, rehearsing during their one-hour weekly music and chorus classes, and presented the following program in fulfillment of their course requirements:

Edward Elgar: Nimrod from Enigma

Variations, adapted by John Cameron
Hector Villalobos: Bachianas Brasileiras
Nr. 5 Aria and Cantilena

Richard Strauss: Morgen

Rollo Dilworth: Walk In Jerusalem

Queen: We Will Rock You

Ryan Cayabyab: Iniibig Kita

Aside from chorus singing, the more vocally adept students sang the solo parts of some of the selections. They were Brothers Jose Paolo Garces, Hayse Villamin, Jayson Dellomos, Mark Angelo Diaz, and John Arnold Lozada. Additionally, the guests performers also sang a solo number each, from George Frederick Handel's *Samson* (Let the Bright Seraphim), and the *Messiah* (Comfort Ye, Every Valley Shall Be Exalted).

Many members of the audience commented positively on the

impeccable blending and the warm, luscious sound of the voices of the seminarians. With more training, the students will be able to present more high level repertoire, and further hone their vocal prowess in the next Ingenium concert series. They are also looking at an invitation to perform in a joint concert with a Catholic School from Kobe, Japan.

When asked regarding his insights on the rehearsals and performance, their music teacher Mr. Pamintuan, said, "The choral sound of the group is greatly enhanced by the community life of the seminarians. Living in harmony promotes concord in the voices and good blending; living in obedience removes the idiosyncrasies and peculiar characteristics of the individual voices, and living in constant prayer promotes a sense of well-being in the over-all quality of the final work."

Not to be outdone, the Religious Formators Fray Bob T. Cabanag, OAR, Fray Bernard C. Amparado, OAR, Fray Jerome B. Virtudazo, OAR, Fray Leonardo P. Pauligue, OAR, Fray Joseph Philip I. Trayvilla, OAR and Bro. Raymund Rueanne G. Alcedo, OAR, presented the opening number in four voice parts, Pamintuan's *Have Thine Own Way, Lord* (text by Adelaide Pollard) and set the mood for a truly prayerful and meditative evening of choral music. **RO**





The Luminaries

Pre-Novices Theatre Arts

BY BRO. JHOBEN M. RODRIGUEZ

ANTIPOLO CITY – Nine OAR Pre-novices showcased their talents during the culminating activity of Sojourn Theater Arts Workshop last 10th of August 2017 at the auditorium of the Camillian Sisters at Kingsville Subdivision of this city.

Sojourn is an Inter-congregational Pre-novitiate Program that provides classes and modules related to Psycho- Spiritual aspect of formation and Human Formation.

The Recollect formands performed monologue, dialogue (acting), dance and pantomime, together with other congregations and orders. Using the music, *All I desire*, composed by Fray Julius Marcos, OAR, the pre-novices performed an interpretative dance, applying what they have learned. Br. Alfie Angeles was tasked to do the solo performance of his pantomime

during the event. “This workshop will help formands to boost their self-esteem and discover their unknown self within,” he shared afterwards.

They underwent two and half days of workshop, from August 8-10. During those days, they were taught the basics of acting, dancing, stage positions, projection of voice, proper postures, to convey a message through emotions—in other words, all about theatre arts.

Part of the event was a modern dance production of the sojourn formators (religious sisters and priests)

and one among them was the Director of the Pre-novices Fray Roland Cepe, OAR. Present during the show were the OAR novices, Frays Panaligan and Haguisan, the members of SARF de Antipolo, and some guests.

Ever since the OAR pre-novitiate program had begun in the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, the OAR pre-novices consistently joined the said workshop. In fact, this group of pre-novices was the 21st batch –The Luminaries. **RD**



Recollects in Sistina Celebrate Year of Holiness

BY FRAY ANTHONY IRINEO, OAR

ROME – “Be holy for I am holy” (Lev 11:44) echoes down from the ears to the hearts of everyone who participated in the opening rite and vigil of the Recollects’ Year of Holiness last Saturday evening, March 4, 2017.

Indeed, everyone is called to holiness, or “called to be saints,” thus the theme of this celebration. Almost three years ago, in the Philippines, Catholic Bishops Conference of the Phil. (CBCP), for the country’s nine-year preparation for the year 2021’s 500th year anniversary of Christianity’s arrival in her shores, named 2014 as the Year of the Laity and used the similar theme: “Called to be saints... sent forth as heroes.”

In the Order, with the many graceful occasions to thank God for this year of 2017: September 28 – the 150th anniversary of the beatification of the Recollect martyrs of Japan, Blessed Francisco de Jesus and Blessed Vicente de San Antonio, three religious

brothers and catechists; March 16 – the 75th death anniversary of the Recollect Servant of God Bishop Ignacio Martinez (Ignacio of the Blessed Sacrament), the former Apostolic Administrator of Labrea, (Amazon) Brazil; April 2 – 50th death anniversary of Blessed Maria de San Jose, foundress of the AR Sisters of the Heart of Jesus; October 20 – feast day and the 30th anniversary of the canonization of Sta. Magdalena de Nagasaki, the AR tertiary and the patroness of the SAR; October 11 – the 25th year anniversary of the canonization of St. Ezekiel Moreno whose feast day falls every 19th of August; and hopefully, also this year, the positio of the Servant of God Fr.

Jenaro Fernandez will be presented to the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, it is a fitting moment to intensity such call to holiness!

Vice Prior of the House, Fray Juan Pablo Martinez, OAR, led the liturgical rite and participated in by the members of the community, some religious sisters, and lay persons. Intercessory prayers were said in English, Italian, Portuguese, and Italian.

This second semester of the academic year 2016-2017, there are twelve members in the community: one Spaniard, four Colombians, two Mexicans, four Filipinos, and one Brazilian. Collegio di Sant’Ildefonso e San Tommaso da Villanova is located in Via Sistina 11, Rome. **RD**



RST prays to the Holy Spirit as it begins AY 2017-2018

BY FRAY EMIL A. QUILATAN, OAR

MIRA-NILA HOMES, QUEZON CITY – August 11, 2017 (Saturday) The Recoletos School of Theology officially opens the Academic Year 2017-2018 with the celebration of the Mass of the Holy Spirit.

The Mass of the Holy Spirit is a traditional practice by all Catholic educational institutions in commencing the academic year praying for the help of the Holy Spirit. The Society of Jesus under St. Ignatius of Loyola strengthened its practice in 1548 in Italy until all Jesuit schools observed the Mass of the Holy Spirit after his death in 1556.

During the Mass the academic community led by priest main celebrant prayed for the Holy Spirit's power to imbue all students and professors with its seven gifts (Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Knowledge, Fortitude, Piety, and Fear of the Lord) as they face the demands of the academe. Furthermore, the academic community asks the Holy Spirit for guidance and wisdom in order that they may see the presence of God in their studies and in their fellow students.

The Eucharistic celebration was held at the parish church of Our Lady of Consolation. The celebration of the



Rev. Fr. Lauro Larlar, OAR with professors and formators

Holy Mass began at 8:00 AM with a solemn procession led by the altar servers and priest concelebrants. Fray Lauro V. Larlar, OAR, rector, was the main celebrant and homilist. Rev. Fr. Jose Antonio Aureada, OP, SThD, representative of UST was present during the Eucharistic celebration. Right after the homily all professors present took their oath of fidelity to Holy Mother Church by pronouncing

the "Profession of Faith." All RST students present also witnessed their mentors take their promise of fidelity. Finally, all RST community partook of the Holy Eucharist as one family in Christ.

To date there are fifty-two (52) students from eight (8) religious congregations enrolled in RST for the Academic Year, 2017-2018:

RST ENROLLEES

Augustinians of the Assumption (AA)	1
Oblates of the Virgin Mary (OMV)	6
Order of Augustinian Recollects (OAR)	21
Order of St. Augustine (OSA)	10
Oblates Apostles of the Two Hearts of Jesus and Mary (OATH)	1
Pastoral Assistance and Community Education Mission (PACEM)	2
Priests of the Sacred Heart (SCJ)	6
Servants of Charity (SdC)	5



Senior high school and college seminarians of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary during a photo opportunity with Fr. Mark Rochelle Renacia, OAR at the end of the 3-day retreat. Fray Lounal E. Jarumay, OAR

3-day retreat prepares seminarians for rigors of formation year

BY BRO. IOANNES P. ARONG

BAGUIO CITY—In order to help them prepare spiritually for the coming formation year, seminarians of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary in Baguio City underwent a 3-day retreat which focused on human dignity, vocation and the Augustinian Recollect community and way of life.

Rome-educated Fray Mark Rochelle Renacia, OAR, the retreat master, told seminarians gathered at the mini-theater that in order to encounter God, a true follower of Augustine must begin the search within one's self.

"This is very Augustinian: that if you can't find God in yourself, you can't find Him anywhere else," he said on the opening day of the retreat

scheduled on Aug. 3-5.

"The search for the divine in the self," he added, "will eventually lead one to recognizing his inviolable dignity: that he, though made of clay, is a creation after the image and likeness of God, was molded by the hands of God and received life through the breath of God (cf. Gen.1:1-8)."

"Therefore," he continued, "man

is pleasing before God not because of his God-given talents, abilities and achievements, but because of who he is."

"With his dignity now unassailable, man is then called to be holy as God is holy," Fray Renacia said. "To achieve this, man must faithfully respond to his call or vocation (from the Latin verb: voco, vocare, meaning "to call") either in the religious or married life,



or in single blessedness," he added.

Voco, vocare

The retreat master said one of the roots of man's crisis in life is his failure to distinguish his vocation from his career.

While career is self-motivated and is geared toward the achievement of one's goals and dreams in life, vocation is listening to the voice of God and doing His will in one's life.

"Failure to respond to one's vocation means losing one's purpose in life," Fray Renacia said. "The pain could be so great that no amount of success and even riches can compensate for it."

Though vocation is mysterious because it is unique for every person, it is not born out of God's random whims but comes from the Divine Wisdom and should therefore be taken seriously, he said.

As a being endowed with free will, however, God allows man to say no, but also makes him understand later on that his happiness can only be found in harmony with God's will, Fr. Renacia said.

"If we say yes to our vocation, God can transform us into a person we never imagine we can be," he said, citing as example how the Lord transformed Peter and Paul from being a simple fisherman and a

persecutor of Christians, respectively, into the very pillars of Christianity.

OAR Community: One mind and one heart intent upon God

In answering one's calling to the religious or priestly life, Fr. Renacia insisted that one needs to belong to a community.

"On our own, we are bound to despair," he said, citing as example Judas Iscariot who killed himself after leaving the community of the apostles.

However, one has to belong not just to any community, but to a community that brings him closer to Jesus, he said, adding that it is also there in the community that one meets the Lord.

"Thomas didn't meet the Risen Christ when He first appeared to his disciples because he was not with the community. Only when he returned to them did he meet the Lord," he said.

He reminded the seminarians that they are not just any seminarians; they are religious seminarians in the formation, hoping to become Augustinian Recollect religious or priests someday.

As such, they should embrace the life of poverty and the sharing of goods, practice the virtue of humility, service and obedience out of love, and cherish genuine friendship as a bond of unity, the pillars of the Augustinian

community.

Group sharing

Though the 3-day retreat had at its core prayer and the celebration of the Eucharist, group sharings were also held after every input.

This allowed the seminarians to bond and get to know each other better, especially the neophytes who were still adjusting to seminary life.

Br. Stephen Palicdon, a neophyte seminarian, said the retreat helped him a lot as it gave him an idea of what to expect and what are expected of him as he submits himself to formation.

"I like their way of life," he said. "More people are relying on screens rather than seeing their friends face to face. We need to be connected to each other more intimately so we could have a better future."

Br. Venes Carmelo Banquiles, a 3rd year seminarian who is set to receive his habit in October, said the retreat was a good starter in his journey to becoming a postulant of the Order.

"As I grow in formation, more is demanded of me in being a religious, and through this retreat I recollected and there in my heart was ignited the fire that burned in the heart of St. Augustine," he said. **RD**





SeMoNoRe holds hospital visit

BY BRO. ALFIE J. ANGELES

ANTIPOLO CITY –Rizal Provincial Hospital Antipolo District Annex welcomed the community of St. Ezekiel Moreno Novitiate –Recoletos for a visit last August 14, 2017.

The visitation, headed by the seminary rector, Fray Bernabe M. Dosdos, OAR, included the celebration of the Holy Eucharist which was presided by Fray Zachary Haguisan, OAR.

The patients received Holy Communion and the sacrament of anointing of the sick. After the reception, together with the members of the Secular Augustinian Recollects, Antipolo Chapter, they were entertained by the pre-novices and novices who rendered a song and dance number.

This activity was part of the upcoming celebration of the Feast of St. Ezekiel Moreno, patron saint of Cancer patients and of the Province, which will be held on August 19. It has been a practice of the community to visit and celebrate the holy mass in the said hospital every 19th day of the month.



SEMoNoRe on the Solemnity of Our Lady of Consolation

BY BRO. JHOBEN M. RODRIGUEZ

ANTIPOLO CITY – “Through the wearing of the cincture we are reminded today that the Virgin of Consolation is guiding us and is with us,” Rev. Fray Bernabe M. Dosdos, OAR, enunciated in his sermon addressed to the Secular Augustinian Recollects, Novices, Pre-novices and lay faithful during the Solemnity of Our Mother of Consolation last 4 September 2017 at St. Ezekiel Moreno Novitiate-Recoletos.

Fray Roland Cepe, OAR, Fray Joseph Cyprian Panaligan, OAR, and Fray Zachary Haguisan, OAR, concelebrated during the mass and, after that, the whole community prayed the lauds. Then, agape followed.

The Our Lady of Consolation is the patroness of the Order. Viva la Virgen! **RD**



OAR Pre-Novitiate turns 20, gathers “Alumni”

BY REV. MARK SALUDES, OAR

ANTIPOLO CITY—More than 36 religious “alumni” of the Pre-novitiate program of the OAR Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno graced its 20th anniversary with a two-day period of prayer, reflection, and fellowship.

The celebration was opened in the morning of March 9, 2017 by Fray Emilio Edgardo Quilatan, OAR, the official church historian of the Province, with the presentation of the thumbnail history of the Pre-Novitiate. He said that the Program welcomed its auspices in 1998 to 11 candidates of whom six completed the formation cycle and two were ordained to the OAR priesthood.

Fray Romeo Ben Potencio, OAR and Fray Roweno Eugenio Hamo, OAR were the pioneers. The former was the first to be ordained among the so-called alumni in 2005 while the latter was just recently ordained.

Fray Dionisio Selma, OAR, prior provincial, presided the thanksgiving mass. In his introduction he encouraged the brothers to pray for the recovery of Fray Philip Rollon, OAR (one of the Pre-novitiate program alumni) who met a car accident on his way to celebrate a funeral mass.

During the homily, the prior provincial focused his reflection on two significant points, namely, remembrance and gratitude. Remembrance of the memories of the past, and gratitude to people who shared their life and resources in the Pre-novitiate especially the two Pre-novice directors who have already

gone back to heaven, Fray Loreto Cesar Dacanay, OAR and Fray Alberto Avanzado, OAR.

Two other erstwhile directors, namely, Fray Regino Bangcaya, OAR, the first pre-novice director and Fr. Nicolas Salamanca, the third pre-novice director and now a diocesan priest of the Cubao diocese, also attended the celebration.

Before the final blessing, Fr. Roland Cepe, OAR, the present pre-novitiate master, gave thanks to the participants on behalf of the SEMONORE community.

An exhibit displayed in Bahay



Lingkod-Recoletos guided the alumni in their journey back to the past. This exhibit unveiled memories of the pre-novitiate program in the past twenty years. Picture throwbacks, video presentation, art works and pre-novitiate trivia cramped the entire space of the building's first floor. The room was filled with noise and laughter as the alumni browsed over their old pictures and recalled the stories behind them.

At 12:00 PM, lunch followed. After a short rest, the participants readied themselves for the basketball game. They were divided into two groups—Recoletos of Luzon and Recoletos of

Visayas. In a four-quarter duel of about an hour and a half, the Recoletos of Luzon team was declared the winner.

The first day of the anniversary celebration culminated with a get-together at the Villa San Ezekiel in Brgy. Pansol Calamba City, Laguna. The 50 seater-bus of San Sebastian transported the alumni from Antipolo to Laguna. They stayed overnight in the resort. They celebrated each other's presence with sumptuous meal, videoke, swimming, more chats, and card games.

The next day, March 10, 2017, the celebration continued. Many of the participants took advantage of the

remaining hours to relax their bodies in the fresh and cool water of the resort's pool.

At 11 o'clock in the morning, the participants assembled at the resort's lobby for the closing liturgy—the Holy Mass presided by the newly ordained and one of the pioneer pre-novices, Fray Eugenio L. Hamo, OAR. The short homily of Fr. Hamo recapitulated the very purpose of the anniversary celebration—gratitude.

After lunch, the delegates went home with new memories to keep and another anniversary celebration to look forward to. **RD**

Spanish Recollect visits OAR Novitiate House in Antipolo

BY BRO. JOSE ENRICO V. GALLEG0

ANTIPOLO CITY – Fray Francisco Javier Legarra, OAR, visited St. Ezekiel Moreno Novitiate – Recoletos in on August 28, 2017, the Solemnity of Our Holy Father St. Augustine.

Fray Paco, as he likes to be called, gave a conference to the six novices about any lingering questions about the Church, the Order, St. Nicholas Province, etc. One of the topics

discussed is about community life wherein he stresses the importance of living in and among the community and not in isolation from it. He mentions that the community is

there to help purify each member. He compares this idea to a rough stone slowly being smoothened as it is carried away by the waters of a river where it constantly has contact with other rough stones.

He adds that happiness in the community does not lie in wanting to change others but in changing oneself for the betterment of the community. "Do not wait for the community to make you happy, but commit yourself in making others in the community happy," Fray Paco states.

Fray Paco hails from Pamplona, Navarra, Spain. He is a member of the Province of St. Nicholas of Tolentine and he is currently assigned in Mexico as the in-charge of the OAR contemplative nuns. **RD**





Fray Emil Quilatan, OAR, speaks before the six candidates for solemn profession.



Six friars on 30-day preparations before making lifetime yes

BY FRAY PAUL S. DEMILLONES, OAR

BAGUIO CITY—A new journey to last for a lifetime is about to begin for the six simple professed friars of the Province as they ready themselves for 30 days in Baguio City.

The mandatory month-long preparation proximate to solemn profession of vows is called Month of Preparation (or better known in Spanish as Mes de Preparación). As in the past, the Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary in Baguio City is this year's venue of the activity that began last June 17 and will end on July 17.

The six friars are Fray Paul S. Demillones from Tacloban City, Leyte; Fray Robin Ross S. Plata from Candelaria, Quezon Province; Fray Niel Ryan E. Jarumay from Canlaon City, Negros Oriental; Fray Elpedio N. Sarita, Jr. from Valencia, Negros Oriental; Fray Keneth B. Pahamutang from Tagbilaran City, Bohol; and Fray Kenneth S. Caligdong from Brooke's Point, Palawan.

A 3-member Responsible Team was appointed and is composed of

Frays Bernabe Dosdos (chairman), Ronel Gealon, and Raymund Rueann Alcedo.

According to the Constitutions of the Order, the Mes is a required program for the candidates for solemn profession to specially prepare them for this event (cf. Add. Code 233). The preparation includes, among others, a series of inputs given by carefully selected persons, whether religious, priest, or lay, vis-à-vis the different facets of religious and pastoral life in depth reflection and discernment on the part of the participants.

To better immerse the candidates in the life and charism of the Order, different topics were given to different resource speakers so that the candidates may better appreciate and know deeper the life they are about to embrace for their whole life. Before

they delve into the topics, they first underwent an ARSE or Augustinian Recollect Spiritual Exercise, with the theme: "Holiness and its Models in the Augustinian Recollect Family" which was given by Fray Emilio Edgardo Quilatan, OAR from June 20 to 22, 2017. Readings on the life of some Augustinian Recollect Saints and Blessed, lectio divina type of meditation, observance of absolute silence, veneration of the Cross, and penitential service characterized those special days with the Lord.

Immediately following the retreat was a review on the History of the Order of Augustinian Recollects from its humble beginnings up to the present. The same resource person expounded it to us from June 23 to 24.

Fray Regino Bangcaya, OAR was given the topic OAR Constitutions



and Charism. He met the participants on June 26 to 27. The Theology and Anthropology of the Vows was assigned to Fray James Castelo, OAR from June 28 to 29. June 30 was graced by the presence of Sr. Cleofe Maria Agua, AR as she talked about the life and charism of the Congregation of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters. The responsible team invited Sr. Evelyn Balingit, SAR and Br. Edwin Ruiz, SAR to give a talk about the Life and Spirituality of the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity, which they ably did on July 3. The next day, July 4, was reserved for Fray Gideon Antolin Lagrimas, OAR who presented the statutes of the Recollect Augustinian Youth and planned a series of activities for the said organization. Fray Jaazeal Jakosalem, OAR updated the

candidates on Social Apostolate of the Province and of the Order. His talk was scheduled on July 5. The Educational Apostolate of the Order in the Province was given by Fray Cristopher Maspara, OAR, USJ-R President, on July 6. Fray Paul Dacanay, OAR was invited on July 7 to share his views and experiences on the Year of the Parish and Basic Ecclesial Communities.

As of this writing, the upcoming topics shall include: The Canonical Implications of the Vows to be given by Fray Arnel Diaz, OAR, a canon lawyer, on July 10-11. Then, The Prior Provincial, Fray Dionisio Selma, OAR, will dwell on the State of the Province and on the process of Discernment of Religious Vocation, on July 12 to 13. The last talk regarding Stewardship and Patrimony of the Order will be

shared to the candidates on July 14 by Fray Henry Santiago, OAR, the Provincial Procurator.

In a strict sense, one month would not be enough to fully equip the candidates for solemn profession for the reason that a lifetime cannot be contained in just one month. However, this does not mean that the simple professed friars are not worthy to make their solemn profession of vows. It is God who made them worthy. The abundance of God's grace will make them sturdy amidst the challenges of religious life. And if they fall, it is the same grace that will make them stand up again. After all, when God calls someone to follow him, He will provide all the means for him to endure. **RD**

Recollect formands meet: gathering focused on the challenges of new evangelization

BY FORMANDS DOCUMENTATION TEAM

Held every two years, the 11th OAR Formands Convention was held in Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary (CaReS) in Baguio City with the theme "Evangelized Evangelizing Communities." Gathering Recollect seminarians from different formation houses of the Province, the convention ran from January 9 to 13, 2016 with a series of talks, liturgical celebrations, and bonding activities.

Recollect formators along with minor seminarians from Saint Thomas of Villanova Formation Center - Recoletos, San Carlos City, Negros Occidental; pre-novices and novices from Saint Ezekiel Moreno Novitiate Recoletos - Antipolo; and professed brothers and deacons from Recoletos Formation Center in Mira-nila, Quezon City joined the seminarians and formators of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary in the week long activity. The activity gathered some 126

formands for a week-long celebration with participants arriving to Baguio City on January 8 and 9.

Fray Bernard Amparado, OAR, Prior and Dean of CaReS officially welcomed the delegates in a simple ceremony on the evening of January 9.

From seminary to the world

The five-day convention of Recollect seminarians emphasized a gradual look at the situation and challenges of

being a Recollect formand in the light of the recent developments in the Order and the challenges of the New Evangelization.

The first talk was delivered on January 10, second day of the convention, by Fray Raul Buhay, OAR, Second General Councilor of the Order on the topic of "Formation Houses as Venues for Evangelization." He modified his talk to stress the need to identify the challenges in



authentic Recollect formation and the aim of a formand to be formed in genuine vocation of becoming true evangelizers. Prayers and liturgical celebrations were offered in honor of Saint Ezekiel Moreno, patron of the Province.

On the third day, Rev. Fr. Dionisio Selma, OAR, Prior Provincial, gave the State of the Province Address (SOPA), exposing the formands to the reality of the current condition of the province in terms of statistics, mission directives, and life and mission project. In his talk and homily during the Votive Mass, he encouraged the formands to reflect on their current stage of life and be open to responding to the call of the Order and the Church to the future religious. Prayers and liturgical celebrations were offered in honor of Saint Thomas of Villanova, patron saint of Augustinian Studies. A lucernarium (liturgy of light) with confession capped the night.

The fourth day featured the highlights of the recently concluded 55th General Chapter in relation

with religious formation. Fray Lauro Larlar, OAR, former Prior Provincial and currently the prior of Recoletos Formation Center, delivered his talk on "Reflections of the 55th General Chapter on the Formation of the Recollect Formands." He made it clear to those gathered that the direction of the Order is geared towards the revitalization and restructuring of the Order to better respond to the needs of the Church. A subsequent open forum and group sharing brought about discussion on the difficulties and recommendations of the formands to formators in matters relating to different aspects of religious formation particularly that of spiritual formation. Prayers and liturgical celebrations were offered in honor of Our Lady of Consolation.

Formands' Night, which showcased talents of formands in different performing arts, was held in CaReS mini-theater concluded the fifth day's activities. The friars of Recoletos Formation Center won the best performance of the night.

The fifth day expanded the discussion on the challenges of formands on the New Evangelization with Rev. Fr. Manny Cruz, SThD, rector of Immaculate Conception Major Seminary in Malolos, Bulacan. He reminded seminarians to be always generous and courageous in responding to the needs of the New Evangelization. The prayers and liturgical celebrations were offered in honor of our father Saint Augustine. After the luncheon which followed the Mass held at noon, the minor seminarians, pre-novices, novices, and professed friars returned to their respective communities determined to reflect further on the deliberations of the convention.

The 11th OAR Formands Convention was organized by the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno Secretariat of Formation and Vocation under Fray Ian Anthony Anthony Espartero, OAR with Fray Juvy Gallego, OAR as over-all chairman. **RD**



UNO-R celebrates feast of St. Augustine

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR.

BACOLOD CITY - The community of the University of Negros Occidental –Recoletos celebrated the feast of the Solemnity of our Father, St. Augustine, August 25, 2017.

The day started with the Concelebrated Mass led by Fray Abraham Latoza, OAR, and joined by house Prior, Fray Willaim Villaflor, OAR; President, Fray Eduardo Celiz, Jr., OAR; Fray Louie Gabinete, OAR, Fray Persiuz Joseph Decena, OAR and Fray Manuel Lipardo, OAR. Fray Latoza shared in his homily that everyone is called to holiness and we should partake of the holiness of the saints for we are all brothers and sisters. A procession from the Oratory of St. Nicholas of Tolentino to the main lobby followed the Mass. Triduum masses were held from August 22-24, 2017.

The community celebrated the family day with parlor games in the morning and a bowling competition among teams in the afternoon. A



search for UNO-R King and Queen was held in the morning where Mr. Jose Caballero and Mrs. Jenalyn Libosada of the RED team won the title.

UNO-R celebrated the feast in advance because August 28 is a non-working holiday. **RO**

13 New Lawyers for UNO-Recoletos

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR.

BACOLOD CITY—May 3, 2017—The dean of the UNO-R School of Law has identified 13 passers from the University of Negros Occidental –Recoletos. The new UNO-Recoletos lawyers are:

John Mark A. CAMALON

Jose Maria D. DOZA

Nicolie E. DIAPEN

Joselle Lea R. GEOPANO

Racel D. MALALU-AN

Marianne Therese A. MALAN

Russel Marvin G. OLADO

Ray D. PARREÑAS, Jr.

Eljun D. RICO

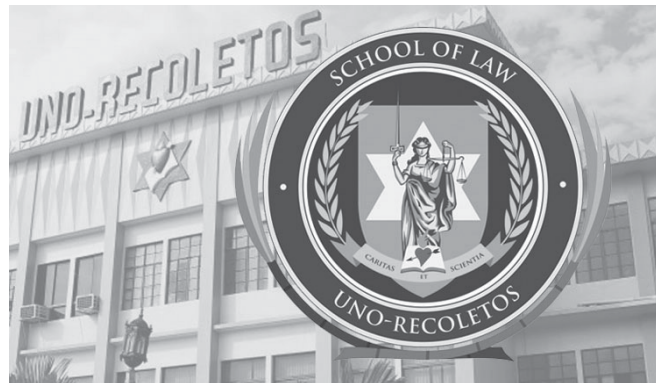
Gabriel P. SINCO

Jonna A. SORALLO

Hannah Leah N. TAÑOSO

Analie I. VILLA

Congratulations!





*Lance Daryl DR. Camacho and
Justin L. Gonzales presenting
the CICTC website*



SSC-R dC IT students develop CICTC website

BY RHEYMARD G. DONEZA

San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite's (SSC-RdC) graduating Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT) students Lance Daryl DR. Camacho and Justin L. Gonzales developed the Cavite Information and Communications Technology Council's (CICTC) website. The website is part of the CICTC's project in strengthening the IT Infrastructure in the whole Province of Cavite.

"The website contains news, events, and other information about the projects and plans of the CICTC" said Camacho. "Other information such as statistics of the employment rate of graduates residing in Cavite is also included, because of this, investors and companies may be encouraged to establish businesses in Cavite upon viewing this kind of information" added Gonzales.

Camacho and Gonzales presented the initial design of the website to the Members of the Board of the CICTC at the Information Systems Office (ISO) Conference Room, Provincial Capitol Building in Trece Martires City, August 15, 2017. Additional enhancements were suggested by the body before the launching of the website on September 6,

2017 during the quarterly meeting of the Convergence of Luzon ICT Champions at Summit Ridge Hotel Convention Center.

"At first, we were excited because our client for our internship is the CICTC of the Provincial Capitol; but as soon as we started developing the system, we realized that it was not an easy task. We needed to study a new platform from scratch." said Camacho. "Then during the presentation, it was really nerve-wracking especially the atmosphere. Presenting in front of all these IT professionals and representatives from different institutions is really quite an experience as a student, but we are happy it turned out well," seconded Gonzales. **RD**



San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite

51 Years of Nurturing Minds and Empowering Hearts





USJ-R researchers to provide training for external contributors

BY USJ-R CORRESPONDENT

The Center for Policy, Research, and Development Studies of the University of San Jose-Recoletos organized a seminar-workshop for external contributors of the Recoletos Multidisciplinary Research Journal (RMRJ). This was held on May 20 to 21, 2016 at the main campus of USJ-R, Cebu City.

According to Dr. Jessica M. Avenido, the managing Editor of RMRJ, this will be a great venue for researchers who have hard time converting their papers into international publication standards. This will not only help researchers follow international standards but also aide them on how to integrate the suggestions and recommendations of the expert's review. "Sometimes, when we send the results of the peer review process to the authors, they do not follow the suggestions of the reviewers. Authors will send us back the same paper

without integrating the comments and suggestions of the peer reviewers", Dr. Avenido said.

Participants from different schools was mentored by Researchers of USJ-R who have undergone an extensive training in research writing and publication. These researchers have published and presented papers in international conferences. At the end of the two-day seminar-workshop, participants were expected to come up with a publishable format of their thesis and dissertation that will meet international publication standards.

The Recoletos Multidisciplinary Research Journal (RMRJ) is the official research journal of the University of San Jose-Recoletos which is accredited Category A by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). Being accredited category A means that publications in the Journal are considered international publication. Outputs of the two-day seminar workshop will be sent to peer-reviewers in a double-blind review process and hopefully find its way to its being published in the RMRJ. **RO**



USJR launches food-sharing program

BY USJ-R CORRESPONDENT

USJ-R—Hungry street children and homeless adults around the University of San Jose-Recoletos will be provided with a free meal at least once a week by the university.

The USJ-R launched yesterday the La mesa ni San Jose (St. Joseph's Table), a food-sharing program intended for the poor living within the vicinity of the university, in time for the Solemnity of St. Joseph, the university's patron.

"Hunger is still the number one problem in the country," said Institute of Non-Formal Education and Community Outreach Program (INFECOP) director Fray Jaazeal Jakosalem, OAR.

"This is our institutional response to the problem. We just cannot close our eyes," he added.

During yesterday's launching of the program at the university grounds, 83 children and adult were given a meal of rice, fried chicken, squash soup with coconut milk and banana.

Bro. Jakosalem said feeding the poor on the occasion of the feast of St. Joseph is an old tradition by the Catholic Church. He said the Cebuano phrase "magpa-San Jose" (loosely translated as "to do a San Jose") means to do a charitable work such as feeding the poor in honor of the foster father of Jesus.

"We are reintroducing that practice especially that our school bears the name of St. Joseph," he said. St. Joseph worked hard to provide for the needs of the Holy Family, he added.

Hospitality Management students of USJ-R sponsored the first food-sharing activity. They were also the



Community Prior Fr. Vicente Ramon Jr., OAR (left) and Bro. Jaazeal Jakosalem, OAR (director of INFECOP) with the food-sharing program beneficiaries.

ones who personally cooked and prepared the food, supervised by their teacher Chef Richard Hao.

The Order of the Augustinian Recollects (OAR) which runs USJ-R is also under the patronage and protection of St. Joseph.

Dr. Joan de Catalina, INFECOP supervisor, said beneficiaries of the food-sharing program are dwellers of surrounding streets like Magallanes, Borromeo, Leon Kilat and even as far as Colon.

She said succeeding food sharing will be done every Friday at dinner time. On Holy Week, the university will prepare a meal for the beneficiaries on Holy Monday.

Dr. de Catalina revealed that an organization of Hospitality Management students of USJ-R



sponsored the first food-sharing activity. They were also the ones who personally cooked and prepared the food, supervised by their teacher Chef Richard Hao.

Bro. Jakosalem said the initiative would be sustainable because he is confident that the Josenian Community would respond to the call of addressing hunger problem by supporting it.

"Our generosity will answer the question of this program's sustainability," he said.

For those who would want to contribute (cash or in-kind), donation boxes are put up at the lobby of the main campus. You may also visit INFECOP office (beside SDPC) and look for Dr. de Catalina or call them at 253-7900 loc. 215. IPA. **RD**



USJR High School Exchange and Cultural Immersion Program

BY: KIMBERLY MAY SIOS-E

(Masscom Intern, USJ-R Public Affairs and International Relations Office)

Josenian students visited Toyo University and Toyo Ushiku High School for Exchange and Cultural Immersion Program in Japan on May 10-17, 2017.

The program is intended for USJ-R students to learn and understand the Japanese culture, and also to experience and be exposed on how classroom instruction is done in Japan.

The USJ-R Junior and Senior High school students toured around the Imperial Palace and went to Lake Kawaguchi Seminar House in Yamanashi. They also visited the famous tourist sites in Japan namely Mt. Fuji and Ice Cave.

The students learned Haiku (Poem), Physics, Math, Calligraphy and the Japanese way of living. They lived with their host Japanese families who are connected with Toyo University and Toyo Ushiku High School.



USJ-R Senior High students take a pose in front of the statue of Toyo University's founder.

Dr. Marivic Diwa, Senior High Department Coordinator said, "Students were selected and ground rules were set before going to Japan. They were reminded before they were



Calligraphy class with Rev. Fr. Emilio Jaruda, Jr., OAR in Toyo Ushiku High School.



USJ-R Junior and Senior High School Students with Rev. Fr. Emilio Jaruda, Jr., OAR (USJ-R Junior High School Principle) and Dr. Marivic Diwa, (Senior High School Department Coordinator) during their second day of tour in Mt. Fuji and Lake Kawaguchi.

taken by their foster parents. So, everything went smoothly. We had an open Facebook group chats for communication and monitoring purposes, and it helped me a lot."

Kris Nicole Teofilo, a Grade-12 student said, "A very unforgettable experience though the expenses we had was costly yet worth it, because I already knew Japanese, their culture and their daily living."

Vince Ryan Bacall, a Grade-12 student said, "I was amazed that I was able to experience Japanese culture from my host families. They were very good to me. The experience was a total immersion because I became one of them."

Shaina Menchie Martel, another Grade-12 student who is part of the exchange program said, "We're trained by the dos and don'ts that's why the experience was cool because their subjects are totally different and challenging."

During their visit, USJ-R students were accompanied and monitored by Fray Emilio Jaruda, OAR, USJ-R VP-Administration and Junior High School Principal together with Dr. Marivic Diwa, Senior High School Department Coordinator. **RD**



CPA topnotchers: Jessele Ann Echavez (3rd from left), Marie Claire Cortes (4th from left) and Harold Pacaña (5th from left) with College of Commerce Dean Dr. Edgar Detoya (3rd from right) and Mr. Brian Alenton (2nd from right) paid courtesy call to USJ-R President Fr. Christopher Maspara, OAR (2nd from left).
Photo by Yoland Yap

USJ-R scores 3 CPA topnotchers

BY IOANNES ARONG

Harold Pacaña was riding on a motorcycle with his father on the evening of May 29 when he received a text message saying that he and two of his classmates topped the government's licensure examination for the accountancy program.

"I feel I was in cloud nine," Pacaña, who graduated summa cum laude from USJ-R, said. "I had very little sleep because of the many congratulatory calls and texts that I received all throughout the night."

The Professional Regulation Commission announced on its website that Pacaña landed on the sixth place of the top ten finishers of the May 2017 Certified Public Accountant (CPA) Licensure Examination with an average grade of 91.00

Fellow Josenians Marie Claire Cortes and Jessele Ann Echavez — both magna cum laude graduates — shared the seventh spot with an average grade of 90.67.

"I am the only hope of my parents. My father works as a family driver and my mother is a house caretaker, and they see me as their only hope who could take them out of poverty," said Pacaña.

The topnotchers credited the university's Accountancy program — the flagship program of the College of Commerce — for their success in the

board exams.

Mr. Brian Alenton, director of the university's CPA Review Center, said that the university doesn't just prepare students to pass the CPA licensure exams but train them to become good CPAs as well.

He said aside from the "exhaustive review sessions," they are also employing a "rigorous screening" process for the accountancy students so that only the best remain.

"Even in the undergraduate level, our training is already intensive," Mr. Alenton said. "We set a passing grade of 2.0 for all major subjects and we give them qualifying exams every year so that we can truly screen who can make it to the next level."

He said failure to reach the passing grade of 2.0 means the student has to retake the subject or is advised to shift to another program.

Failure to pass the qualifying exams, moreover, also means the student has to shift to another degree program.

"We tell our students that the

training is tough and tedious, but it will all be worth it in the end," he said.

Cortes, who was emotional when the topnotchers faced the Cebu media for an interview, said the whole process was far from easy.

"One needs to devote one's time, to sacrifice a portion of one's self in order to attain what one wants," Cortes said. "It was really for us that our teachers squeezed every bit our character because it was only us who benefitted in the end."

The topnotchers agreed that a good study habit helped them overcome all obstacles thrown their way.

Mr. Alenton said he is happy that of the top performing schools, it was USJ-R that produced 100 CPAs.

Of the 130 examinees from USJ-R, 100 passed or a 76.92% passing rate, way above the national passing rate of only 35.14% — or 3,389 passers out of the 9,645 takers.

The university will be giving the topnotchers P75,000 and a laptop each. **RD**



USJ-R holds workshop-seminar for textbook writing

BY USJ-R CORRESPONDENT

CEBU CITY—The Recoletos Educational Apostolate in the Philippines (REAP) in collaboration with University of San Jose-Recoletos’ Center for Policy, Research and Development Studies (CPRDS) held a seminar-workshop in Textbook Writing last June 28-29, 2017 at the Talavera House of Prayer, Quiot Pardo, Cebu City. This was attended by book writers from teachers of basic to higher education faculty members. The program aims to come up with learning materials that is “TATAK RECOLETO”, which will be used by all Recollect schools in the country.

Dr. Mark Joseph T. Calano shared his expertise in textbook writing, and on research publications as well. According to Dr. Calano, “What is good about a human being is that, we are not like waters, we can be above our source”. This, he believes, can be possible by making writing a habit. He further explained that writing is a skill and can be learned through constant practice. “Write a paragraph a day and you will be surprised, you will have 365 paragraphs in a year”, he added.

The textbook writing program is part of the REAP’s institutionalization program. This program aims to institutionalize not just research related activities of all REAP schools but the production of Instructional Materials as well. Participants were given 5 to 10 months to finish the book, just in time for the opening of the next school year, 2018-2019. **RO**



(From L-R) Knowles Human Resource Director, Ms. Agnes Lucente and Knowles Philippines Managing Director, Mr. Joseph Emmanuel Liwag together with USJ-R President Fray Cristopher Maspara, OAR and USJ-R's VP for Academics, Fray James Bumangabang, OAR, signs the Memorandum of Agreement of the Graduate School's Off-Campus Program. Assisting them during the signing is Ms. Annie Castillo, Graduate School Secretary.

USJ-R ties up with Knowles for the graduate school's off-campus program

BY KARA MARIE CORTES

(Masscom Intern, USJ-R Public Affairs and International Relations Office)

The University of San Jose – Recoletos signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Knowles Electronics (Philippines) Corp for the off-campus program of the Master's Degree in Business Management and Administration.

USJ-R President Fray Cristopher Maspara, OAR, together with VP for Academics, Fray James Bumangabang, OAR; Knowles Philippines Managing Director, Mr. Joseph Emmanuel Liwag and Knowles Human Resource Director, Ms. Agnes

Lucente signed the agreement on July 3, 2017 at Cebu Light Industrial Park, Mepza 1, Basak, Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu.

Knowles Electronic (Philippines) Corporation is an international firm registered in the Philippines. It manufactures microphones, speakers, and hearing aid components.

Mr. Joseph Emmanuel Liwag, Managing Director of Knowles Philippines, expressed his gratitude for USJ-R's initiative in terms of taking the challenge in this innovative way of conducting classes.

Mr. Liwag said, "I think the University took the initiative in most of the schools we've talked to in terms of bridging the gap between academe. We appreciate your being open to

discussions about opportunities and modified approaches to cater to us in supporting our students to get this opportunity to learn."

The program aims to give convenience to those who want to finish their Master's Degree in Business Management yet have a hard time in going to USJ-R. The program sends USJ-R Business Management professors to conduct classes in Knowles every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 6pm to 9pm.

The program doesn't only cater to Knowles employees who like to enroll master's degree on Business Management and Administration but also accept students from neighboring Mepza companies who wish to have their master's degree in USJ-R. **RD**



CST-R commemorates St. Thomas of Villanova's feast day

BY JENNETH KATE TELEBANCO

The whole Colegio de Santo Tomas-Recoletos community gathered at the CST-R covered court on October 10, 2017 at 3PM to celebrate the feast of their patron saint, St. Thomas of Villanova.

Most Rev. Gerardo Alminaza, DD, Bishop of San Carlos, graced the occasion by being the presider and homelist in a solemn mass in honor of St. Thomas of Villanova. Concelebrating with him were the OAR brothers and Fray Louie Gabinete, OAR, a representative from UNO-R, Bacolod City.

This year's celebration of the feast of St. Thomas took a special significance for all of us Thomasians as our ecclesial community and for the local Church of San Carlos. Within the mass, a Profession of Faith by Grade 12 student, Febbie Kristel Carbajosa, who was a baptized Catholic but later was converted and received baptism

as an Adventist, took place to signify her formal reintegration to our Catholic Community.

A procession within the city took place after the mass. Once everyone had arrived from the procession, they offered prayers for the saint, followed by a vivacious celebration of music. Viva, Sto. Thomas! **RO**





With “strings” attached: String Ensemble

BY ROSABELLE D. SY



VALENCIA, NEGROS ORIENTAL – San Pedro Academy (SPA) established the first ever String Ensemble in the municipality of Valencia on August 14, 2017.

It started from a simple strand of dream of the School Director/Principal, Fray Leo G. Alaras, OAR, to have a string ensemble that will accompany the school's regular Wednesday or first Friday Mass.

To make such dream turn into reality, Fray Alaras invited

Samuel Kangma, the Orchestra Director of SU COPVA (Silliman University, College of Performing and Visual Arts) to hold training sessions for SPA students who are interested to be part of the string ensemble.

As it turned out, a number of students and even teachers are eager to learn how to play the string instruments such as violin, viola and cello. And so, the strand of dream became strings of reality. Regular trainings are now being conducted to this string ensemble.

“Now the strings are attached, let the music play” became the mantra of the newly founded string group. **RO**





(L-R) Mr. Arnel Cruz, Rev. Fr. Emeterio Buñao, OAR, Rev. Fr. Ferdinand Fornilos, OAR, Rev. Fr. Nemesio D. Tolentin, OAR

San Sebastian College-Recoletos granted autonomous status by CHED

BY CROSSCURRENT

San Sebastian College-Recoletos (Manila) is granted Autonomous Status by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). The autonomous status is given to deserving higher education institutions (HEIs) with high level of institutional quality and program excellence.



The awarding ceremony was held last May 18 at the CHED Auditorium, 2nd floor, HEDC bldg., CP Garcia Ave., UP Campus Diliman, Quezon City. The awarding ceremony was attended by Fray Nemesio D. Tolentin, OAR (College President), Fray Ferdinand Fornilos, OAR (Vice President for Academic Affairs), Fray Emeterio Buñao, OAR (Vice President for Administration) and Mr. Arnel Cruz (Registrar).

Among the benefits and responsibilities of having granted the autonomous status as stipulated in the CHED memorandum order no. 19 are as follow:

Exemption from the issuance of Special Order (S.O.) for graduates;

Exemption from regular monitoring and evaluation by CHED;

Priority in the grant of subsidies and other financial incentives/assistance from the CHED whenever funds are available;

Authority to grant an honorary degree to deserving individuals in line with the provisions of the existing CHED issuance on conferment of honorary degrees;

Privilege to determine and prescribe curricular programs to achieve global competence;

Privilege to offer new course(s)/program(s) in the undergraduate and/or graduate levels, in their areas of

expertise, without securing permit/authority from CHED;

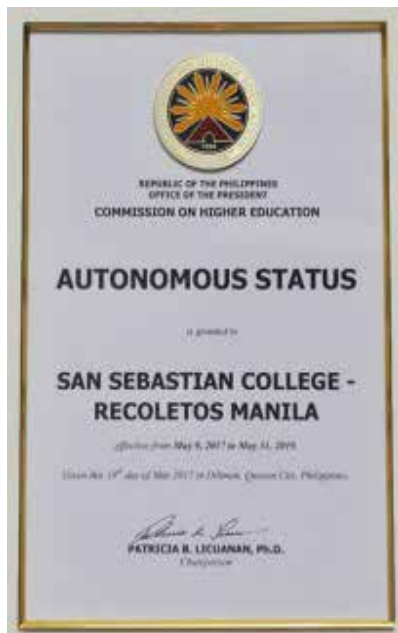
Privilege to offer extension classes to expand access to higher education;

Privilege to establish linkages with recognized foreign higher education institutions;

At the instance of CHED, the PHEIs may be authorized to offer program(s) via the alternative mode such as distance education, ETEEAP, or transnational education;

Privilege to increase tuition fees without securing permit from CHED.

The Autonomous status is valid from May 9, 2017 to May 31, 2019.





Former Supreme Court Justice is the new Dean of College of Law

BY CROSSCURRENT

Born on Dec. 29, 1946, Court of Appeals (CA) Associate Justice Arturo D. Brion, became a magistrate on March 17, 2008.

Editor-in-chief at the Ateneo Law Journal, and ranked first place with a grade of 91.65% in the bar examinations, he also graduated with awards such as Cum Laude, Class Valedictorian, and awardee of the Golden Leaf Award, Gold Medal for Academic Excellence, and First Honors Gold Medal.

Vice-Chair of the Labor and Employment Committee and a member of the Committee on Revision of Laws and Constitutional Amendments in 1984.

Appointed Court of Appeals Associate Justice in July 2003.

Now the current Dean of the College of Law of San Sebastian College-Recoletos, he is looked upon by the students of law as an inspiration for both their studies and their lives. **RD**

StagsRun 7 and a history of charity

BY CROSSCURRENT

Over the course of the seven consecutive years of its existence since 2011, the proceeds of the StagsRun fun run event has generated far more than enthusiasm and fond memories but also charitable assistance to its beneficiaries.

The StagsRun event has been the staple event that San Sebastian College Recoletos-Manila holds each year to kick-off its week long Foundation Week Celebration that is held during mid-January of every year.

Starting from its inception during 2011, the StagsRun event has





generated over a million pesos of income completely dedicated to its charitable projects. Proceeds from 2011 and 2012 all went to the El Superior Dela Corporacion Filipina de Padres Agustinos Recoletos. 2013's funds were donated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Recoletos Sta. Monica Foundation and to the Colegio de Santo Tomas Recolectos. And those of 2014 and 2015 went to parishes and schools in the Negros Occidental and Negros Oriental regions. The proceeds from the 2016 fun-run went to the funds for the 75th foundation celebration of San Sebastian College-Recoletos, Manila. **RO**

Cultural exchange program with Naresuan University, Thailand

BY CROSSCURRENT

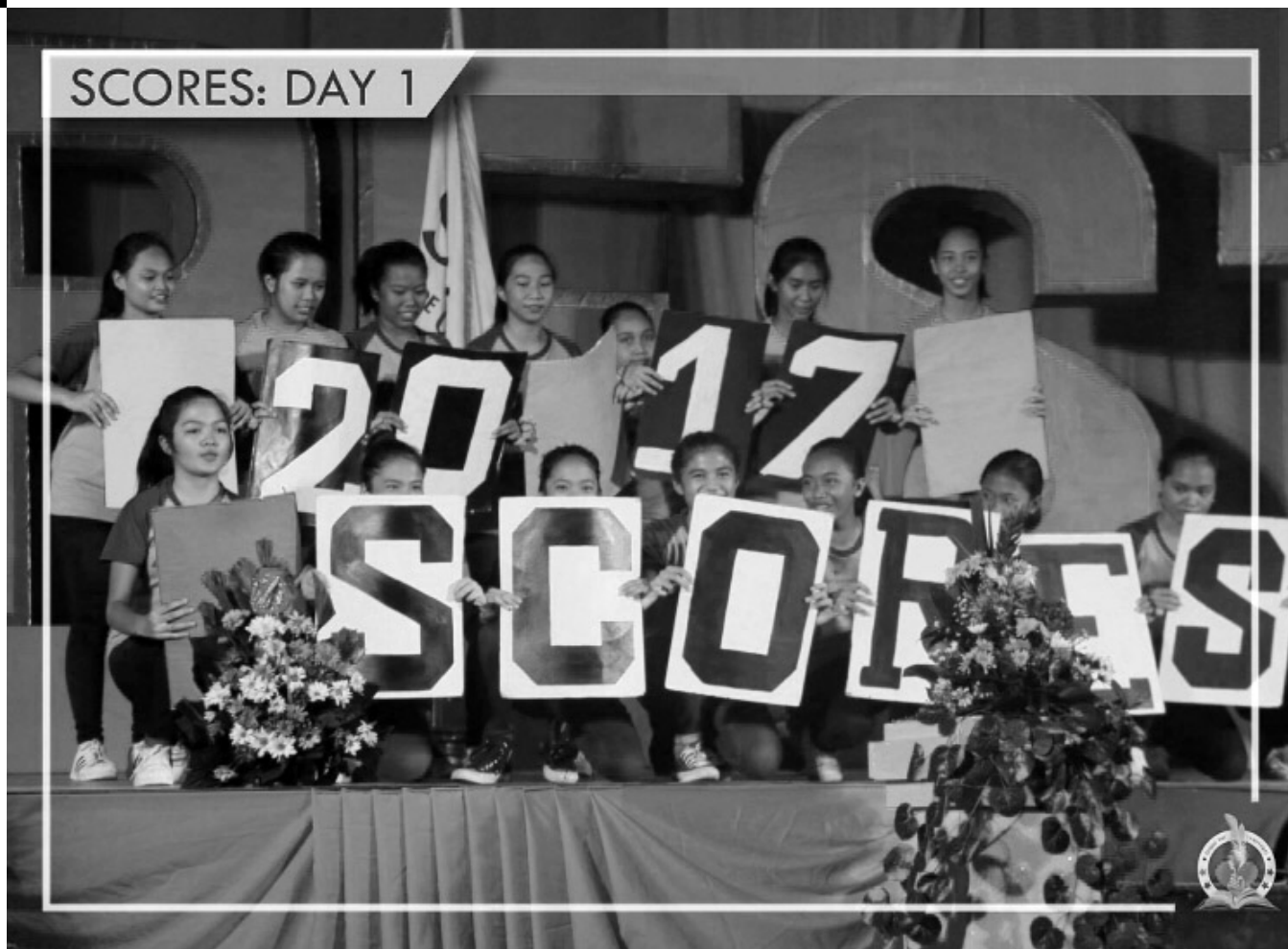
A cultural exchange program between SSC-R Manila and Naresuan University was organized and was still ongoing between the dates of July 12-July 25.

This program will open new opportunities for students of both schools, broaden their perspectives, and help them understand each other's culture even more.

Opportunities that are not available for each of the schools will be made by the use of this program. It would show each school how the other teaches their students and how they learn. It would be possible that because of this program some students of the schools said they would want to try studying at the school they visited.

The cultural exchange program includes not only going to the schools of the participants but also introduces them to the local culture. One of the things that they participated in is the introduction of each school's respective music and sports which are simple things easy to understand, giving them a way of knowing more about the country that they are visiting even without knowledge of the language itself. Not only will this program help attain understanding of each other's culture and educational background, but it will also help the students gain moments of relaxation from the pressures of the school. **RO**





31st SCORES opens in UNO-R

BY SCORES CORRESPONDENT

BACOLOD CITY - Drum beats and cheers signaled the opening of the 31st season of the Students' Congress of Recollect Schools (SCORES), welcoming the eighty-seven delegates of nine Recollect Schools today, by this year's host, University of Negros Occidental - Recoletos.

Msgr. Louie Galbines presided over a concelebrated the Holy Mass with the Recollect priests prior to the Opening Program.

"Truth without mercy is cruelty; mercy without truth is sentimentality," Msgr. Galbines said, stressing this year's theme, "Recollect Youth: Communicators of Truth and Mercy."

The Opening Program included

the showcase of Junior High School Department's talents, turning over of the delegates to the hosts families and a recap of the first day.

"Proclaim the truth and lead the youth in Jesus' name," University President Fr. Eduardo S. Celiz, OAR, emphasized in his opening remarks.

The participating Recollect schools are University of San Jose - Recoletos,

Balamban and Basak campuses, San Sebastian College - Recoletos de Manila, San Sebastian College - Recoletos de Cavite, Colegio de Sto. Tomas - Recoletos, San Carlos City, Colegio San Nicolas de Tolentino - Recoletos, Talisay City, San Pedro Academy - Recoletos, Caidiocan, San Pedro Academy, Valencia and University of Negros Occidental - Recoletos, Bacolod. **RD**



TESDA joins UNO-R JHS in RESOURCE, signs MOA

BY DANELL JUMAYAO

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) represented by the provincial Director Joel Villagrancia signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with UNO-R Junior High School, February 25, 2017 at the Recoletos Social Outreach Center (RESOURCE) in Handumanan. The agreement is about the UNO-R as a partner of TESDA in the implementation of the latter's flagship program, "Barangay Kasanayan para a Kabuhayan at kapayapaan".



Fray Ronel, Dir. Villagrancia and Fray Abe signing the MOA (ADJumayao)

The program opened with the prayer led by Ms. Mariel Tinsay, president of Public Speakers' Club and Jhola Villanueva led the community in the singing of the national anthem. The opening remarks were given by Fray Ronel Gealon, OAR, UCDO Consultant. The rationale of the activity was given by Mrs. Diane Rose Tagle, the English subject area chairperson. The guest speaker, Dr. Mary Ann G.

Roble, USJ-R –RITTC Director, was introduced by Dr. Nena Samillano. After the talk, MOA signing between UNO-R and TESDA was done. Dir. Villagrancia gave the message and a response was given by Bangon RESOURCE bookkeeper, Mrs. Elinor Mariano. Fray Abraham Latoza, OAR, Basic Education Director, gave the closing remarks. **RD**



OLCP celebrates its 30th patronal fiesta

BY BRO. MANDY CONSTANTINO

MIRA-NILA - The Our Lady of Consolation Parish (OLCP) honored its patroness with its 30th Patronal Fiesta last September 1-3. Our beloved parish priest, Fray Arnel F. Diaz, OAR, and his Parish Pastoral Council (PPC), headed by its President Sis. Lulu Monzon and Vice President Sis. Rita Apuya, wanted the fiesta celebrations to foster the spirit of “Communion of Communities” in all the strata of the parish---the youth, the not-so-young, the parishioners in the gated subdivisions and the area chapels, the active and the not-so-active in the parish.

And so they did. Parishioners were encouraged to attend the 6AM and 6:30PM Novena Masses from August 25 to September 2 to set the tone of the fiesta proper on September 3 as a way of focusing on the Lord and glorifying Him, and to thank Him for gifting us with Mama Mary under the title of Our Lady of Consolation. Fray Arnel invited guest-priests from the Vicariate of San Isidro Labrador under the Diocese of Novaliches, and the Order of Augustinian Recollects whose homilies were to benefit and grow the parishioners’ spiritual perspectives.

Furthermore, the PPC invited the parish mandated organizations, the Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs), the Homeowners Associations, the Area Chapels and even the different parish choirs and music ministries. They were partnered together to be the sponsors and offerers in the Novena Masses. Thankfully, these organizations enticed their members and constituents to participate in the Novena Masses.

As the weekend of the fiesta approached, the parish

staff, volunteers and assigned organizations went into high gear with their preparations. Buntings were made, tarpaulin announcements were printed and hung to welcome parishioners in the parish grounds. The Parish Youth Ministry invited its members and its not-so-young supporters to its “Parokya Ko, Linis Ko Project” to wash and scrub the parish grounds; to sweep, wipe and clean the church interior, floor and pews. The altar, the Our Lady of Consolation Room and the images of St. Augustine and St. Monica were likewise cleaned

Continued on page 90, OLCP celebrates...



4th Centenary of Carmel's arrival in PH launched

BY FRAY JOY ZABALA, OAR

MANILA--The San Sebastian Parish launches the year-long celebrations of the 4th centenary of the arrival in the Philippines of the first image of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

The celebrations began with the traditional novena in honor of our Lady of Mount Carmel culminating with a Solemn Thanksgiving Mass on the 16th of July 2017. No other than the Prior Provincial of the Philippines Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, Rev.

Fr. Dionisio Selma, OAR, was the main celebrant together with more than twenty Recollect Religious and Clergy concelebrants.

The parish priest, Rev. Fr. Antonio "Joy" Zabala, OAR, took the

opportunity to present the activities lined up for the year.

Right after the Mass, hundreds of parishioners and devotees joined the procession around the parish. Viva! Virgen del Carmen, Guapa! **RD**



*The Order of Augustinian Recollects
at
Basílica Menor de San Sebastián*

*ay magulang agong inangayahan
na maty sa sa*

Biyaheng Carmelo

*ang paglalakbay ng mga ita ng
Nuestra Señora del Carmen
sa mga parokya.*

26 August 2017	St. Nicholas de Tolentino	Quezon City
23 September 2017	Our Lady of Consolation	Quezon City
21 October 2017	Our Lady of Mount Carmel	Quezon City
18 November 2017	St. Ezekiel Moreno (Novitiate)	Antipolo
27 January 2018	Our Lady of Peace & Good Voyage	Tondo, Manila
17 February 2018	Basilica of St. John the Baptist	Quiapo, Manila
17 March 2018	San Miguel Church	Quiapo, Manila
21 April 2018	St. Jude Church	Quiapo, Manila
19 May 2018	Our Lady of the Pillar	Sta. Cruz, Manila
16 June 2018	San Jose de Trozo	Binondo Manila



We have returned: Recollect Mission opens anew in Mindanao

BY FRAY ABRAHAM B. LATOZA, OAR

SURIGAO DEL SUR--The Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno of the Order of Augustinian Recollects has just made a comeback to Mindanao, the rightful place, at the eastern Pacific coast of the country, after more than a decade since it has relinquished a short-lived mission in Iligan, Lanao del Norte on 4th of October 2004.

Historical records attest that Caraga, the old capital of Surigao region down to Bislig, was once entrusted to the Recollects as early as 1622. (CBCP, Diocese of Tandag).

The mission flourished through thick and thin until 1864 when the Hispanic Friars finally left the Caraga mission. "One hundred fifty years ago since the Augustinian Recollects left the Caraga, now you have returned" (Bp. Nerio Odchimar, DD, Homily, August 12, 2017).

Long awaited

The move was initiated by

the Local Ordinary of Tandag Most Rev. Nerio Odchimar, DD. His invitation addressed to the Order in the person of the Prior Provincial Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR last year has become a strong gesture of collaboration between the two shepherds of souls. On his first ocular visit, the Recollect Provincial has sent emissaries led by Fray Edgar Tubio, OAR to Mindanao in October 2016. Fray Edgar being one of the Provincial councilors and head of the Secretariat of Mission and Ministerial Apostolate spent time and energy to reconnoiter the mission field and consequently

realize a dream of a long awaited coming back to Mindanao.

Canonical Erection

After a year, the good Bishop, in the presence of 7 Augustinian Recollect friars namely, Frays Albert Pellazar, Jerome Virtudazo, Amado Emmanuel Bolilia, Edgar Tubio, Louie Gabinete, William Cordero, and Abraham Latoza plus the 16 diocesan priests, 2 deacons and 3 seminarians from the Diocese of Tandag, 2 religious sisters of the Dominican Order and the people of God represented by the 27 Christian communities, has canonically erected



in the morning of August 12, 2017, a new Quasi-Parish under the tutelage of the Nuestra Senora del Carmen in Brgy. Dugmanon, Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur.

New Parish Priest

Fray Albert Ampong Pellazar, OAR, former Vice President for Academics of the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos in Bacolod was installed as the Prior of the new Recollect community and at the same time the Parish Priest. Fray Albert is a native of Guindulman, Bohol, a charismatic, game-changer and a fun-loving friar. Together with him is Fray Jerome Virtudazo, OAR (parochial vicar and liturgist) and Fray Mark Saludes, OAR, a deacon (procurator and chronicler).

In the ceremony the Recoleta friar recited the Profession of Faith, received the Canonical Books and the key to the Tabernacle from the Bishop, symbolic of the pastoral tasks entrusted to his care.

Dugmanon

The new mission territory is located in Brgy. Dugmanon, Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur in the Diocese of Tandag.

Dugmanon alone has a population of 1,000 and mostly Catholics with 300 households, and the new

Recollect parish will administer the sacraments to 10 Barangays, 17 Sitios, having 27 chapels in total. If the ratio will be consistent for each Barangay the figures will definitely be overwhelming.

Dugmanon is a Kamayo dialect (the mother tongue for Surigao) which means "grassland." The Dugmanons configure a pious, warm, kind-hearted community of believers welcoming the new changes in their Catholic life. Hope is shining through in their smiles as they unite in prayer and share a helping hand in "bayanihan" (solidarity), one of the best traits of Filipinos.

Challenges

Indeed, there is a great deal of grassland in Dugmanon and in its neighboring villages. The ecosystem is naturally rich. But the most explicit challenges that the new community is facing rest on deforestation and environmental destruction. Illegal loggers castigate Mindanao since time immemorial. But the rapid loss of trees is unacceptable. Greed cannot be tolerated considering climate change wherein countries all over the world are working together to stop abuses in mindless mining and illegal logging to save our environment.

Justice and peace

In the northern part of the Diocese of Tandag, the Lumads have become the target of unjust killing on the interest of a few individuals or private firms driven by greed. It is threatening the lives of peaceful natives of Mindanao. The indigenous peoples' rights cannot be undermined in exchange for profit. But this reality remains in the shadows of Mindanao specially to those in power. It has been a problem which up to now is searching for some answers.

Final Proverbs

The Bishop had a nostalgic narrative about his past. His opening statement was engaging. Rizal's adage was used. He said: "Ang hindi marunong lumingon sa pinanggalingan ay hindi makararating sa paroroonan." [Roughly: "He who does not know how to look back at where he came from will never get to his destination."]

He made reference to his long years in the past as a newly ordained priest sent to Hinatuan, to the history of the Recollect missionaries, and he challenged the newly installed friar and his companion: "For the new priests [missionaries] like Fr. Albert and Fr. Jerome whom I would say they have come from 'heaven.' In your previous





assignments, you have cars, you have fully air conditioned rooms, spacious offices. Here you will not have all of those amenities. Dugmanon is your purgatory. But if today, Dugmanon is a purgatory, I had a hell of experience fifty years ago! No roads, no chapels; no means of communications. We travelled by boat, we experienced storms and gigantic waves...to reach out to the farthest communities of Caraga and Bislig in the east

coast of the Pacific ...shipwrecked once... fell ill of amoebic dysentery for unsafe drinking water. But God never abandoned me. God will never abandon you. He will never abandon us!" the prelate concluded.

Grateful Heart

"Nabuksan ang langit ug nabubo ang gasa." 'The heaven opens, the grace is poured out,' says the newly installed Parish Priest of Dugmanon.

Chapels that receive the sacrament once a year can now avail of it every Sunday and some chapels, once a month. The farthest Christian communities and chapels will be able to hear Mass more frequently.

In his thanksgiving speech Fray Albert said: "A grateful heart is a happy heart." He added: "To reach heaven is to build heaven here on earth and we can only build that heaven because we love." **RO**



RESOURCE conducts medical mission

BY CALOY LEGASPI, JR

On the occasion of the Feast of St. Ezekiel Moreno, Patron Saint of Cancer patients, the Recoletos Social Outreach Center (RESOURCE) Handumanan Foundation, Inc. at Purok San Ezekiel Moreno, Brgy Handumanan, Bacolod City, held a Medical Mission activity last August 13, 2017.

More than a hundred recipient -patients availed of the Free Medical consultation/ check-up and free medicines provided for the residents of Purok St. Ezekiel.

The Medical Mission was made possible in cooperation with the Dr. Pablo O. Torre Memorial Hospital in coordination with the Dr. Pablo O.Torre Memorial Foundation, Inc. (DPOTFI) and with the Siervas de Maria Sisters. There were about twenty-five (25) medical practitioners and volunteers, supporters and partners from Riverside Hospital and DPOTFI who participated in this noble cause. The efforts of Mrs. Jolly A. Mider, DPOTFI Executive Director, made this social outreach activity a success.





Frays Cordero, Cadelina and Virtudazo

Returning OAR Missionaries join Dating-Bayan Program

BY FRAY VINCENT S. CADELIÑA, OAR

PROVINCIALATE, Quezon City—Three Augustinian Recollect missionaries underwent a two-week orientation seminar at the Divine Word Institute of Mission Studies (DWIMS) in Tagaytay City last May 28 to June 11, 2017.

Frays Jerome Virtudazo, William Cordero, and Vincent Cadelina joined in the “Dating/Balik-Bayan” seminar specifically tailored for returning missionaries. Frays Virtudazo and Cordero went home last February from their stint in Taiwan while Fray Cadelina arrived from Sierra Leone late last year.

Pursuant to the Life and Mission Project (LAMP) of the Province, the said weeklong program was among the activities jointly prepared by the Secretariat of Spirituality and Liturgy (SSL) and the Secretariat of Ministerial

and Mission Apostolate (SMMAP).

“DWIMS provided the avenue proper for the returning and vacationing missionaries of the province,” said Fray Edgar Tubio, SMMAP president. Here are some questions that the three missionaries answered before, during and after the seminar orientation.

What are your expectations regarding the Dating/Balik Bayan Seminar orientation?

Fray Cordero: First and foremost, learning for me is a continuous

process. Every day is an opportunity to learn and broaden my perspective in life. Hence, when I heard that I’ll be going to attend the seminar orientation for the missionaries who are balik-bayan, I was excited to join and participate the orientation seminar. I expect to learn more from the stories and the life experiences of the missionary participants and deepen my understanding about mission. This opportunity would also strengthen my passion to go wherever God wants me to do. Hopefully, there will be new discoveries and insights



that would inspire me and I long to share the joy of salvation to our brothers and sisters.

Fray Cadeliña: I expect that new learnings and fresh ideas regarding the mission will help me in my future apostolate. I hope that the seminar orientation will be more exciting and reinvigorating experience for me as a missionary.

What is your opinion regarding this Dating/Balik Bayan seminar orientation?

Fr. Virtudazo: The two-week long orientation is intended for two groups of participants, i.e., the Balik – for the Filipino missionaries serving abroad and the Dating – for the foreign missionaries coming to serve in the Philippines. For both participants, the orientation is very helpful in many ways. For the Balikbayan, there is a need to be re-oriented to one's own culture and the present situation of the local church where they will be sent soon, more so for those who were in the foreign missions for very long period of time, e.g., 20 years, 30 years and 40 years. For the Dating bayan missionaries (foreign missionaries). It's a solemn obligation to be educated or oriented to the culture where they're about to enter to.

Fr. Cadeliña: When I learned about

the theme of the seminar orientation, I thought about a similar orientation of the missionaries when I was working in Brazil. Before I was assigned in the Amazons, I had a three-month long study and orientation of the culture and faith of the local people. The DWIMS seminar-orientation was quite similar in structure when I had my three-month study and orientation in Brasilia. It was an enriching and a paradigm-shifting experience in doing missions. At DWIMS another fresh learning in doing missions in my own local culture.

Kindly summarize your personal leanings from, and insights about, the seminar orientation.

Fr. Virtudazo: To work as missionary in or out of the country needs to have a good and solid preparation such as personal disposition to go to mission; has to attend some seminars on missiology; sound mind and body; and have a deep relationship with Christ. I am very happy and blessed that I had the chance to review and relearned my own culture and understand the different dynamics in missiology. I hope this practice of sending the missionaries (going out and coming back) for orientation must be continued.

Fr. Cordero: By joining the orientation

seminar, I have plenty to assimilate and comprehend. I realized that I still have much to learn and be schooled to become a good religious missionary. I really admired the witnessing of the missionary participants. I was inspired to listen to their own stories that would somehow encourage me to pursue my passion of being a missionary. Now, I realized that being a missionary is not all about sacrifice but also sharing the love of God, sharing “the joy of the Gospel” to our brothers and sisters.

Fr. Cadeliña: My experience on the seminar orientation was great and above my expectations. I recommend this program to be continued as part of the continuous formation of the returning missionaries and fulfilling the LAMP of the province. Kudos to the Secretariat of Spirituality and Missions for their collaborative effort for the welfare of the returning missionaries. **RO**

Note:

Fray Virtudazo spent a cumulative of ten years while Fray Cordero, three years, doing mission work in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Fray Cadeliña had spent three years in the Amazons, Brazil prior to his assignment in Kamabai, Sierra Leone, West Africa where he worked for another two years.





Fr. Allan Rubett Cabatian, OAR

Recoletos de Saipan celebrates San Roque Parish fiesta and first anniversary of arrival in the island

BY SAIPAN CORRESPONDENT

S AIPAN—Biba San Roque! These were the words chanted by the parishioners and the many faithful who came to celebrate the Feast of San Roque – patron of Saipan’s northernmost church, last August 20, 2017.

It was a warm and sunny Sunday afternoon, a weather that surprised many given the rains that watered the island the past few days. As one turns on the road going to the church, an arch with a sign that read: “Umatuna Si Yuus, Biba San Roque” welcomed the parishioners. The usually clear and quiet street of San Roque Village was filled with cars lined up on the side of the road indicating that the parking lot was fully occupied. From the church’s entrance hung a welcome banner and its facade was decorated with bright, colorful buntings giving it a festive vibe. Youths were at the entrance greeting parishioners and handing out handkerchiefs printed with a prayer to San Roque.

Inside the church, fresh flowers

decorated the altar and the newly painted walls provided a subtle enhancement to house the saints’ images at the front. At 3:30 pm, the 9th day of novena prayer was recited. It was followed with the Eucharistic celebration at 4 pm presided by Bishop Ryan P. Jimenez of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa. Not to be missed are the three religious/priests of the Order of Augustinian Recollects (OAR) led by local prior, Fray Allan Rubett A. Cabatian, OAR, San Roque’s pastor, Fray Leo Neil Bullos, OAR, of Kristo Rai Parish, and Fray Philip Rollon, Jr, OAR, of Santa Remedios Parish, who delivered the homily describing San Roque’s selfless sacrifice, unconditional love and dedication to help the sick and the needy and his

strong faith in God amidst trials and suffering. Mass concelebrants were Fr. Jason Granado of San Vicente Parish, Fr. James Balajadia of San Jude Parish, Fr. Harold Funa of Mt. Carmel Cathedral and Fr. Romil Aperocho of San Antonio Parish.

It was during last year’s fiesta celebration that Bishop Ryan installed Fray Allan Rubett Cabatian as San Roque’s Parish Administrator. He, together with Fray Neil and Fray Philip, officially marked the return of the OAR’s missionary presence after long years, and this is the first year of their reestablishment in the island. Fr. Allan, in his first year as pastor, together with his brothers Recollects spearheaded many projects, working diligently to



reinvalidate the people's interest and involvement in the church, and, address the needs of the parishioners. Mass goers can now better hear and understand the liturgy with the new speakers installed. Parents who may have reservations or difficulty in attending the church due to their infants or young children may now stay in the former parish office which has been turned into a "crying room." The room is designed to accommodate and help them watch over their children while still being able to take part in the Eucharistic celebration. Fray Allan also organized a Youth Faith Formation through Lectio Divina every last Saturday of the month to help the youth grow deeper in faith. He was also instrumental in the conversion of one adult to the Catholic faith. And last June, in response to the request of many parishioners who were unable to attend the morning mass due to work schedules, the parish began its Tagalog Evening Mass every first Sunday of the month at 6 pm.

Indeed, there are so many things to



be thankful for. It took several weeks of planning and preparation, distributing and selling raffle tickets to raise funds for the upkeep and many projects lined up for the parish, and before the final blessing, Fr. Allan, expressed "gratitude" on the collective efforts of the parish volunteers (Servants of San Roque), donors and sponsors, and all the people who extended their help and support to come up with not just a momentous but meaningful celebration.

After the mass, "lukao" (procession), dinner, entertainment and raffle draw are in order. The "lukao" was held

around the village while Hymn to San Roque was sung. Looking up, people were in awe at the sight of not one but two rainbows forming a beautiful backdrop against the clear blue skies. The "lukao" ended with the blessing of the handkerchiefs with the image of and prayer to San Roque inside the church by Bishop Ryan and Fr. Allan as the people waved them in honor of the patron saint while chanting "Biba San Roque!" And just as rainbows bring a sense of hope and remind us of God's promise; it is with the same fervent hope that the fiesta celebration is not the conclusion but rather the commencement of a more active, collaborative, and prayerful parish community in San Roque. The challenge is on...

The parish and its organizing committee wish to extend its sincerest gratitude to the following donors, sponsors and individuals who generously contributed to make this occasion a success. May the Lord through the intercession of San Roque return your kindness a hundredfold.





Eucharistic celebrations highlight Mt. Carmel Parish Fiesta Activities

Eucharistic celebrations highlight Mt. Carmel Parish fiesta activities

BY FRAY ONZ ANTONIO, OAR

MT. CARMEL PARISH, CEBU CITY—On the eve of the feast, a packed Mt. Carmel Parish Church solemnly enjoyed the celebration of the Feast of Mt. Carmel. Most Rev. Jose Palma, Archbishop of Cebu, was the main celebrant for the occasion, and he gave an excellent homily and said as always a beautiful Mass. We were also very pleased to have very solemn music provided by both the choir from University of San Jose and the parish choir.

The Mass gave thanks for 46 years of existence as a parish and to everyone involved in the life and spirit of the parish community.

In his homily, Archbishop Palma said: “Jesus gave his mother to us to be our own mother, too. And so we have a good reason to pause and give thanks for this great gift and for many other things, particularly those gifts of mercy offered, shared and received through our Mother’s intercession.”

Archbishop Palma emphasized on the mercy that underpins Mary’s

work and reminded attendees and devotees that each of us is “more than the worst thing we’ve ever done”. Yet, in our Mother’s heart and eyes (so with every human mother’s eye and heart) it does not matter if by nature we are weak and so full of flaws since it is Jesus living in our soul that enables the person to love God in a most beautiful fashion and to love others.

(As supplement to his sharing, he mentioned that the original devotion to Mount Carmel was brought to the

Philippines by the Recollect friars).

The Mass was followed by a convivial dinner at the Recoletos convent where the Recollect friars welcomed the visitors, mostly active workers of the parish, with simple foodstuffs. Dining with the Archbishop and parishioners provided the friars much opportunity for learning, sharing and, importantly, building community.

Pontifical Mass will be presided by Most Rev. Dennis C. Villarojo, D.D., on the feast day itself at 9:30 A.M., July 16. **RD**



OLCP celebrates... *(from page 80)*

and adorned with fresh flowers beautifully arranged by the members of the Mary's Altar Guild.

Then on September 1, 85 golfers and sponsors, led by the head of the organizing committee Bro. Roger Murga, converged at the Royal Northwoods Golf Club at Coral na Bato, San Rafael, Bulacan for the OLCP Invitational Golf Tournament. The golfers were one in saying they had lots of fun out-doing each other in trying to put a small ball into a small hole, 18 times, with the least number of strokes; followed by a sumptuous lunch and a raffle replete with prizes. What a great way to support OLCP and its efforts to complete the construction of the Parish Pastoral Center!

September 1 being a First Friday, our beloved Recollect seminary fathers joined together for a Kumpisalang Parokya to enable the parishioners to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This was perfectly timed to coincide also with the Communion of Reparation Vigil in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary from 8PM till the 12 Midnight First Saturday Mass, conducted monthly by the OLCP Alliance of the Two Hearts with the faithful support of Fr. Arnel and Fr. Jonathan Caballero, OAR, the OLCP Assistant Parish Priest.

Then at 5AM on September 2, the members of the OLCP Apostleship of Prayer (AP), Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity (SARF), the Recollect Augustinian Youth (RAY), the Legion of Mary, and the Confraternity of Altar Servers led the monthly First Saturday Dawn Procession of the image of Our Lady of Consolation. This was followed by the regular 6AM Mass and a light breakfast was shared by all. Then, the Mary Butler's Guild (MBG) members sponsored the 7:30AM LeBrans Dance Exercise in the parish

grounds and led the parishioners in flexing their bodies and in releasing and dissipating their inner tensions. Whew!

Fray Arnel invited the Most Rev. Fr. Florentino Cinense, D.D. to the 10AM Confirmation Rites for our parish youth. Parents, relatives and friends were present to witness and to share their Catholic Faith during the confirmation of their loved ones.

Then at 2PM, the parish youth converged in the parish ground for the OLCP Palarong Pambata Parish Youth Council and the Sportsfest organized by the Parish Youth Ministry. Hundreds of them competed with the spirit of sportsmanship, to give their best and to develop friendships with their fellow youth. Finally, at 7:30PM, the parishioners were serenaded by the beautiful and angelic voices of the different chorales invited by the OLCP Music Ministry to the Marian Chorale Serenade, the highlight of the 2nd day of the fiesta celebrations.

The following day, September 3, the Solemnity of Our Lady of Consolation, Fray Arnel and Sis. Lulu woke up very early in the morning to be interviewed by Radio Veritas which also broadcast the 7AM Sunday Mass celebrated by Fray Arnel himself. After the Mass, parishioners milled around the parking area which was cordoned off exclusively for them to partake of simple breakfast fare generously donated by former Ombudsman Ananiano Desierto and family.

Parishioners from all over, including the members of the different mandated organizations and BECs, streamed early into the OLCP Main Church to pray the Holy Rosary before the 9AM Thanksgiving Mass officiated by Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, assisted by concelebrating Recollect priests. In his homily, Fray Selma focused the attention

of the mass-goers to the goodness of the Lord who blessed us with our dear Mama Mary. He also exhorted everyone to emulate the example of Mama Mary as the Perfect Disciple.

Aside from the homily, the karakol, the offering of flowers by the children to the Virgin Mary, the long lines of communicants and the blessing of September birthday celebrants were the highlights of the High Mass. As they exited, mass-goers were treated to simple snacks offered by an ice cream cart, etc. and the Lions Club distributed free reading glasses.

Fray Selma then proceeded to bless the 2nd and 3rd Floors of the Parish Pastoral Center which were recently completed, thanks to the generous contributions of the parishioners and their friends. After the blessing, parishioners were treated to a free, simple AGAPE potluck lunch with different viands amply contributed by the parish organizations and magnanimous donors. There were several waves of parishioners who partook of the AGAPE potluck lunch and, most, if not all, went home appreciating the lunch offered by a grateful parish.

Finally, parishioners joined the 6PM Procession of the image of Our Lady of Consolation as well as the images of the patron saints of the parish chapels and some Augustinian saints. Praying the rosary continuously as the procession circled around the Miraflores Subdivision, parishioners showed their devotion and expressed their gratitude to the Lady, the Mother who consoles them and who intercedes for them so powerfully to our loving God. Truly, Our Lady of Consolation helps us and brings us, her children in OLCP, closer to Jesus her Son and our Almighty Father. Praise be to God!

Thank You for Mama Mary! **RD**

13th SARF National Biennial Convention

BY SIS. CORA PADUA, SAR

The Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity (SARF) Phils. held its 13th Biennial National Convention recently (May 12-14, 2017) at the Bulwagan Recoleta, Miranila Subd., Quezon City. Two hundred eleven (211) delegates and accompanying persons from 10 chapters in Luzon and 6 chapters from the Visayas attended the event. Out-of-towners were billeted at the San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish dormitories in Quezon City and at the Bahay Sta. Monica in Mira-nila Subd.

Each day of the convention was started with the Holy Mass. Celebrants were celebrants Fray Emmanuel A. Bolilia, OAR (Provincial Councilor, In-charge of Spirituality), Fray Emilio L. Larlar, OAR (National Spiritual Director of SARF, Phils) and Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR (Prior Provincial). Lauds, Mid-day prayers and vespers were properly incorporated in the activities.

The following talks were delivered: *The OAR Year of Holiness 2017: "Called to be Saints"* by Fray Lauro V. Larlar, OAR; *The SARF Phils. LAMP 2017-2020* by Fray Emilio L. Larlar, OAR; *Ways of Expressing Holiness* by Fr. Ian D. Espartero, OAR, and; *Stewardship: A Way of Life, A Spirituality* by Fray Emmanuel A. Bolilia, OAR.



Election of the new officers of the National Council was also held. The 2017-2020 National Council Officers include the following:

Position	Name	Chapter Affiliated
National President	Edwin T. Ruiz	SEMNOV – Antipolo
Vice President –Luzon	Zenaida Lapuz	Recoletos Provincialate
Vice President – Visayas	Carmenda Leonoras	UNO-Bacolod City
1 st Councilor – Luzon	Ceres C. Alcantara	SSBP –Quiapo, Manila
2 nd Councilor – Luzon	Yolanda V. Zaragoza	SEMNOV – Antipolo
Councilor - Negros	Fe Violeta B. Taring	OLAP- Valencia
Councilor - Cebu	Evangeline E. Gubatao	OLMCP – Cebu
National Secretary	Ma. Windle M. Oane	SEMNOV – Antipolo
National Treasurer	Corazon A. Padua	RFC – Miranila, Q. C.

Spiritual Directors	Name	Chapter Affiliated
National SD	Rev. Fr. Emilio Larlar, OAR	
Regional SD - Palawan	Rev. Fr. Rex Bangcaya, OAR	OLMCP – P. Princesa SHJHS- Brooke's Point
Regional SD - Negros	Rev. Fr. William Villafior, OAR	UNO-Bacolod City
Regional SD - Cebu	Rev. Fr. Vicente Ramon, Jr. OAR	OLMCP - Cebu

The fellowships were happy and memorable (if not a bit roaring on the second night!) The Himig Consolacion, RFC Seminarists and OLCF Dance Troupe provided formal entertainment. But, the excitable presentations of Cavite, Carmel, Cebu, San Carlos Chapters and the impromptu community singing and zumba goaded by naturally fun-loving delegates delicious peppered the

concoction.

Since the 13th was the Centenary of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima, a rosary procession and flower offering to our Lady was celebrated by the non-voting delegates. Also, since the 14th was Mothers' Day, remembrance of mothers was paid in songs and speeches, particularly the "Sulat ni Nanay sa Atin" read by Prior Provincial Selma. Surely, some

delegates were teary-eyed singing "Mama."

SARF RFC, the host chapter, thanked the Triune God for moving our hearts and minds to make the convention a success, and everyone: the OAR, the National Council, the delegates and RAYs for their generous help and participation. The event was formally closed with the song "People." **RD**

SARF-provincialate's silver anniversary

BY SIS. YENG GALANG, SAR

The fraternity started in early 1990s through the encouragement of Fr. German Chicote, OAR and the perseverance of Fr. Leonardo Pauligue, OAR.

The chapter's ten jubilarians: Bro. Abelardo A. Almeida, Sis. Flora A. Atienza, Sis. Hermenegilda Axalan,

Sis. Amelia A. Casino +, Sis. Ma. Consolacion F. Cruz, Bro. Reynaldo C. Cruz, Sis. Sylvia Estacio, Sis. Zenaída R. Lapuz, Sis. Editha V. Padua, Sis. Margarita V. Ramos made their promise on May 10, 1992.

From the first ten SARs, the fraternity has grown to 81 members, 52 of which are active, 12 inactive and four living abroad and 14 deceased.

The chapter's milestone, was noticed by Spiritual Director Fray Jose Ernil F. Almayo, OAR, when officers were preparing celebrations for his birthday, July 25. **RD**



The Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity-Provincialate chapter is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

A maritime pilgrimage

BY FRAY RENÉ F. PAGLINAWAN, OAR

Journal of a pilgrimage to Recollect legacy in Palawan, 15-19 May

(Part 1)

Deliver us from our wretched wanderings, our miserable mistakes, and establish us in Your way and comfort us, and say: Run, I'll carry you, yes, and there also will I carry you" (St. Augustine, Conf., 6,26)

Nota Previa:

Almost a decade ago, in my first assignment to SSC-R Manila, I published a few write-ups in the college webpage entitled Monday Moorings, musings on Mondays that were meant to serve as inspirational, religious or moral moorings. The present revival attempt is simply entitled Moorings, detaching it from any particular day.

15 May 2017, Monday

"Uh oh, the rain's going to spoil their fiesta", I told myself as dark clouds ushered in daylight of May 15, feast of Saint Isidore the Farmer, patron of the parish of Barangay Casian, Taytay, Palawan. In fact, it had rained that night. It's going to be a wet fluvial procession, I thought.

"But we want the rains to come!", was Fray Charlie's, parish priest, response to my concern. The water wells are drying, salty water is seeping into our water supply, he explained.

My week in Casian and neighboring islands would be an enriching occasion to see things from another perspective and to deepen in my appreciation of the work done by missionaries, past and present.

For the fluvial procession that would kick off the fiesta activities, pump boats of various sizes were gathering around the quay; on the bigger ones, bedecked with bunting and plastic flowers, were installed



L-R: Frays Francisco Antonio and Rene Paglinawan, Sr. Emily Madrigal (superior of Saint Ezekiel Moreno Spirituality and Development Center, Puerto Princesa, Palawan; Frays Louie Gabinete, Raul Buhay, Antonio Carron, and Edgar Tubio (President, Provincial Secretariat of the Pastoral and Mission Apostolate)

the religious images: of St. Ezekiel Moreno's, our Blessed Mother's, and the patron saint's. Though a couple of hours delayed - in the islands you have to seriously adjust your sense of time - the procession of about 30 vessels started moving towards Dadalitan island, where Fray Charlie was going to bless them and their riders.

He was riding the faster, flat-bottomed junco (pronounced djung-ko, which was donated by San Sebastian College on its 75th anniversary) and had brought a farm spray filled with holy water. Manually blessing the boats was tiring, he recalled last year's experience. He was ready for a liturgical tweak.

Well, the junco's engine sputtered several times and the spray choked, so, after the engine finally came to life, Fray Charlie had to bless the clustered boats with the ol' reliable tabo (dipper). The ritual done, he executed some nifty hiphop moves, his white Recollect habit highlighting the actions, to the delight of his parishioners. The boats then circled the island and some motored back to Casian, while others went back to their home islands.

Main celebrant at the 10 a.m. mass was Fray Raul Buhay, general counselor of the Order in charge of the Apostolate; he had come from Rome a few days before, accompanied by



another general councilor, Fray Antonio Carron, who heads the Order's educational apostolate and its communications arm. The usually enthusiastic Fray Raul has lost none of his fluency in Tagalog as he preached the homily. After the mass, he informed about the Association of Saint Monica Christian Mothers, enjoining the women to become members. (I had started the movement in the country several years ago in Manukan, Zamboanga del Norte, and had spread it also to the secular fraternity members in Antipolo, Quezon City and Manila; but Fr. Raul's general dissemination is a welcome move).

The evening brought loud music from the covered court across the street. It was going to be our second sleepless night as the revellers thought nothing about reducing the boom boom of the speakers that accompanied their all-night dancing. On the first night, we sat at a table reserved for the parish pastors. Fray Antonio observed that the whole thing was almost identical to the manner of celebrating in the mission parishes in Marajo, at the delta of the Amazon, in faraway Brazil.

It was 530 in the morning of the next day that the generator was put off, and, mercifully, with it died the music. Silence was a bliss! In fairness, it's not every day that these people celebrate, we consoled ourselves.



Fray Notnot Naranja tests the fishing line Fray Oniot Antonio offers for our use, while Fray Jojo Jadulco looks on

May 16

My Casian sojourn 2017 was designed to be a delightful sandwich. The May 15 parish fiesta and May 20 silver anniversary of Fray Joel "Notnot" Naranja's ordination are both ends of the bun, and the maritime pilgrimage to Recollect evangelization areas from May 16 to 19 the filling.

First stop is Cuyo, some 8 hours away to the east.

The name of Cuyo stuck in my mind as an eleven-year old first year seminarian at San Carlos City, Negros Occidental in 1968. Apostolic Vicar of Palawan Bishop Gregorio Espiga had shown slides of the Vicariate, hoping to instill in our young minds the love for the missions.



Anchors aweigh! Leaving Casian port for Cuyo

Sixteen years later, as a young priest, I chose as topic for my licentiate thesis at the faculty of Church History at the Greg (Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome) the creation of the apostolic prefecture of Palawan in 1910. It was mostly from research work, at the Recollect archives of Spain and Rome and at the Archivo General de Indias, in Seville, Spain, which prompted my major superior in 1987 to gift me with my first trip to Palawan, until then known only through pictures and documents. Now, in 2017, I was going to personally visit Cuyo, the cradle of Recollect evangelization in Palawan and the core of the Prefecture at its creation. It was a realization of a dream long overdue. And I would love every minute of it.

We finally lifted anchor at 10 o'clock, about four hours after the original schedule.

Our pump boat, named after Saint Ezekiel Moreno, is a five-year-old, 72-footer vessel, 6 feet wide, with cask of tipolo wood acquired from Dipolog. Its engine is a 6-cylinder Mitsubishi model 6 D16 which had moved buses in its previous earth-bound reincarnation, testament to the Pinoy's knack for creative reuse, a proper marine engine being more expensive. Fr. Notnot had acquired the boat for the chaplaincy in Apo Island, in Negros Oriental, when he was assigned there. Seeing that, after his transfer to Casian, it was not being used but was instead slowly



The small baroto (right) is necessary to bring people and provision ashore when there is no available port



Our provisions, beside the blue 200-liter diesel drum: rice, fish, bread, fruit, vegetables, chichirria, beer and local brandy. Making sure no one's getting hungry nor bored!

becoming fiesta fare for the wood-burrowing tamilok (wormwood), he negotiated for it to be reunited with him in his new assignment.

Viatoar 2017

No one objected to my suggestion that we call our group, the first to make this historical maritime pilgrimage to former Recollect areas of evangelization, the viatoares. It is a combination of viator, oar and OAR. Viator, Latin for traveler, is a beloved word for Saint Augustine. Man is a traveler towards God, the homeland. Oar is of course the most essential and simplest means of moving a boat around. And OAR stands for the Order of Augustinian Recollects.

Here are the first viatoares.

Fray Joel "Notnot" Naranja, who is celebrating his 25th year of ordination, is the local prior of Recoletos de Casian. Constant energy and perpetual smile is perhaps the shortest way to describe him. His decade of assignment in island ministries (Apo Island and Casian Island) has made him a skilful navigator (if a bit imprudent, in the mind of some land-bound religious, who view with concern his seafaring even at night), a tireless worker in the vineyard of the Lord, bringing the sacraments to the island parishioners and building more durable places of worship and, in the amazed description of fellow Casian pastor Fray Francisco "Oniot" Antonio, a person incapable of getting angry.

Fray Charlie Orobia may not have seen much of the sea as a child in Las Pinas, but as a priest he has more than made up for that lack. A co-founder of the Sea Knights, a small group of religious men and priests, in 2007, his advocacy is cleaner seas and more sustainable water resources. Current parish priest of Casian, he leads his fellow pastors in the evangelization program, at the core of which is bringing the Eucharist to the more than ten island chapels every Sunday. Weddings, baptisms, catechism and other standard activities in parish life are part of his menu. Moreover, concerned about the dwindling stocks in even the once-fabulous fishing grounds of northern Palawan, Fray Charlie thinks of ecological tourism as possible sources of income for his parishioners. Surely, the unspoiled white sand beaches in many islands, the pawikan habitat at Debangon Island, the five-star diving site at Nabat island hold enticing possibilities.

Tough as nails, I remember describing Fray Louie Gabinete, as he brushed aside one of the many malaria attacks he had in Kamabai, Sierra Leone, where we were assigned together in 2005-2006. He learned toughness as a young boy; undeterred by meager resources, he sold pandesal, fed pigs, served in

the house of an aunt on his way to finishing secondary school in Narra, Palawan. Entering the seminary in college, he had to study harder as his classmates, some of whom came from the high school seminary, had had a big academic and formative headstart. Fray Louie is currently Vice President for Student Welfare of our university in Negros. Last October, while attending the 75th anniversary celebration of Santo Tomas minor seminary, he had an almost fatal heart attack. Learning that it was caused by varied strenuous sports activities coupled with insufficient sleep, we had to warn him: "Louie, you are not that young anymore".

Frays Jojo Jadulco and Ken Lao are only three and two years in the priesthood, respectively. I had known them, though, as seminarians, especially in the Novitiate, where I taught history of the Order. In this trip I realized that Jojo, a pleasant conversationalist, is always eager to learn. One lesson he learned fast from Louie was to float and swim. (Foreign visitors are shocked to learn that so many Filipinos, living in an archipelago of more than seven thousand islands, do not know how to swim, while they, who could only have the summer months in the year to take to the water, are mostly good swimmers).



(L-R) Frs. Joel "Notnot" Naranja, Ken Lao, Jojo Jadulco, Louie Gabinete, Rene Paglinawan, Charlie Orobia



Boat captain, Bonifacio "Boning" Abrina

I also obliged Fray Jojo in his many inquiries, linguistic, historical, cultural.

Fray Ken Lao, recently reassigned from Casian to Tagburos parish in Puerto Princesa, is a silent, gentle soul. During the trips, he would silently perform tasks and services for the rest. For instance, with a bolo he slashed open the young coconuts so we could drink its electrolyte-replenishing milk and chew on its tender meat.

As for me, let me just present myself as chronicler of the voyage.

We have a three-man crew: Bonifacio "Boning" Abrina, 59, is the captain, assisted by Ferdie Valdez, 57, and Jake Mendoza, 46.

I did not know that Boning is a Muslim, so that when during a conversation after a long trip, he mentioned that he had two wives in Malaysia aside from his wife in Casian (who is the mother of our sacristan in San Sebastian parish, Amry Abrina) I said to myself: "Aba, nagyayabang pa!". I realized later that he was just stating what for them is a common and perfectly legal arrangement. Before this conversation, I had received a text from a colleague at the Bastecon (San Sebastian Basilica Conservation and Development Foundation, Inc.) inquiring whether we are open to training Muslims as tour guides of the basilica, as part of our community development program. Well, here we have Boning bringing us to see the forts that Augustinian Recollects from the 17th to the 19th centuries constructed or maintained

to ward off Muslim invaders. So, I have no objection to the training of those Islamic believers who are properly disposed to be tour guides of the basilica; after all, Quiapo is being increasingly populated by Muslims and one must look for ties that bind rather than breaches that divide.

Traveling these seas in the 17th to the 19th centuries was no mean feat for the missionaries. Without motorized boats, clear maps, accurate marine information and easy provisions, as well as without sufficient knowledge of the local languages and customs, difficulties abounded for them. Which made what they accomplished all the more admirable.

Our seafaring brothers Charlie and Notnot have gadgets that our forebears did not have. GPS on cellphones that function independently of telecom signals, accurate compasses, solar chargers, and the like, brought us directly to our destination. Cuyo is 100 degrees southeast of Casian; we were running at an average of 17 kilometers per hour; we should be there in 6 to 8 hours. In the meantime, we tried to identify the islands as we went. Maducang and Calandagan at starboard, Cabunglawan and Nangalaw at port side. Hours later, Quiminatin and Chicos islands, then Lubid, and then Canipo. Still further, we could sight the famous exclusive resort for the rich and famous, Amanpulo.

Concerned about sunburn and skin cancer? We, the city-bred, applied

generous measures of carefully-chosen sunblock brands with reassuring PH levels. I offered Fray Notnot some; he smilingly declined. The gradual buildup of his melanin gives his skin natural protection. I think about fisherfolk, exposed to the sun most of their lives, I don't think skin cancer is a leading cause of their death. Drowning, maybe. Hunger, maybe. But not skin cancer.



The viatores 6 (L-R: Frs. Jojo Jadulco, Joel Naranja, Louie Gabinete, Rene Paglinawan, Charlie Orobia, Ken Lao) arriving in Cuyo, 16 May 2017

I am a bit embarrassed that this maritime pilgrimage has none of the hardships that faced the missionaries we are trying to honor and remember. When tired and board by the vast expanse of the seas, we could comfortably recline. While Jake was preparing lunch, we could munch on peanuts and chichirrias and guzzle ice-cold beer. And the sea in the month of May is sometimes like a lake of oil so that a maritime voyage feels more like a walk in the park. It was a pleasurable pilgrimage!

The lunch of brown rice, fried talakitok and goat papaitan (a fiesta leftover) and dessert of sweet backyard-grown papaya was for us haute cuisine in the high seas!

Cuyo, here we come

The approach to Cuyo opened the vista to more than twenty islands around. I now understood better that Cuyo was a good place to start evangelization with.



Haute cuisine in the high seas for hungry friars!



On one side of the fort is the church whose outside wall serves as rampart



Entrance of the church, Cuyo, Palawan

We docked at past 6 pm; Fray Notnot had to report our arrival to the Philippine Ports Authority as well as to the Philippine Coast Guard. This latter agency posed a bit of a problem, because our vessel's papers are still being processed with Manila and we were, strictly speaking, undocumented.

The beauty, peace, and cleanliness of Cuyo banished the boredom and tiredness of the 8-hour ride. Current parish priest Fr. Rey Palanca gave us a warm welcome and soon showed us the fort. As described in the documents and portrayed in pictures and scale models, the massive construction had the church-fortress's outside wall serving as rampart of one side of the square fort. At the opposite side is the

bell tower, recently augmented with another floor.

Four bulwarks secured the four angles of the fort. Fr. Juan de San Severo, who built the fort in the 1680s, certainly knew his trade; in his student days he must have been as interested in military tactics as in theology. The fort, and especially the bell-cum-watch tower had a commanding view of the bay. In yesteryears, when the bells rang to warn of an enemy incursion, the inhabitants would rush from their fields into the refuge of the fortification. A group of trained menfolk would sally forth in a sortie and engage the enemy to prevent them from pillaging the settlement.

The church is one long nave; its rampart side has windows high

up. The floor is machuca tiles, so it must have been installed in the 1950s or 1960s. We came across some tombstones of Recollects and lay people; among the former, Frs. Nicanor Arciniega (+1885), Manuel Bonilla (year of death unrecognisable), and Geronimo Sancho (died in Taytay in 1890 and transferred to Cuyo in 1922). The retablo, also a modern replacement, has the image of the Crucified Jesus at the topmost tier, that of Saint Augustine in the tier below, and that of the Sacred Heart and of Our Lady of Consolation at the left and right flanks, respectively. What seemed to remain from the older altarpiece is a magnificent silver-plated conical base, about two feet high, on which rests the tabernacle and its surroundings, also silver



Life-size statues of apostles and saints stand guard as sentinels of the fort



A recently-constructed rooftop runs around the buildings inside the fort of Cuyo. The upper portion of the belfry is also recently added



A recently added arch a few meters in front of the church façade, Cuyo, Palawan



From a height of about 8 meters, fell, unharmed, the last Recollect parish priest of Cuyo, Fray Juan Garde (+2014)



Interior of the Saint Augustine Church, Cuyo, Palawan.



Inside the church, the tombstone of parish priest of Cuyo, Fray Nicolas Arciniega (+1885)



Tabernacle of the main altar, silver-plated



Conical base of the tabernacle has embossed coat-of-arms of the OAR at the center

plated. In the center of the base, the seal of the OAR is in embossed silver. As we would observe in the course of our pilgrimage, the missionaries spared no expense in what pertained to liturgical concerns. As the *Forma de Vivir*, the first constitutions of the Recollect movement, put it: While in everything we must be poor, in what pertains to divine worship, let us be rich (FV ch. 1, 2).

I must say that whilst well-meaning, the later pastors added fixtures or images that diminished the simple elegance of the original. The disproportionally-sized new stations of the cross inside the church, the asymmetrically-positioned-and-totally-unnecessary (for me, at least; it serves the once-a-year Salubong ceremony of Easter dawn, so why do you construct a permanent structure for use one sole day in the whole year?) cement arch several meters in front of the church entrance and the garishly-colored, almost-life-size statues of apostles and saints placed on top of the ramparts are accretions over time I could do without. Pero, mira, as the Spaniards would say, hay gente para todo. If in many people a sense of wonder or mystery is evoked, who am I to object?

It was not long before I asked Fr. Rey Palanca the exact spot from where



A three-story convent can accommodate visitors and gatherings

Fray Juan Garde, the last Recollect parish priest of Cuyo (died 2014), backstepped into empty space while watching — was it a parade? — and fell on his feet, what we calculated would be some 8 meters, on the ground below. Was he distracted by the winsome majorettes, we his fellow religious in Madrid (1997-1998) used to rib him. Fortunately, the physical harm was not that great; perhaps, the teasing through the years annoyed him more.

A former parish priest, Monsignor Moring, built the present three-story convent, with plenty of rooms for visitors. We were able to sleep with plenty of help from electric fans.

(Part 2)

Cuyo and Agutaya

17 May, Wednesday

At 2 am, I was awake. The night was absolutely still, there were a few stars. Prayed the rosary from the balcony of our common room, facing, across the courtyard below, an image of the Crucified Jesus.

Four of us took an early morning dip, while Fray Notnot was up and about with paper processes of our boat and Fray Charlie prolonged his sleep.



Visit to the lato (seaweed) farm in Magsaysay, Cuyo Island

The surreal scene of the beach took our breath away. The nearby islands seemed to float in the air as the perfectly still waters mirrored the clouds. The low tide had exposed wide swaths of the white sandy beach and we walked as if fearing that our heavy feet would make vanish this unearthly



The viatoares 2017, with Cuyo parish priest Fr. Rey Palanca (3rd from left) and soon-to-be-priest Rev. Jeffrey Tan (7th from left), at a kasuy orchard, Magsaysay, Cuyo Island.



Façade of the Saint Michael parish church, Magsaysay town, Cuyo Island, Palawan



Interior of the Saint Michael parish church, Magsaysay town



Fort ruins, Magsaysay town, Cuyo Island



Fort ruins, Magsaysay town, Cuyo Island



Remarkable ivory image of Saint Augustine, kept at the Tan's ancestral residence for safekeeping, Cuyo, Palawan

apparition.

Where in the world but in Cuyo can you swim in clear and clean waters in a wide white beach just beside the harbor?

The setting was perfect for Fray Louie to give Swimming 101 to Fray Jojo. First step, float face down. Now, flap your legs without bending the knee. Now, float face up. Now, extend your arms to move forward. It was that simple. Was it the expert teacher or the fast learner student? Anyway, the combination of both made Fray Jojo now able to "locomote" above the water.

After breakfast, Fr. Rey, ever the gracious host, brought us to the other town, Magsaysay. He had hired one of the only two jeepneys in the whole island, a vintage vehicle in blood-red color and chrome-plating such that you thought it was recently restored.

We dropped by the parish of Saint Michael the Archangel, paid a courtesy call to the parish priest and got introduced to Monsignor Allen Aganon and a couple of pastoral council officers from Saint James parish in Alabang, Metro Manila, who had just come the day before to check on the progress of the senior high school building their group are financing as part of their outreach program. This praiseworthy cooperation of a rich parish with a faraway community in an island lost in the Palawan sea must surely be an example of the Church going out to the periphery!

The "lato" (Caulerpa lentillifera) from Cuyo island is reputedly among the best in the Philippines. Soft but crunchy, succulent and tangy, it rolls in your tongue like sea grapes



A 1980s painting of the fort and church of Cuyo, Palawan, also at the Tan residence



Beautiful ivory of the Infant Jesus, Cuyo, Palawan



Liturgical paraphernalia, Saint Augustine parish, Cuyo, Palawan



Fr. Notnot, is hands-on as we make the difficult mooring at Agutaya port

and, with a bit more imagination — and much less money — reminds you of caviar. Green caviar, it is indeed sometimes called. The fishermen and lato growers of Cebu and Bohol, reportedly, could only dream that their product had the same quality as that of Cuyo. And so, off we went to one of the seaweed farms. The morning was well advanced, the tide had risen, for which reason we were not able to see the sea product, contenting ourselves with a group selfie while standing on ancient wood planks that serve as walkway. And buying 2 kilos - all that was left - of the prized lato.

We also visited the ruins of the Magsaysay fort. An enterprising resident, reportedly a politician, has used it as a backdrop to his resort

Back in Cuyo town, we accepted deacon Jeffrey Tan's invitation to visit his grandparents' house to see the image of Saint Augustine that their family is safekeeping for the parish. Reverend Jeffrey is due for priestly ordination this coming June 7; thanks for the invite to the ordination, but we could not stay that long.

It is a custom in many parishes, we learned, that valuable images are loaned to selected families for safekeeping. The family also vests the image and decorates its carroza for the liturgical festivities. In a recent development, a memorandum of agreement is drawn between the parish and the family, to make sure, that through the passage of generations, both parties understood that the image is property of the parish, and not of the family.

The image of Saint Augustine kept by the Tan family is of ivory, a fine and beautiful work, and from my layman's eyes, probably by a Filipino or at least Asian carver, judging from the almond-shaped eyes and generally Oriental features. The bushy beard, painted black, is also of ivory. The ivory hands confirm the work of a remarkable

artist.

Fr. Rey also showed us a considerable collection of liturgical vessels and paraphernalia (candelabras, censers, vestments, pennants) and bells that our Recollect forebears had used to help make divine worship what it really is: man's giving, or trying to give back, to God



Surprise welcoming committee at Agutaya, Palawan. Fr. Joe Rey Alcantara, parish priest, is in white t-shirt, beside Fr. Ken Lao



Maambeng ang Pagkabot to Agutaya



Fr. Jojo Jadulco, at the entrance of the church-fortress of Saint John the Baptist, Agutaya



Interior of the church-fortress of Saint John the Baptist

his numerous gifts. They are gathered in a room, not yet properly a museum, which hopefully Fr. Rey will be able to one day realize. Later, he showed us a treasure which he personally keeps in his room, handed down from the Recollects: a precious ivory image of the sleeping child Jesus, its beauty enthralling.

Again, the words of the Forma de Vivir came back, reminding us that indeed our missionaries spent the best of their fortunes in things that pertain to God and the worship due to him.

As I toured the walkways around the fort's ramparts for picture-worthy angles, a young monitor lizard saw me coming and scurried to safety. It turned the corner, into the corridor leading to the living quarters of the convent staff, as I gave chase. The shiny floor tiles made its escape cartoonish, and it soon disappeared into a room left open. Turned out to be the room of Fr. Rey's nephew. I informed him and he started shrieking and flailing his arms and beseeching a younger sacristan to drive the monster out. Finally, it was flushed out, and again it ran for dear life. I finally cornered it in an empty corner hall and shot it. With my iPad's camera.

Fr. Rey said there are two bigger ones that also frequent the area.

Leaving Cuyo past one in the afternoon, we arrived in Agutaya almost three hours later. Mooring the boat was tricky, the currents endangered the propellers hitting the rocks; after disembarking, we left the crew to disentangle the stuck anchor.

The welcome party was a pleasant surprise. Fr. Joe Rey Alcantara, parish priest, and his Parish Pastoral Council officers and some choir members were at the dock, and soon were placing leis on our collars. It was enfleshing the words on the town's entrance arch: "Maambeng ang Pagkabot!" A lavish merienda awaited us in a kiosk



in the middle of the Agutaya fort: native suman, cassava puto, and the more Western cake and doughnuts. The Parish Pastoral Council was solicitously hovering over, while the choir was, by way of practicing their songs, providing background music. We felt like celebrities!

As dusk settled, we commenced



Holy water dispenser. According to the caption, it is of the time when Fr. Jesus Sobejano was parish priest



According to the caption, the chalice is of the time of Fr. Jose Frances as parish priest



Old bells, Agutaya, Palawan



One of the bulwarks of Agutaya is named after Saint Augustine



At the front rampart, the coat of arms of the OAR, and the epigraph "Se acabo el ano 1748" (Finished in 1748)

the Eucharistic celebration inside Agutaya church. Fray Louie, the only native Palaweno among us friars (and whose lolo hails from nearby Cuyo) did not need great persuasion to preside over the sacrament. Also concelebrating with us was Fr. Joe Rey. And there, in the silence of the church fortress, as evening drew near, and in the company of the handful of faithful, we commemorated the Lord's Supper. Fr. Louie made a stirring homily, with a generous garnishing of cuyonen phrases, on the day's gospel of how, indeed, only as branches connected to the Vine could we be fruitful. The same fidelity to the Lord that brought our missionaries, back in the 17th century, to these once-inhospitable shores, is the only guarantee to the fidelity and fruitfulness of today's pastoral efforts.

A rich dinner of fresh seafood was served soon after mass. We insisted that the pastoral council members, the choir and the cooks join us.

The after-dinner conversation with Fr. Joe Rey was a great blessing. We saw in this earnest, dedicated, self-sacrificing and gentle-mannered young priest a pastor that Agutaya needs. Agutaya is one hundred percent Catholic. There have been attempts by ministers of other beliefs, Christian or otherwise, to establish in the island. Fr. Joe Rey talks them out of it. Agutaya's soil is poor, vegetables are hard to come by; not even the ubiquitous cashew tree, which thrives on acidic soil, grows in Agutaya. The island does not even have a wet

market; the sea, its most natural source of livelihood, can spew, in the months of the amihan, not fish but meters-high waves. You've got to be a committed missionary to survive in Agutaya.

Of similar commitment and dedication were, of recent memory, the last Recollect pastors of Agutaya:



NHI marker (1999) at the entrance of the church-fortress in Agutaya



Entrance to the fort, Agutaya, Palawan



A view of the Agutaya church from the convent inside the fort



Talking with parish priest of Agutaya, Fr. Joe Rey Alcantara, atop the fort ramparts



Crumbling bastions needing repair

Fray Jesus Sobejano (+3 July 2015) and Fray Jose Frances (still alive and kicking in Spain, I met him May 2016 in Marcilla, Navarra). Fr. Sobejano would become later the first parish priest of our parish in Tondo, Manila, and, after that, be elected Vicar Provincial of the



A room with a view



Twilight at the fort, with tent on the ready

Vicariate of the Philippines in China. Fr. Jose Frances was assigned later to San Sebastian convent in Manila, where he was known for ministering to the street people and saying masses in various chapels in the parish. And oh, did I tell you he wrote his master's thesis in Pilipino?

Back to Fr. Joe Rey. His limited time and resources have to be divided among the necessary formation of the people of God (through sacraments, catechesis, sacramentals, etc.) and their human development; on the



Morning praise of the "Beauty ever ancient, ever new"

other hand, he cannot but address the stone fort, some parts of which have fallen, endangering the safety of the people around. He was glad to know that, since the National Historical Institute (renamed in 2010 as the National Historical Commission of the Philippines) has put a marker in 1999, it would not be farfetched to think it could help restore the monument. Hopefully, the attention of said government entity could be given to this fort. Though not a high profile project, it is in sore need of help from cultural and heritage agencies.

The NHI marker reads: "Church



Book of baptisms (1912-1924), Parish of Saint John the Baptist, Agutaya, Palawan



Book of Funerals, Agutaya, 1912 onwards

of St. John the Baptist. Completed in 1748, the church fortress of St. John the Baptist of Agutaya was built by the Augustinian Recollects as defense against Muslim invasions. Named as Baluarte de San Juan Bautista, it was constructed with the help of the Agutaynons and their encomendero Don Antonio de Rojas, who delineated and laid out the building. The fortress was equipped with cannons, arquebuses, slingers and mortar weapons. During the Second World War, the church-fortress became an evacuation and refugee center for the people of Agutaya".

Though I seem to remember that Fr. Juan de San Severo, who built the fort



Opening pages of the Book of Funerals

of Cuyo, also built those of Agutaya, Linapacan and Taytay in the late 17th century, there is no contesting the inscription on the coral stone at the front rampart that says: Se acabo en el ano 1748. (Doesn't take away the possibility, though, that he could have started the original forts, onto which further fortifications would be added. But one needs to go back to the original documents).

Again the complete stillness of the



night, when it was time to retire. And the sweltering heat in the rooms. Frs. Charlie, Notnot, Jojo and Louie soon settled in cots which they located in the pasillos outside the stuffy rooms, while Fr. Ken and I pitched our tents at the bulwark. I channeled the little boy in me, imagining pirates kept at bay by the secure fort. Fray Ken had a more troubled sleep: he felt eyes peering inside his tent. Eyes of those who have died, missionaries, local residents, pirates within and without the ramparts of that fort.

(Part 3)

Agutaya, Linapacan, and back to Casian

18 May 2017, Thursday



Fr. Charlie cuts an impressive figure at the prow



Relaxed but vigilant: Frs. Notnot and Charlie



Fr. Louie Gabinete and sleeping, er, traveling companions



Fr. Ken prepares a snack of buko juice and young coconut meat for his fellow viatoares

Early in the morning, I went to the other bulwark, upturned a paint pail in front of a crenel and, with in view the expansive sea, prayed the morning praise and office of readings. From my iPad. God, beauty ever ancient ever new, would surely find no oddity in this mixture of the 17th and 21st centuries!

After breakfast, I asked Fr. Joe Rey to show me the old books of the parish archives, hoping there would be more than the customary books of baptisms, weddings and funerals. Perhaps there would be some “Libro de Cosas Notables”? If there were, I wouldn’t hesitate to ask Fr. Joe Rey to give it for our provincial archives, since, strictly speaking, it is a book that belongs to the religious order and not to the parish as a Church jurisdiction. There was none. So, I just took pictures of two old books, of baptisms (1912-1924) and of funerals (1912). Both, with worn-out covers of calfskin, were opened by the first Prefect Apostolic of Palawan, Monsignor Victoriano Roman, in December 1912. Signing as secretary was Fr. Javier Ariz, his trusty companion, one of the few missionaries in the early years of the prefecture. At least, I was re-connecting with names I had come across continuously when writing my licentiate thesis in 1984.

We left for Linapacan at half past nine. It’s some 124 kms away, 290 degrees northwest of Agutaya, I learn from my seafaring co-friars. Six to seven hours of travel.

How do you keep yourself from boredom? Well, after being entertained by a generous dose of marine vistas and changing views of the Calamianes group of islands, of smelling the brine, of feeling the rare splash of the waves in the placid May waters, and of hearing the constant chug-chug of the bus-engine-turned-pumpboat-motor, you can turn your attention elsewhere. The bright-colored dry bags, of various volumes, 3 kilos, 6 kilos, 10 kilos and 20 kilos. The maritime fashion of your companions, contrasting with your simple shorts and sleeveless shirt: rash guard, amphibious shoes, army-type hat, or an authentic fishing hat,



Approaching the commercial trawlers



Hauling in a sizable amount of donated fish

complete with a canvas to cover the face except the eyes. Or Fr. Charlie himself, a veritable fashion sight to behold: all white long loosely-sleeved linen shirt, with matching loose linen pants. Standing on the prow while scanning the horizon, he cuts a de Caprio-like-a-la-Titanic figure (minus the girl, of course); in front of an ancient fort with a mean-looking bolo hanging at his side, he’s a dead ringer for Andres Bonifacio; and, inside the church, with arms clasped in prayer,

he reminds of Saint Pedro Calungsod. His gadgets, which he insists are genuine stuff and not “made in China, manufactured in Quiapo”, can also engage your curiosity for a couple of hours. Or you can sleep the time away, waking up just before lunch and preparing yourself therefor by the time-honored practice of drinking beer and munching on peanuts.

And of course, there is plenty of time to think, to reflect, to count blessings.

If that's not enough, how about participating in barter in the high seas?

About halfway through the trip, at past one in the afternoon, near Canaan and Nangalao islands, we came across a dozen or so commercial trawlers spread around an area called Solitario Rock. We approached one, captain Boning and Fr. Notnot got aboard, were seen talking to the trawler's first officer. Will they give us fish? I inquired from Fr. Charlie. They cannot refuse, he replied, explaining that per the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 (RA 8550), trawlers have to fish outside of 200-nautical miles from Philippine shores, so they were, aha, in an illegal place.



Bisugo, tulingan, etc., safe inside our cooler



Local brandy for barter

So, another cure for boredom is to haul inside your boat twenty kilos of bisugo, tulingan and other fish, and transfer to the eager hands of the trawler's crew bread, four canned goods, a cluster of young coconuts and six bottles of a local brandy called Primera. Fr. Charlie said something about trawler owners usually disallowing their crew to drink, but, hey, these could well be international waters.... Barter completed, everybody happy!

Linapacan

We docked in the San Miguel, Linapacan port a quarter before 5 pm. The parish church, dedicated to Saint Michael the Archangel, is just at the other end of the port. A wedding ceremony was just ending, and soon we were greeting the mass presiders Fr. Eugene Elivera (former rector of the diocesan seminary in Puerto Princesa) and the parish priest, Fr. Miguelito Visentino.

The Linapacan fort being at another part of the island, called Kaseledan, and Fray Notnot not remembering how to go there (his last time there was in 1989, when as a theological seminarian, he and a fellow corista were commissioned to take pictures



Port at San Miguel, Linapacan



At San Miguel parish church, San Miguel, Linapacan, Palawan, with Frs. Eugene Elivera and Miguelito Visentino, parish priest, 4th and 6th from left.



of Recollect places of ministry both past and present for an album), we asked for a guide. We were given two, both named Adrian.

ASG jitters

It was dark when Adrian steered the pump boat into the most beautiful cove I have ever set eyes on. Shaped like a horseshoe, it was a guaranteed refuge for vessels. At port side we could see the bright lights of a pearl farm. But the Bantay Dagat did not recognize our boat nor did the security group of the pearl farm. Eleven unknown men, some with bonnets and masks, in an unidentified boat coming in unannounced raised alarm bells among the locals. As Fray Notnot and I were being rowed ashore in the baroto by the other Adrian, a couple of Bantay Dagat promptly showed up at the pump boat and inquired from Fray Charlie. Identity? Purpose? He assured them that, though not simple fishermen, we were fishers of men. A local boy, who had seemed to recognize Adrian's voice, was approaching with a baroto, too. Panicky shrieks from his mother on shore made him suddenly u-turn and furiously paddle back to land, handily passing us by as his alarm grew. Wasn't Palawan under advisory of possible Abu Sayaff incursions? Didn't they talk of some members being seen around the area? Meanwhile, our baroto touched shore. Residents soon flocked around, though at a cautious distance. Darkness veiled what must have been their alarmed faces. A security guy from the pearl farm, with a clipboard and pen and flashlight flashed — not too blatantly, but enough to recognize our features — asked: identity? purpose of visit? As Fr. Notnot assured him, he radioed back the pearl farm. Soon, we were comfortably conversing with the village folk.

Fray Notnot wanted to see the fort - that was what we came here for, he reminded - but I was not too determined anymore. I was also thinking of the

others, who had remained in the boat, not too keen about seeing another fort, in the darkness, and one that was up a promontory and covered with vegetation. Or, we could sleep here, or in the boat, and visit the fort in the morning, Fr. Notnot suggested, still smiling.

Back in the boat, we discussed our options. Fray Charlie wanted us to go to Kala-Kala, at the other side of the island, to see what is touted as having the clearest water (in the whole country? the region? the world?). Fray Louie informed that he had to be back in Puerto Princesa by 7 pm of the next day, so as to catch the last trip to Narra, in time for his appointment on Saturday morning; judging from its recent track record, the boat would take several hours to get to Kala-Kala and he was not comfortable with that risk. Meanwhile, the two Adrians have to be conducted back to San Miguel, Linapacan, so they can go with Fr. Visentino, who leaves for Sibaltan island at seven the next (Friday) morning. In short, we ended up going back to spend the night in San Miguel, Linapacan. Fr. Visentino had prepared the rooms above the church for us. Frs. Ken and I preferred to sleep in our tents in the ground in front of the church.

It was certainly not a boring day.

19 May, Friday

Fray Louie was fully dressed and was hoisting his backpack when I, having just waked up, rushed for a leak to the washroom upstairs. Fray Ken's tent had this marvelous mechanism that you opened and closed the whole thing like you do an automatic umbrella. Mine had the two foldable poles, and the tent itself that you have to fold into four parts, roll slowly making sure that the folded poles did not stick out too much to fit into its bag nor that air is not trapped swelling the tent. Mercifully, Fr. Visentino invited us to coffee and pandesal, so I had more than enough time.

Time for some philosophical

discussion, even.

I said: What serenity, what a calm morning! But then, precisely for that, there is no air and it's warm. Then, sighing: Well, nothing's perfect.

Fr. Visentino: Nature is perfect! Philosophy has taught us that it is man's thinking that perceives imperfection. But creation is perfection!

Absolutely no rejoinder to that affirmation of the highest ontological order. Another shift in perspective!

As we lazily boarded our pump boat for the last leg of the journey, we took in the sights and smells of Linapacan port. A passenger vessel had come in from Mindoro and its sewage discharge was neither eye candy nor baby-cologne scented. A rat came down from the boat into the water and started swimming to the stairs of the port!

I had the urge to make a statement of truth, to make up for that philosophical setback courtesy of Fr. Visentino. Hey, Jojo, do you remember the childhood fairy tale about the Pied Piper of Hamelin? Well, that was wrong. Rats don't drown, as you can see. Fray Jojo is always glad to learn something new. But I am sure, now shifting to the Gospels, that the herd of swine of at Gerasa really drowned falling from the precipice into the sea. Fray Jojo seemed impressed I stayed within orthodox hermeneutics.

By 830 in the morning, we were negotiating around the islands just off Casian. By around 9 am, we were back in the parish convent waiting hungrily for a heavy brunch.

The viatoares are back!

Viatoar I (2017) officially ended with a dip at Amianan beach at the other end of Casian, a few minutes walk from the convent.

Viatoar II (2018), barring game-changing transfers after the provincial chapter in February, is aiming for Romblon.



Debangon Island; on the foreground, the baroto on which I came paddling

See ya'll, mates.

(Part 4)

Epilogue

That afternoon, I rowed to Debangan island, about five minutes from Casian (in Fray Oniot's estimate, but it took me more than 20 minutes). The name is reportedly a softening

of what used to be the Libangan (R and R grounds) for the fishermen. It's a habitat for the pawikan. I had not seen them in an earlier visit; I was determined not to leave Casian without sighting them.

Turned out that I had looked for them in the wrong place; this time, I had more than 20 sightings, especially

in the passageway of the current between the two islands. Unused to human presence, they keep a shy distance away and would submerge when you approach. For perhaps half an hour, I just softly paddled around the area, hoping that one would pop its head close to the boat. It was dusk when I returned, contented, to the convent

20 May, Saturday

Fray Joel celebrated his 25th anniversary of priestly ordination in San Isidro Labrador Parish, Casian Island. The support of the parishioners was amazing. Since yesterday afternoon, they had been coming from different islands, bringing the meat and food they would prepare during the night for today. The men of Calampisao brought two butchered pigs; two women from Silanga peeled and cooked cassava; parishioners from Casian prepared the two goats, etc. It was a show of force of people involvement.

Fray Notnot's classmate, Fray Emilio Quilatan, current dean of



Parishioners from Calampisao brought butchered pigs they themselves would cook



Preparing the food at the convent ground floor



Preparing the cassava



More parishioners from the islands arrive to join Fr. Notnot's jubilee celebration



These men had been cooking the whole night. The next morning found them still at it.



The parish youth tribute the celebrant with a dance number after the mass



Baragatan sa Barangay

studies at Recoletos Formation Center and holder of a doctorate degree in Church History from the Gregorian University, came all the way from Luzon and gave a hearty homily.

Lunch was served for everybody at the Barangay Hall.

Coinciding with Fray Notnot's celebration, the governor of Palawan



Palawan Provincial Governor talks to the people

(Jose Alvarez), the congressman of the northern district (his nephew) and the mayor of Taytay (Mayor Salvame) held a Baragatan sa Barangay in the parish, featuring a 50-strong medical-dental mission, rice distribution (in reusable dry bags), and entertainment, including a videoke contest. They stopped the loud music during the mass, which the said government



Rice in reusable dry bags is distributed at the Baragatan

officials also attended.

Before the 10 a.m. mass, I had time to visit again the Amianan beach, at the other side island, where I had the 400-meter beach practically all for myself. With pictures of the beach – the reader provides their own adjectives – I end this journal of Viatoar 2017. **Ro**



Martyrs
INVESTITURE 2017

Gasiciaco Recoletos Seminary
OUR LADY OF THE PILLAR CHAPEL, BAGUIO CITY
OCTOBER 12, 2017, THURSDAY 9:00 AM
MASS PRESIDER: REV. FR. DIONISIO Q. SELMA, GAR
PRIOR PROVINCIAL



PRAYER FOR THE YEAR OF HOLINESS

Father who art Holy,
all our hope rests in your great mercy.
We give you thanks and we bless your name.

May your Spirit
open our hearts to conversion;
a conversion that unites us to Jesus,
that transforms our ways of thinking and living.

Grant us the grace of being creators
of communion,
that we may be transmitters of your peace
in your Church and in the world.

Make us responsive to the needs of those
who live without faith;
may we be close to those who suffer and
to the poor.

Give us humility and openness to follow Jesus.

May he fill our life with hope,
may he fill us with love for you. Father,

Instill in us your Spirit
so that we respond with joy
to your call to holiness.

Amen.





After 72 years, Church revives Virgen de la Salud

BEN CAL (PNA)

MANILA – After 72 years in hibernation, the Catholic Church in the Philippines has revived the devotion to the Nuestra Señora de la Salud (Our Lady of Health) Novena with a Holy Mass held at the San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish in Project 6, Quezon City on Nov. 17.



More than a thousand devotees of the Blessed Virgin Mary attended the concelebrated Mass, which was followed by a procession on Neptune St. and nearby subdivisions.

It was the first time in 72 years that the miraculous holy image of Nuestra Señora de la Salud was shown to the public for veneration, especially to the sick who need miraculous cures.

From this day on, the miraculous image of Nuestra Señora de la Salud will have a permanent home at the San Nicolas Parish Church in Barangay Bahay Toro.

According to Fray Rommel L. Rubia, Nuestra Señora de la Salud was the title given to a small miraculous image of the Virgin brought by the Order of Augustinian Recollects in 1634 from Mexico.

The 380-year-old image made of ivory and adorned with costly and colorful stones “was a precious gift from the Discalced (Barefoot) Carmelite nuns of Mexico to the Recollect missionaries on their way to their missions in the Philippines” in 1634, Fray Rubia said.

Records of the long and arduous sea voyage resulted in numerous illnesses to those on board the vessel.

With no doctor on board, the Recoletos fathers prayed to God before the image of Nuestra Señora de la Salud.

“Miraculous healings occurred after praying in front of the image during the long and difficult trip from Mexico,” Fray Rubia narrated.

It was that historic event that the holy image was given the title “La Salud” by the faithful, he pointed out.

Upon arriving in the Philippines, the image was enshrined in the Church of San Juan de Bagumbayan in 1634.

However, in 1762, an unfortunate incident took place when both the church and convent were destroyed, and the image was transferred to the Church of San Nicolas in Intramuros, Manila, drawing more devotees.

In 1945, during the great Battle in Manila, American airplanes bombed Japanese-held areas, totally destroying the city.

However, “the image of La Salud miraculously survived the bombing of the San Nicolas Church,” Fr. Rubia recounted.

The Recoletos fathers took the image and brought it to the sacristy of San Sebastian Basilica in Manila for safekeeping.

When the Vicar Provincial transferred its residence to Quezon City in 1970, he took the image with him.

In 1988, the image was handed over to the Museo Rekoletto for safekeeping.

For 72 years, the image was kept from public eye, and many thought that the miraculous image was lost or destroyed. Devotion by the faithful faded into oblivion, and people never bothered to celebrate her feast day.

“However, in December 2016, the OAR (Order of Augustinian Recollects) fathers decided to reintroduce her cult to the Filipino people, giving those afflicted with different illnesses a source of strength, comfort and hope by invoking Mary’s intercession through this marian devotion,” Fr. Rubia said.

The miraculous image of Nuestra Señora de la Salud can now be venerated by the faithful seeking healing -- spiritual and temporal -- at the San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish in Barangay Bahay Toro, Quezon City. (PNA) **RD**





Recoletos family celebrates La Salud fiesta

BY BRO. JHOBEN M. RODRIGUEZ

QUEZON CITY – “Ibalita ninyo sa social media... The Black Virgin of Health (Nuestra Señora de la Salud) is once again around, ready to intercede for us,” Fray Rommel L. Rubia OAR exclaimed during his homily during the Fiesta of La Salud at San Nicholas de Tolentino Parish last November 17, 2017.

After more or less seventy two (72) years that the devotion and public veneration was lost now the OAR Friars of the Philippines revived the celebration of the Solemnity of the

Black Virgin.

Fray Amadeo Bolilia, OAR presided the concelebrated Eucharistic celebration. Fray Rommel focused his Sermon about the degree of mother’s love for her children. “Grabe and pagmamahal ng isang ina sa isang anak,” he emphasized. Though we are aware that not all mother are really perfect, always remember Christ is giving us his own mother –a mother of all, he continued.

People from different parishes around Quezon City gathered to celebrate and see the original image. They sang the Salve Regina and Ioseph. Before the final blessing, Fray Hector Gonzalez, OAR delivered his gratitude to all who supported the National Caravan (to different OAR communities), to those who attended the Fiesta and those who throughout

the Novena Mass were present.

The more than 20 OAR preists, OAR formands, Augustinian Recollect Sisters, SARF, RAY & CARAS from different chapters, other religious sisters, those who seek for healing and lay faithful attended the occasion.

Brief History: (compilation of Fray Rommel L. Rubia, OAR, La Salud: the Black Virgin of Health.)

The Image of Virgen de la salud was brought by by the 7th batch of OAR Missionaries in the year 1634. The dark Mexican Virgin of la salud was enthroned in the Church of San Juan de Bagumbayan, the first church of the Recollect Fathers in the Philippines.

The devotion faded since the Virgin lost her principal shrine in Bagumbayan twice. **RO**



Pointless Points to Ponder Not...

BY FRAY ONZ, OAR

Casianic Pointless Points in pictures



There's an immeasurable line between fishing and just standing on the shore....



It's nice, when fishing, to catch a fish. But it doesn't matter if you don't. What you always catch is a quiet time sitting or walking at the water's edge, a silent time of water and sky and the movement of natural things where the presence of the Lord dowses your whole being.



Is there more beautiful than the way the ocean refuses to stop kissing the shoreline, no matter how many times it's sent away? I guess there is much more beauty to see the Father accepting back His prodigal son returning back home again after leaving Him a thousand times.



pointless points to ponder not



Blessed are they who find beauty
in the simplest of places!

In order to have a good catch, a fisherman has to be patient enough—wait for long until Casianic a number of fish bites the bait and catch them! We fishers of men have a lot of lessons to learn from these ordinary fishermen.



This is what I see every time I look out my broken window (Casian convent) . . . but the scene changes so often according to the time of the day, the weather . . . and the mode of the beholder. My little window serves as an electrode placed between the plate (anode) and the control grid in a tetrode valve, used to reduce the capacitance between the grid and the plate, increasing its ability to respond to high frequencies, especially radio frequencies... in short my window has become my TV screen in that small island.

In that island, I learned what is obvious to a child—that a happy life is a simple life and a collection of simple and little things. No computer games, PlayStation games, no dolls, no toy cars!





We sailed for the Sunday apostolate, and the long Casianic waves rolled and murmured rhythmically beside us; the fresh salty wind blew freely and drenched our bodies.... Home is the only secure ground where the brothers, and a shot “empe” await to give us a bit of zing again!



Amihan Casianic journeys

We sailed for the apostolate, and the long Casianic waves rolled and murmured rhythmically beside us; the fresh salty wind blew freely and drenched our bodies.... Home is the only secure ground where the brothers and URSUS await to give us a bit of zing again!

It is an anchor of strength to know that Mary is with us when in a faraway island tensions, stress, sufferings and hurts come as hooks and baits to beset and overwhelm us.



Faith tells me that no matter what lies ahead of me, God is already there. . . .



pointless points to ponder not



Sometimes God brings us to troubled waters not to drown us but to cleanse us . .

Waters , Peter and Jesus . . .

The very first words of Jesus when he and Peter met at the waters was, "Follow me, and I will make you a fisher of men." His very last words to Peter, again down at the waters of the Sea of Galilee, and after his resurrection, were, "Feed my sheep, Follow me."



So what are we do with this time left for us on earth?

Psalm 90 has a great way of talking about this: "You are God from eternity to eternity; in your eyes, a thousand years is just like merely a yesterdayhuman beings will return to dust..... then he says: 70 is the sum of our years or 80 for those who are strong some are strong who made it into the 80's—"

Then the author says this: "teach us to count our days aright so that may gain wisdom of heart." In other words, Ok we have this period of time and we have eternity, teach us that we may be wise and use the time wisely.

"We all live under the same sky, but we don't all have the same horizon."



THE RECOLETOS OBSERVER

Moderator

Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR

Editor

Fray Francisco Antonio, OAR

Contributors

Fray Jose Ernil F. Almayo, OAR

Bro. Alfie J. Angeles

Fray Francisco L. Antonio, OAR

Ioannes P. Arong

Fray Vincent S. Cadeliña, OAR

Elmeer Meeynard Calimpos

Ben Cal (PNA)

Bro. Mandy Constantino

Kara Marie Cortes

Fray Paul S. Demillones, OAR

Rheymard G. Doneza

Sis. Rosario Galang, SAR

Bro. Enrico V. Gallego

Fray Jovy A. Gallego, OAR

Fray Anthony P. Irineo, OAR

Fray Jaazeal D. Jakosalem, OAR

Danell Jumayao

Fray Abraham B. Latoza, OAR

Dr. Carlos Legaspi, Jr., PhD

Sis. Cora Padua, SAR

Fray René F. Paglinawan, OAR

John August Pamintuan

Fray Emilio Edgardo A. Quilatan, OAR

Bro. Jhoeben M. Rodriguez

Prof. Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Fray Mark R. Saludes, OAR

Kimberly Mae Sios-e

Rosabelle D. Sy

Jenneth Kate Telebanco

Fray Antonio C. Zabala, OAR

Correspondents: croSSCuRrent, Saipan,
SCORES, and USJ-R

Lay-out Artist & Photographer

Fray Reynaldo Jaranilla, OAR

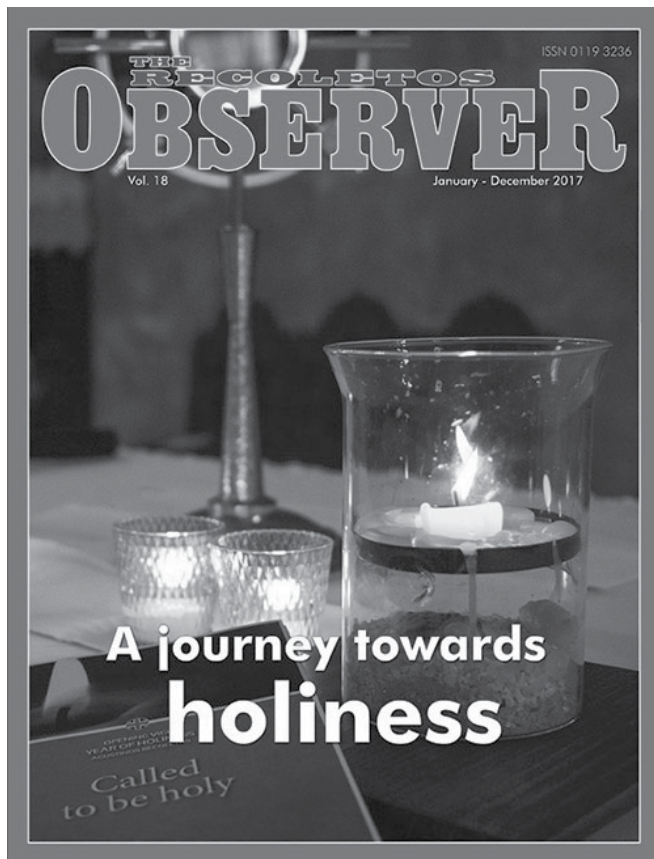
Circulation Officer

Anthoneth Salcedo

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The Cover: Given that this year coincides with various anniversaries recalling the holiness of our brothers and sisters, the 55th General Chapter wanted to dedicate a year to this holiness. (*Fr. General, Prot. CG. 13/2017*)

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24 Neptune St., Congressional Subd.
Brgy. Bahay Toro (P.O. Box 1127)
1106 Quezon City, Philippines
Tel. (02) 921-6103
Fax. (02) 456-1658

email: observer@recoletos.ph
website: recoletosfilipinas.org, recoletos.ph



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Nuestra Señora de la Salud 72 years later

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